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On the Relationship Between Teaching Pronunciation and Teaching Speaking: From Technicality to Fluency: Case of First-Year LMD EFL Students

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2017

Dedications

In memory of Mr Abderrezzak BENZIAN (1941 – 2016)

And

Prof Belabbes NEDDAR (1960 – 2017)

To my mother

To my wife

To my daughters

Declaration

I, Bouhadjar Fethi BELKHEIR, declare that the doctorate thesis with the title

"On the Relationship between Teaching Pronunciation and Teaching Speaking: From Technicality to Fluency: Case of First-Year LMD EFL Students"

was solely undertaken by myself. All sections of the thesis that use quotes or describe an argument or concept developed by another author have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Signature

Fethi Belkheir

Abstract

Oral/aural communication represents a pivotal area to develop amongst learners of English. EFL learners' communication expertise draws greatly on the mastery of listening, speaking, and pronunciation skills. At the tertiary level, departments of English are concerned about several challenges including the improvement of communication in spoken English. The present research seeks to determine whether the modules devoted to this particular aspect of the language and their content, the approach adopted, and the teaching practices are appropriate for and consistent with the set aims and objectives for oral/aural communication training. The methodology adopted obeys a mixed method design in order to gather qualitative and quantitative data. One aspect of the research is quasi-experimental based on the study of two groups of EFL freshmen. These two groups, experimental and control, were taught differently to decide on the causal impact of the approach suggested to teaching oral expression in general and pronunciation in particular. The corpus, therefore, comprises recorded performances of students from the two groups of a skit before and after the treatment. The other aspect of the research employs an interview administered to teachers of Oral Expression and Phonetics. This research design helped us reach some noteworthy findings. We could empirically demonstrate how effective a top down approach can be to teaching pronunciation. Although listening skills are important to oral-aural communication, they are not given any room in the learners' training. Teachers underestimate listening skills instruction believing that such skills can be acquired without any direct pedagogic treatment and are left to soak in through mere exposure. The instruction of speaking is not based on a well-defined nor structured course. An absence of collaboration and coordination amongst teachers characterises the sphere of oral expression instruction.

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

ASR: Assisted Speech Recognition

CA: Classical Arabic

CG: Control Group

CLT: Communicative Language Teaching

CNRSE: Commission Nationale pour la Réforme du Système Educatif

CS: Communication Strategies

CT: Control Trio

Ctrl: Control

ECT: Ethan Control Trio

EET: Ethan Experimental Trio

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

EG: Experimental Group

ELT: English Language Teaching

ESL: English as a Second Language

ET: Experimental Trio

Exp: Experimental

ICT: Information and Communications Technology

L1: Mother tongue

L2: Second or foreign language

Lic1: First year university students

Lic2: Second year university students

Lic3: Third year university students

LMD: Licence Master Doctorat

MALL: Mobile Assisted Language Learning

MCT: Man Control Trio

MET: Man Experimental Trio

MSA: Modern Standard Arabic

OE: Oral Expression

PDA: Personal Digital Assistant

Ph.D: Philosophiæ doctor

POT: Post-treatment phase

PRT: Pre-treatment phase

R: Researcher

SCT: Sydney Control Trio

SET: Sydney Experimental Trio

STDV: Standard Deviation

T: Teacher interviewed

TEFL: Teaching English as a Foreign Language

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General Introduction

The English language has proven supremacy over other languages in the world as a lingua franca used to expedite communication at a global level. This status is reinforced because of two factors. First, the expansion of the British colonial power by the late nineteenth century; and the second is the leadership of the USA in almost every field: politics, finance, military, media, computing, research, wealth, Nobel Laureates, medals in the Olympics, etc. Along with these two factors, the phenomenon of 'globalization' requires cross-cultural communication generating the need for a language as a medium of interaction. Anyone striving for an international impact cannot achieve their goals without the capacity to communicate in English.

Dominance of the English language over almost all spheres of interaction worldwide has left no choice to decision makers but to incorporate it in their countries language policy. Since the importance of the English language in the global market place cannot be understated, the inclusion of English in the linguistic strategy of a country can offer a larger impact at an international level. Similarly, individuals may witness a real change in their lives and be offered a lot of opportunities thanks to English. That has also pushed almost every country to include its promotion in their strategies of development including the educational system.

Inevitably, this necessity is also applicable to Algeria which has followed suit both within and without the main stream educational system. Promoting the English language in Algeria is consistent with its strategic framework for international cooperation. This cooperation covers political, economic, scientific, and cultural aspects. It goes without saying that assuring a successful cooperation includes sustainable human development where English language training is given an important status.

The sociolinguistic situation in Algeria is complex. The linguistic diversity can be seen as the manifestation of cultural plurality. This situation comprises Modern Standard Arabic (used in formal situations), colloquial Arabic (used in social life), Tamazight language, and French. In the Algerian language policy and according to the Algerian constitution, MSA and Tamazight are the national and official languages of the country.

Besides, French and English are foreign languages meant to promote 'globalised' Algeria. Sociolinguists may disagree and describe French as a variety that is used as a formal language in some situations and as an informal language for social life in others.

The position of the English language has witnessed a gradual shift since the seventies. At the beginning, mainly because of historical inheritance, French *per se* was considered to be the language of international exchanges. Through time, other challenges emerged and the use of English as a communicating medium started to gain more room in 'globalised' Algeria.

English language instruction has taken an important share in Algeria. This can be witnessed by the booming number of private language schools in different parts of the country. A lot of efforts have been made to make the teaching-learning of the English language more effective and efficient. In this sense, the efficiency and effectiveness of the pedagogy adapted and/or adopted to promote the communicative power of the English language are questioned.

It is clear that using the English language for communication requires the mastery of macro-skills, namely Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing and micro-skills which include Grammar, Vocabulary, Spelling, and Pronunciation. We cannot deny that a successful user of the language for communicative purposes is to prove competence in combining these aspects accurately and fluently. Since we are inquiring into oral communication, we need to make it clear that three language skills are our main focus for this research, namely Speaking, Listening, and Pronunciation as they make up oral-aural communication.

Focusing on the ELT context at the tertiary level, a set of courses is designed to help achieve common aims. In that sense, there should be both horizontal and vertical coherence and cohesion. In other words, the subjects in one level have to be consistent with each other and with the set aims, and the same aspect of consistency is respected within a subject or a set of subjects from one level to the following. The transfer of knowledge, skills, and competences from one subject to another can help optimise learning and reach their aim efficiently.

General Introduction

Aims linked to oral-aural proficiency are mainly developed in the subjects of Phonetics and Oral Expression. They are supposed to focus on improving students' speaking skills, listening skills, and pronunciation proficiency. The bulk of literature agrees on the fact learning and teaching such skills is demanding and challenging. Yet, an important number of university teachers express their wish to teach the subject of Oral Expression believing it is an easy matter to deal with. In fact, most of the lessons are designed around topics discussed by the students. This kind of exposure is believed to help learners improve on their speaking skills.

Listening is also an important skill in oral communication. It is the natural precursor to speaking and decisive in the development of linguistic communication: Babies born deaf cannot speak as they grow older. Most teachers neglect the active aspect of listening. We can notice this in the actual classroom practices. Students are, generally, exposed to one source of English: the teacher's. Raising learners' awareness about the listening process and the skills involved is minimal.

As for pronunciation, we find among practitioners divergent assumptions, not only about the teachability of pronunciation, but also about the features of pronunciation to be taught. This is similar to what takes place amongst teachers of English in the Algerian educational system in general and at the tertiary level in particular. We have noticed that when it comes to teaching pronunciation, teachers are guided by intuition rather than research and science. They either teach it as articulatory phonetics or not at all.

Traditionally, English language courses have started with segmentals and concentrated on them, sometimes almost to the quasi-exclusion of suprasegmentals. We have serious doubts about the efficiency of adopting a bottom-up approach to teaching English phonology at the tertiary level. Students are taught segmental features of pronunciation at an early stage as freshmen, and can graduate without having covered or being trained in the suprasegmentals. Hardly ever have we met students reading for a Masters Degree adequately use the suprasegmental features of pronunciation. We question whether this outcome is due to the approach adopted, the gradation, or the time devoted to produce competent oral-aural users of English.

Another issue is linked to whether the skills of speaking, listening and pronunciation are implemented in an integrated fashion. This questions not only the coherence and the cohesion of the curriculum but also the transfer of skills and competences from one subject to another.

Nevertheless, the general consensus in the field of teaching is that oral proficiency is amongst the priorities. Three years at the tertiary level, for a BA degree in English, should be sufficient to have orally-aurally competent users of English. Unfortunately however, the outcomes are far from satisfactory.

In this sense, we should question the curriculum, the syllabus and the practices guiding the treatment of oral-aural proficiency at university. We, therefore, should shed light on what really takes place in the subjects of Phonetics and Oral Expression at the level of the First Year University context.

The purpose of this research is to draw as fair a picture as possible of the treatment of speaking, listening, and pronunciation at the tertiary level. For that purpose, we will focus on first year university students in the subjects of Phonetics and Oral Expression. The research also aims at testing the use of a different approach to teaching the features of pronunciation.

The results obtained and conclusions reached in this research can give more insights of great theoretical and practical significance to the community to help improve the teaching of speaking, listening, and pronunciation.

The present study aims at answering questions which pertain to the development of the skills of pronunciation, listening, and speaking within English as a foreign language at the level of first year LMD. It questions the effectiveness of the suggested instructional programme designed to develop tertiary level students' speaking skills. There are three main research questions with three sub-questions linked to each main one.

1. Which approach is adopted to improve learners' oral-aural skills?

a) Is pronunciation taught through the bottom-up approach or the top-down approach?

b) Is the approach adopted to teach pronunciation appropriate to have competent speakers of English?

c) How are the listening skills treated in Oral Expression classes?

2. What are the declared objectives in the modules linked to the development of oral-aural skills?

a) What are the objectives behind teaching Phonetics?

b) What are the objectives behind training in Oral Expression?

c) Are the objectives set for Phonetics complementary with the aims set for Oral Expression?

3. What elements of pronunciation are taught to improve oral-aural skills?

a) Which elements of pronunciation are focused on in Oral Expression class?

b) Which elements of pronunciation are taught in Phonetics class?

c) How is a pronunciation focus integrated into listening and speaking?

In an attempt to answer the questions, the following hypotheses are put forward:

1. The approach that may prevail in teaching pronunciation at the level of university is the bottom-up approach. However, in order to reach adequate competence in oral-aural skills, the top-down approach may be more appropriate. Learners can reach a higher competence in oral-aural skills since they are formally exposed to suprasegments and connected speech from the beginning. Listening skills may not be targeted by teachers believing it is a passive skill which may develop on its own, through mere exposure.

2. Aims in Phonetics and Oral Expression may not fulfil complementary requirements. A Phonetics syllabus may aim at giving learners a theoretical background about the physical properties of sounds, while an Oral Expression course may privilege general communication over pronunciation, which may not reduce communication breakdowns.

3. In Phonetics, there is an emphasis on the segmental features of pronunciation and their physical properties. As far as the Oral Expression course is concerned, the pronunciation of words is focused on at the expense of suprasegmental features, such as, for example, intonation which has an important communicative value. The pronunciation aspects and materials taught may have more to do with what is convenient for teachers to teach rather than what is effective for learners to learn. The link between listening, speaking, and pronouncing is not optimised neglecting thus the impact of pronunciation-oriented listening activities in the development of oral-aural skills.

To address the aforementioned aims, we will employ an explanatory mixed-method design which will enable us to gather qualitative and quantitative input. We will use primary data collection methods, including an interview and an experiment.

A semi-structured interview will be designed and administered to teachers of Oral Expression and Phonetics modules. The interview is intended to have a conversation-like approach based on a guide with questions prepared and others that can be brought in according to the informants' answers. Thanks to this tool, we shall unveil teachers' views and practises concerning listening, speaking, and pronunciation and their instruction.

A crucial part of this research relies on a quasi-experimental design and more precisely on a non-equivalent groups design conducting a pre-treatment/post-treatment randomised experiment. We, therefore, will use two intact groups of first year students that we think are similar as the treatment and control groups. The two groups will be taught following two different approaches to pronunciation treatment. To that end, a course will be designed and implemented along concepts that will be defined and discussed in the review of literature.

Consequently, the corpus consists of recordings of first-year LMD students performing a play entitled *Shakespeare's House*. The recordings will be carried out before and after the treatment. In other words, we shall have two groups which will be tested twice over a period of time. All in all, we shall have two sets of nine recordings. Each recording includes three students.

For the purpose of comparing the groups, we have to consider the null hypothesis as a starting point so that we can use a t-test for statistical measurement. The null hypothesis simply says that there is no difference between the two groups. We can, therefore, conclude that the experimental group is statistically the same as the control group.

The present research will be organised into six distinct chapters. The first three chapters will be devoted to a thorough discussion of the state of the art literature dealing with speaking, listening, and pronunciation. The three other chapters will deal with a more practical part. They will tackle the description of the situation, data, data collection procedures, results, and recommendation for change.

1.1 Introduction

For many people, speaking is an important skill to use in oral communication. Similarly, for EFL learners, learning to speak English competently is a priority. They may need to master this skill for a variety of reasons. Speaking is what people notice first in language users and even rely on to put forward a judgement. It is, therefore, essential for ELT practitioners to give this skill its due share in their practices and to provide appropriate pedagogy in order to optimise its instruction, even though learning to speak efficiently is complex and challenging.

Consequently, the bulk of the chapter is devoted to the speaking skills and their implementation in the EFL classroom. We shall first explore the nature of speaking and oral interaction. In order to cover a thorough definition of speaking, we shall try to describe the components and characteristics of spoken language and the functions of speaking. In an attempt to discuss effective speaking, we shall point out some competences to consider in building the speaking competence. Another aspect we believe is important has to do with the teaching of the speaking skills. That is why we shall try to give an account of how speaking is treated in some methods and approaches. Some room will be devoted to classroom speaking practice and the teaching of some communication strategies for successful speaking.

1.2 The nature of speaking and oral interaction

The language teaching-learning process can be described in terms of skills development. Scholars often talk about the four macro skills which are speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Our main concern in this section is to shed light on the speaking skills. We have to define speaking and its nature. To get a clearer picture, we shall include the identification of the constituent elements of spoken language and the functions fulfilled through speaking.

1.2.1 Defining speaking

The speaking skills have been studied by different scholars trying to define them and explain their nature. Bailey (2005, p. 2) suggests two aspects to consider in describing the language skills, the first in terms of direction (productive or receptive) and the second in terms of modality (oral-aural or written). According to this description, speaking skills represent the productive aspect of oral communication.

Several scholars (Brown, 1994; Burns & Joyce, 1997; Florez, 1999; Richards & Schmidt, 2002; Luoma, 2004) see speaking as an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving and processing information. We, therefore, can understand that speaking is a process that involves two parties requiring them to act both as receivers and producers of a message. Speaking is meant to help interlocutors to express their thoughts, feelings, emotions through a spoken form of the language. Harmer (2007, p. 29) explains that, "*[w]hen speaking, we construct words and phrases with individual sounds, and we also use pitch change, intonation, and stress to convey different meanings*".

Notably, speaking skills can rely on linguistic and paralinguistic features to achieve communication. Chaney & Burk (1998, p. 13) rightly note that speaking is "*the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal or non-verbal symbols in a variety of contexts*". In this sense, Communication through speaking can be realized with the use of words on the one hand, and other features including facial expressions, gestures and body movements on the other hand. The selection of one form of communication or another to meet the targeted meaning depends greatly on the context in which participants are evolving. This context is shared by the speaker and the listener as to what decisions are taken concerning the spoken language to be produced.

Furthermore, optimizing chances for a successful exchange between participants depends on how cooperative the speakers are (Tannen, 2007). This position is shared by Nunan (1991) who explains that "(...) *in any interactional speaking task, communication is a collaborative venture in which the interlocutors negotiate meaning in order to achieve their communicative ends*" (p. 47). Opening a talk, closing a talk, and turn taking, to name

but a few, can be considered as important functions in the interactional aspect of speaking. Communication can break down if the speakers fail to handle turn taking. This failure may be inevitable since speakers can face difficulties deciphering turn taking signals when involved in contexts with interlocutors from different cultures (Mc Donough & Mackey, 2000, p. 84).

Most of the time, speaking is linked to performances that are unplanned and spontaneous. They are also open-ended and evolving. Speakers have to take decisions in real time, which increases pressure to a certain extent. This time constraint and pressure impinge on the interlocutors' capacity to organize and structure their thoughts and use language properly.

However, the use of speaking skills for conversational purposes is not always unpredictable. Richards (2008) describes how speakers have recourse to conversational routines in order to perform some functions. These routines become fixed expressions, which can help the speaker produce spoken language and sound natural (Pawley & Syder, 1983). They can be used for beginnings or endings in conversations, for leading into topics, and for changing topics.

It is noteworthy that speaking is not a discrete skill. It is inextricably intertwined with other skills. Several scholars (Bygate, 1987, 2009; Hinkel, 2005; Saint-Léger, 2009; Shumin, 2002; Tarone, 2005; Thornbury and Slade, 2006) agree to say that the ability to engage in oral language production is the most complex and difficult to master. The complexity and difficulty of the speaking performance are accrued since oral proficiency can be achieved by demonstrating some knowledge about both macro and micro skills. Shumin (2002, p. 204) states that "*learning to speak a foreign language requires more than knowing its grammatical and semantic rules*". Burns and Seidlhofer (2010, p. 197) support this view stating that,

> *(...) learning speaking, whether in a first or other language, involves developing subtle and detailed knowledge about why, how, when to communicate, and complex skills for producing and managing interaction, such as asking a question or obtaining a turn.*

In this sense, speaking proficiency does not rely on knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation per se. It has to do also with how to put this knowledge into action. Not only should a speaker demonstrate mastery of the skills mentioned above, but they should also have recourse to some other competences. They should consider both knowledge of the English language and awareness of other skills. In other words, there is on the one hand the mastery of the different aspects of the language and on the other hand command of motor-perceptive skills and social interactional skills. The last two concepts will be developed in Section 1.2.3.1. In the following section, we shall cover the components and the characteristics of spoken language.

1.2.2 Components and characteristics of spoken language

Research about the nature of language and its levels of analysis in general and investigations in the nature of discourse in particular have insisted on the complexity of the speaking skills. This has led to label speaking as the most challenging skill for students, due to a set of features that characterise oral discourse. Several scholars have tried to unravel the components and the characteristics of spoken language. The figure below clearly shows the complexity of the process and the many elements involved.
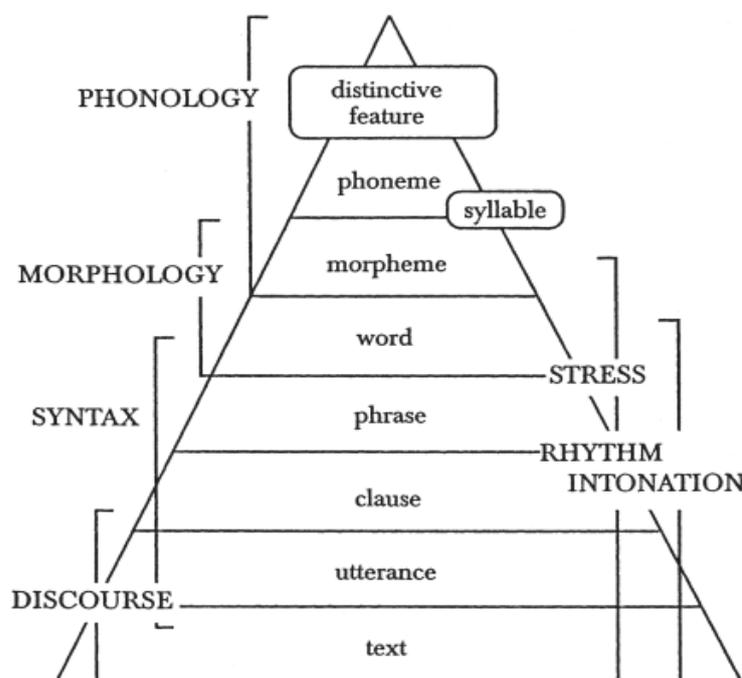
Figure 1.1: Components of spoken language (Bailey, 2006, p. 121)

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The figure above is meant to depict the components of spoken language. On the left side, the four levels of linguistic analysis are displayed. The elements in the centre represent the units of spoken language. In the right side, features of pronunciation are presented. The point is that, for a speaker to be efficient, they need to handle all these elements successfully. Bailey (2006, p. 124) rightly explains that "[F]*or less-than-proficient speakers, managing the multiple components of language that must work together as they speak is very demanding indeed* […]. *The ability to use these components to produce and understand language is known as linguistic competence*". The concepts of linguistic competence and speaking competence will be dealt with in Section 2.

Levelt (1989, 1993) suggests a psycholinguistic model to describe speech production. Although this model was initially developed to describe first language production, it has largely been used to explain production process in L2 (Muranoi, 2007, p. 53). According to this model, speaking consists of three major components: the Conceptualizer for generating a pre-verbal message, the Formulator for putting this message into words, and the Articulator for articulating the generated utterance. The model is presented in the following figure.
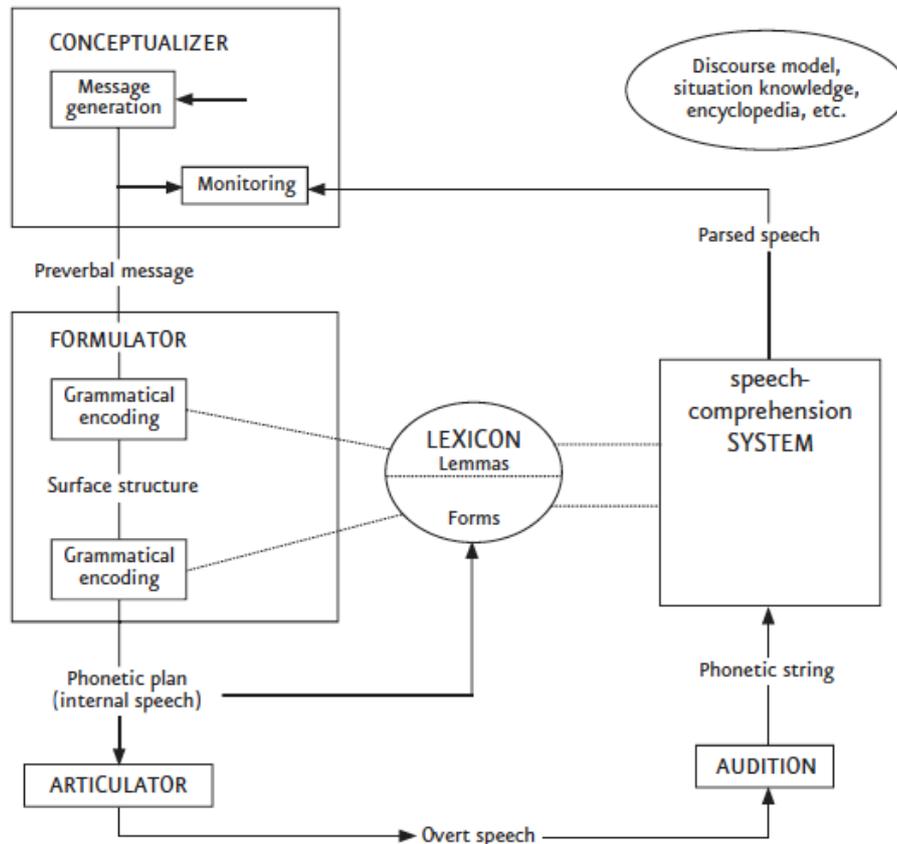
Figure 1.2: Levelt's (1989, p. 9) model of speech production

As suggested in this model, the process of speech production starts with the Conceptualizer. At this level, elements are generated and lexical items are retrieved by activating the appropriate lemmata so that the message is given a linguistic form in the formulator. The next phase consists in retrieving knowledge of the phonological form and selecting the correct inflectional form from the mental lexicon. These phonological forms are phonetically encoded. This process ends with motor processes which help articulate the phonetically encoded forms and produce sounds and subsequently speech. The speaker is able to evaluate the conversation and decide what makes sense thanks to the monitor system which allows a connection between the production system and the comprehension system.

Brown (2001, pp. 270-271) emphasizes the challenging aspect of speaking and suggests that is due to the set of features characterizing oral discourse. They can be listed under the following main points:

- Clustering: the phrasal building of groups through clustering;

- Redundancy;

- Reduced forms: the use of contractions, vowel reductions and elision;

- Performance variables: the use of hesitations, pauses, backtracking, and corrections;

- Colloquial language: the use of slang and idioms;

- Rate of delivery;

- Stress, Rhythm and intonation;

- Interaction: the necessity to interact with at least one other speaker.

After having dealt with the components and characteristics of spoken language, we shall tackle the functions of speaking in the next section.

1.2.3 Functions of speaking

Most discourse contains a mixture of styles and functions of language. Several scholars (Brown and Yule, 1983; Jones, 1996; Burns, 1998; and Richards, 2008) have attempted to classify the functions of speaking in communication. Three main functions have been identified in the literature: interaction, transaction and performance.

1.2.3.1 Interactional functions

The notion of interaction is an important feature in the spoken form of language (O'Keeffe et al., 2007; McCarten and McCarthy, 2010). Nation (2011) insists on the interactive function of spoken language saying that "[m]*ost often speaking is an interactive activity. That is, we speak with others and take account of them in our speaking by suiting our output to them, and by acknowledging their input and seeking clarification of what they say.*" (p. 446)

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Bygate (1987) describes the interactional aspect of spoken language by distinguishing between the motor-perceptive skills and the social interactional skills. The former is linked to the accurate use of pronunciation and structures of the language, and the latter is concerned with the use of motor-perceptive skills for communicative purposes. Similarly, McDonough et al. (2013) define the motor-perceptive skills as "[...] *linguistic elements such as pronunciation, vocabulary and chunks (several words customarily used together in a fixed expression) and structures*" (p. 159); and they explain that social interactional skills relate "*to what and how to say things effectively in specific communicative settings*" (p. 159).

Brown and Yule (1983) explain that the interactional function of speaking serves to establish and maintain social relations. In this sense, the speakers involved in the interaction aim at creating a relaxing atmosphere whereby they can feel at ease and the purpose of social interaction can be served. They seek more to build a friendly relationship than to transmit any particular message. Richards (2008, p. 22) explains that

> [w]*hen people meet, they exchange greetings, engage in small talk, recount recent experiences, and so on because they wish to be friendly and to establish a comfortable zone of interaction with others. The focus is more on the speakers and how they wish to present themselves to each other than on the message.*

This function of spoken language helps participants fulfil their social needs. They can exchange greetings, engage in small talk about unimportant things, take part in polite conversations about ordinary topics, or describe banal experiences. The speakers' identity is highly reflected since they give importance to how they wish to present themselves to each other. Richards (2008, p. 22) describes the main interactive features of speaking as follows:

- *Has a primarily social function*

- *Reflects role relationships*

- *Reflects speaker's identity*

- *May be formal or casual*

- *Uses conversational conventions*

- *Reflects degrees of politeness*

- *Employs many generic words*

- *Uses conversational register*

- *Is jointly constructed*

1.2.3.2 Transactional functions

The second function of speaking is transaction. Brown and Yule (1983) see discourse in its transactional function as language used to convey meaning. Yule (1997) uses the term referential communication to refer to the transactional aspect of spoken language and defines it as

> *communicative acts, generally spoken, in which some kind of information is exchanged between two speakers. This information exchange is typically dependent on successful acts of reference, whereby entities (human and nonhuman) are identified ((by naming or describing), or located or moved relative to other entities (by giving instructions or directions), or followed through sequences of locations and events (by recounting an incident or a narrative)* (p. 1).

In this sense, Transactional language carries a message and is the language used to get things done. It is information and message oriented, that is to say the process is built around the notion of imparting information. Participants, in this case, endeavour to give or obtain information. The message is the core element in the exchange wherein making oneself understood is the central focus.

Goh and Burns (2012) explain that "[t]*ransactional interactions involve speakers exchanging goods and services, as, for example, in business meetings, service encounters, or job interviews*" (p. 113). The speakers, therefore, are involved in communication tasks

and required to develop some communication strategies. Nation & Newton (2009) state that "[t]*he transactional nature of formal speaking means that the effectiveness of the learners' performance should focus on the successful communication of information*" (p. 123). This implies that grammatical accuracy may not be a priority as long as the message is clear. Besides, participants can remedy with some form of strategic competence. These strategies can help speakers deliver their message by overcoming difficulties they encounter and compensate for limitations in their linguistic competence. These strategies and competences will be discussed later in Section 2.

According to Richards (2008, p. 26), the main features of talk as transaction can be summarized as follows:

- *It has a primarily information focus.*

- *The main focus is on the message and not the participants.*

- *Participants employ communication strategies to make themselves understood.*

- *There may be frequent questions, repetitions, and comprehension checks.*

- *There may be negotiation and digression.*

- *Linguistic accuracy is not always important.*

Most language is, naturally, not wholly transactional or interactional but a mix of both. The following figure summarises the interactional and transactional functions of speaking.

```
                          SPOKEN INTERACTIONS

          CONVERSATIONS                         ENCOUNTERS
          Interactional                         Transactional
          (interpersonal)                       (pragmatic)

     Casual           Formal            Factual           Transactional
   (equal power)  (unequal power)    (information)      (goods and services)
```
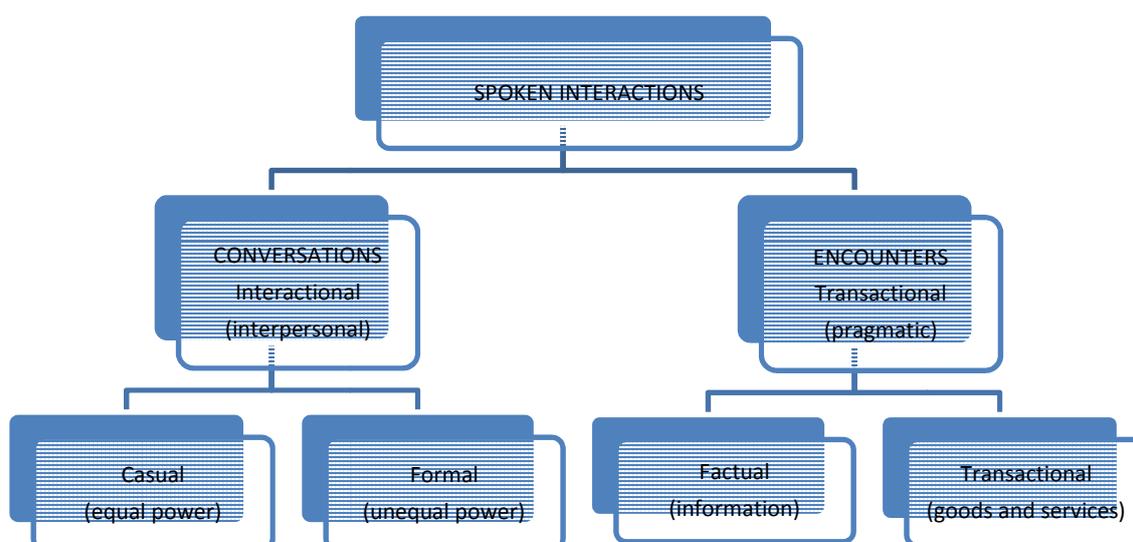
Figure 1.3: Functions of spoken language (adapted from Burns, Joyce and Gollin, 1996, p. 11)

1.2.3.3 Talk as performance

The main feature of this talk as performance is that it takes place before an audience. It is more concerned with transmitting information in the form of speeches, announcements, or presentations. According to Richards (2008, p. 27), this type of talk

> *tends to be in the form of monolog rather than dialog, often follows a recognizable format (e.g., a speech of welcome), and is closer to written language than conversational language. Similarly, it is often evaluated according to its effectiveness or impact on the listener, something that is unlikely to happen with talk as interaction or transaction.*

It implies that a speaker is involved in a monologic performance whereby content reflects accuracy, organisation and sequencing. For a speaker, both message and audience are of paramount importance. In this sense, form and accuracy are given high consideration since the speaker's aim is to deliver a message clearly and maintain the audience engaged.

In short, we can say that the nature of speaking is complex and multifaceted. There are some aspects that have been emphasized in the section above. Speaking is a productive

oral skill which is linear and takes place in real time. It is a mental process that involves proficiency in different areas of knowledge such as mechanics, functions, and social and cultural rules and norms.

We have tried to draw a picture of the nature of speaking by describing its nature, its characteristics, and functions. We shall now tackle the concept of speaking competence in order to discuss which competences may enhance effective speaking.

1.3 Effective speaking

We have to define what is meant by speaking effectively and what elements are required to enhance speaking competence. Nunan (1989, p. 32) describes skills and features that can lead to successful oral communication. He suggests that speakers ought to have

- *the ability to articulate phonological features of the language comprehensibly;*

- *mastery of stress, rhythm, intonation patterns;*

- *an acceptable degree of fluency;*

- *transactional and interpersonal skills;*

- *skills in taking short and long speaking turns;*

- *skills in the management of interaction;*

- *skills in negotiating meaning;*

- *conversational listening skills (successful conversations require good listeners as well as good speakers);*

- *skills in knowing about and negotiating purposes for conversations;*

- *[the ability to use] appropriate conversational formulae and fillers.*

Johnson (1996, p. 155) describes speaking as a "*combinatorial skill* [that] *involves doing various things at the same time*". Hence, in order to reach an appropriate definition of effective speaking, it is necessary to define and discuss some sub-skills and competences that build speaking competence.

In a holistic and comprehensive approach to working on the speaking skills, Goh & Burns (2012) describe speaking competence, and they list three main areas: Knowledge of language and discourse, core speaking skills, and communication and discourse strategies. They explain that "[l]*earning to speak in a second language involves increasing the ability to use these components in order to produce spoken language in a fluent, accurate and socially appropriate way, within the constraints of a speaker's cognitive processing*" (p. 53). The figure below summarises the components participating in speaking competence.
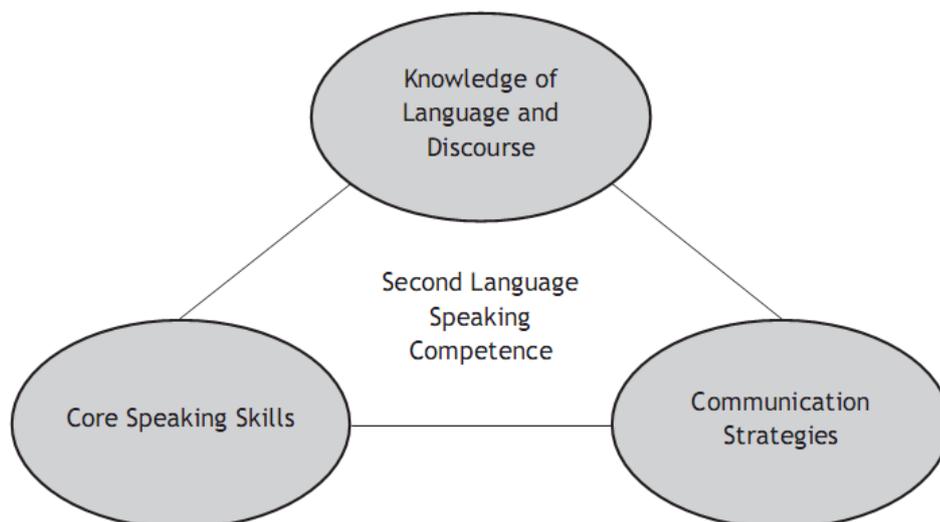
Figure 1.4: Components of Second Language Speaking Competence (Goh & Burns, 2012, p. 53)

The first component, knowledge of language and discourse, involves the mastery of pronunciation with its segmental and suprasegmental features, knowledge of the grammar and vocabulary, and understanding how chunks of connected speech are organised. The second component, core speaking skills, comprises improving the ability to speak quickly and fluently, negotiate speech, and manage speech. The third component, communication

strategies, deals with developing communication strategies and using discourse strategies, which may help the speaker compensate for limitations in language mastery.

1.3.1 Grammatical competence

Grammatical competence is concerned with knowledge of the language itself, its form and meaning. A speaker has internalised knowledge of a set of rules that govern the language they use to communicate. Scarcella & Oxford, (1992, p. 141) define grammatical competence as

> *an umbrella concept that includes increasing expertise in grammar (morphology, syntax), vocabulary, and mechanics. With regards to speaking, the term mechanics refers to basic sounds of letters and syllables, pronunciation of words, intonation and stress.*

Speakers are required to develop this competence so that they can understand and produce the structures of the English language accurately and fluently. According to Shumin, (2002, p. 207) *"[i]n order to convey meaning, EFL learners must have the knowledge of words and sentences: That is, they must understand how words are segmented into various sounds, and how sentences are stressed in particular ways"*.

1.3.2 Pragmatic competence

Pragmatic competence includes the knowledge of pragmatic conventions to perform acceptable language functions as well as the knowledge of sociolinguistic conventions to perform functions appropriately in a given context (Bachman, 1990, pp. 89-90).

Pragmatic competence generally involves two types of ability. On the one hand, it means knowing how to use language in order to achieve certain communicative goals or intentions. This is also known as 'illocutionary competence'. On the other hand, it can be seen as social knowledge necessary to select the language forms to use in different settings, and with people in different roles and with different statuses. In many ways, pragmatic competence and sociolinguistic competence overlap.

1.3.3 Discourse competence

Sentences do not occur in isolation; they combine to form discourse. Discourse competence is all about knowing how to interpret the larger context and how to construct longer stretches of language so that the individual parts make up a coherent whole. Widdowson (1978, p. 22) explains that *"normal linguistic behaviour does not consist in the production of separate sentences but in the use of sentences for the creation of discourse."*

Discourse competence asks: How are words, phrases and sentences put together to create conversations, speeches, e-mail messages, newspaper articles? Halliday (1985, p. 58) describes the variables present within such ever-evolving discourse:

> *Once conversation starts, a new element is added; each new step defines the environment afresh. The meaning of whatever is said is with respect to what has gone before. The process is a stochastic one: the probabilities are reset at each boundary, and the linguistic resources regrouped to face the new situation.*

Effective speakers should acquire a large repertoire of structures and discourse markers to express ideas, show relationships of time, and indicate cause, contrast, and emphasis (Scarcella & Oxford, 1992).

1.3.4 Sociolinguistic competence

In a successful oral performance, a speaker needs to combine both sociocultural choices and sociolinguistic forms (Cohen, 1996). Similarly, Haley and Austin (2004) state that in order "[t]*o be more orally productive, learners would need to be more capable of responding in a relevant and socially appropriate manner to the communication of others*" (p. 189).

The speaker should, therefore, be able to decide upon the appropriacy of what to say and how to say it depending on the context they are in. In other words, sociolinguistic competence refers to the ability to interpret the social meaning of the choice of linguistic varieties and to use language with the appropriate social meaning for the communication

situation. This view is supported by (Brown, 1994, p. 238) stating that "*adult second language learners must acquire stylistic adaptability in order to be able to encode and decode the discourse around them correctly*".

Hymes (1972) contributed to the notion of sociolinguistic 'appropriateness', distinguishing between what is possible, what is feasible, what is appropriate, and what is actually done in the use of communicative language. In the same vein, sociolinguistic competence, according to Swain (1985, p. 188),

> *addresses the extent to which utterances are produced and understood appropriately in different sociolinguistic contexts, depending on contextual factors such as topic, status of participants, and purposes of the interactions. Appropriateness of utterances refers to both appropriateness of meaning and appropriateness of form.*

1.3.5 Strategic competence

Brown (1994, p. 228) defines strategic competence as "*the way learners manipulate language in order to meet communicative goals*". Canale and Swain (1980, p. 30) say that "*strategic competence is verbal and non-verbal communication strategies that may be called into action to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to performance variables or to insufficient competence*". Canale (1983, p. 339) later extended the definition of strategic competence to mean, "… *(a) to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to insufficient competence or to performance limitations and (b) to enhance the rhetorical effect of utterances*".

In this sense, strategic competence is the ability of a speaker to use gestures, facial expressions, synonyms or antonyms, definitions, etc. in order to keep the channels of communication open. It consists in using communication strategies. It means also knowing how to recognize and repair communication breakdowns, how to work around gaps in one's knowledge of the language, such as a smile as a substitute for a faulty or unknown intonation contour for example. Shumin (2002, p. 208) notes that

With reference to speaking, strategic competence refers to the ability to know when and how to take the floor, how to keep a conversation going, how to terminate the conversation, and how to clear up communication breakdown as well as comprehension problems.

The figure below summarises the competences that build speaking proficiency.

Grammatical Competence

Pragmatic Competence

Speaking Proficiency

Strategic Competence

Discourse Competence

Sociolinguistic Competence
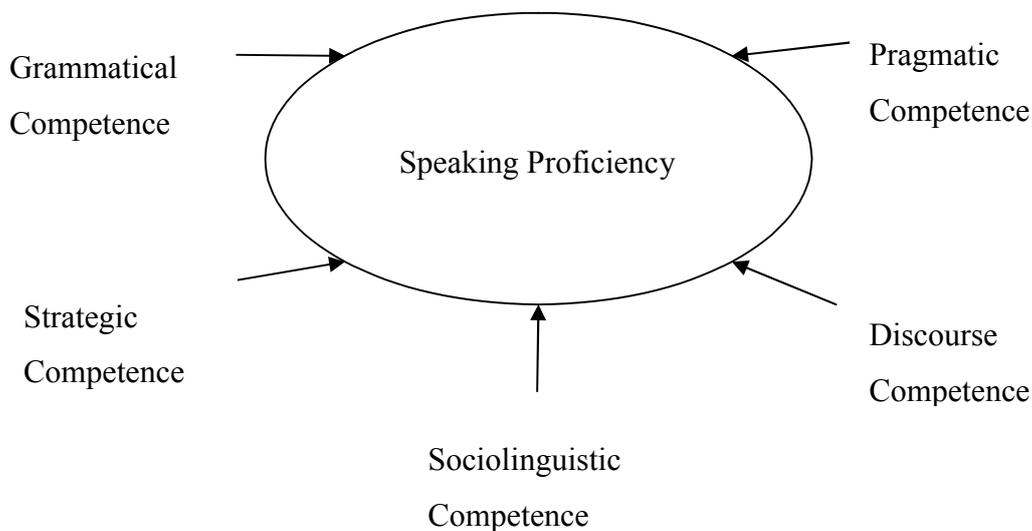
Figure 1.5: The components of speaking proficiency

In the above section, we have tried to define effective speaking and the competences necessary to speak effectively. The following section will deal with the teaching of speaking.

1.4. Teaching speaking

We have tried to define speaking skills, which has been a thorny task to go through. The nature of speaking is extremely complex and multifaceted. When it comes to teaching speaking, it is pivotal to decide upon two aspects: the first one is linked to the speaking skills to target and develop in our learners, and the second one has to do with the teaching strategies to meet those skills. The first aspect has been discussed in the previous section.

Chapter One: The Speaking Skills in the EFL Context

In this section we will try to discuss some methods and strategies that have been used to teach speaking. We also find it necessary to shed some light on the appropriacy of planning speaking activities for an English class.

We need to clarify what is meant by teaching speaking skills and how practitioners realise it in the classroom context. Since speaking skills are meant to help people communicate orally, teaching speaking should follow and adapt appropriate strategies to achieve such aims. In other words, teachers ought to train learners in such a way as to help them improve on their speaking ability and make themselves easily understood, without laying a burden on their interlocutors.

Consequently, learners should be instructed formally in speaking so that the speaking skills will be learned and practised. One should make an important pedagogic distinction between teaching the spoken form of the language and teaching a language through speaking (Hughes, 2011). We can assume that they are interrelated. Yet, one wonders whether teachers are aware of this distinction and how it impacts their teaching of speaking.

One answer is based on the premise that speaking is transient. Much of the material written for teaching speaking draws more on the written form of language than the spoken one. Teachers can feel more comfortable dealing with written language through speaking because the former is characterised by more stability and control.

Baker and Westrup (2003) criticise some practices where speaking classes are based on repeating sentences or dialogues, or chanting some English words. They insist on the fact that teachers should help learners "*construct and say their own responses. In real life, we do not repeat what others say, we make our own sentences and dialogues*" (p. 7). This view of speaking is supported by Bygate (1987, p. 3) asserting that,

> *We do not know merely how to assemble sentences in the abstract:*
> *we have to produce them and adapt them to the circumstances.*
> *This means making decisions rapidly, implementing smoothly, and*
> *adjusting our conversation as unexpected problems appear in our*
> *path.*

In order to cover the teaching of speaking, we shall deal with direct and indirect approaches, methods and approaches in the treatment of speaking, types of classroom speaking activities, teaching communication strategies, and classroom speaking practice.

1.4.1 Direct approach vs. Indirect approach

Another pedagogic issue is linked to the assumption that learners' speaking skills can be developed simply by involving them in discussion about general topics or talk about certain subjects (Shumin, 2002). Such approach can be described as an indirect way to teaching speaking.

The idea underpinning the indirect approach is based on the principle developed by some Second Language Acquisition theorists (Anderson, 1983; Krashen, 1982; Krashen, 1985). Individuals can unconsciously acquire language as long as they are exposed to comprehensible input. Learners will, therefore, become orally competent incidentally simply by being engaged in communicative tasks. In other words, teachers are supposed to create favourable conditions for oral interactions, and then, speaking proficiency will be developed through exposure and practice. Schmidt (1991) states that the indirect approach involves, on the one hand, planning and managing life-like communicative situations in the classroom setting and, on the other hand, leading learners to develop communicative skills by seeking situational meaning.

The direct approach, however, treats teaching speaking skills following different pedagogic principles. Celce-Murcia et al. (1997) compares the direct approach to the traditional methods of teaching grammar "*whereby new linguistic information is passed on and practised explicitly. Language classes following this approach adapt various features of direct grammar instruction to the teaching of conversational skills*" (p. 141). Advocates of the direct approach are in favour of targeting specific features of oral interaction and speaking proficiency and design a course around these skills. One main characteristic of the direct approach is that it stresses the development of learners' awareness of communication strategies.

Whether it be approached directly or indirectly, it is necessary to have learners actually speak. Nation (2011, pp. 445-446) encourages the implementation of learning through pushed speaking output. The point is to encourage learners to produce oral language around topics and areas away from their zone of comfort. They should be put in situations that are unfamiliar to them.

Besides, some theorists welcome an approach that merges the direct approach with the indirect approach. This approach can "[bridge] *the gap between current research on aspects of communicative competence and actual communicative classroom practice, this approach has the potential to synthesize direct, knowledge-oriented and indirect, skill-oriented teaching approaches*" (Celce-Murcia et al. 1997, p. 148). This mixture of the two approaches can be appropriate to teaching speaking.

There is also agreement on the fact that speaking skills should be taught explicitly through consciousness raising activities (Hedge, 2000; Dorney and Thurrell, 1994; McCarthy, 2004).

1.4.2 Methods and approaches in the treatment of speaking

When we examine ELT methodologies and how they have treated the oral aspects of language, we realise that it ranges from complete neglect (Grammar Translation Method) to central consideration of speaking skills (Communicative Language Teaching).

1.4.2.1 The Grammar Translation Method

The Grammar Translation Method was used in foreign language teaching from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century. As its name implies, it relies chiefly on improving learners' mastery of grammatical rules, the translation of lists of vocabulary and literary texts, and the use of the mother tongue as a medium of instruction. According to Richards and Rogers (2001), the main characteristics of the GTM are (1) to study the literature of language in order to transfer its "*mental discipline and intellectual development*"; (2) to focus on reading and writing and neglect listening and speaking; (3) to study lists of vocabulary determined by texts under study with translation as the main technique; (4) to lay emphasis on sentence translation into and from the target language

since the sentence is the core element; (5) to focus on accuracy; (6) to teach grammar deductively; and (7) to use the learners' mother tongue as a medium of instruction.

It is worth noting that the main goal of GTM is to train learners to read literature of a given culture wherein reading and writing are the focus of the teaching practices. It shows little interest in communication activities, and it neglects the spoken aspects of language including pronunciation. Brown (1994) supports this idea and states that GTM "*does not virtually enhance a student's communicative ability in the language*" (p. 19). Similarly, Bailey (2005) criticizes the treatment of speaking by the GTM saying that "[t]*he Grammar Translation Method does not really prepare students to speak English, so it is not entirely appropriate for students who want to improve their speaking skills*" (p. 16). For Hammerly (1991, p. 1), the GTM helps learners develop "*an intellectual understanding of language structure and maybe the ability to read, but instead of gaining oral fluency they suffered from what could be described as language mutism*".

1.4.2.2 The Direct Method

As a reaction to the Grammar Translation Method, the Direct Method came with a shifting focus from written text to everyday language. It is based on the assumption that second language learning is similar to first language acquisition. This is why learners are immersed in conditions where the medium of instruction is the target language, in our case English.

Richards and Rogers (1986) highlight the position gained by the oral aspects of the language with the Direct Method. New language points are introduced orally. There is noticeable emphasis on listening, speaking and correct pronunciation. The language is taught through demonstration and conversation in context. Learners, therefore, acquire fluency in speech. They become more proficient at understanding spoken English. The preeminent status given to speech by the Direct Method can make it more attractive to learners who aim for oral communication in the target language.

1.4.2.3 Audiolingualism

The development of the Audiolingual method draws on some facets of the Direct Method. It is an oral-based approach where oral-aural skills are given much importance in the teaching-learning process. The main aspects that helped shape audiolingualism to language teaching are based on direct, oral, situational and structural approaches as a theory of language and behaviourism as a theory of learning (Larsen-Freeman, 2000; Richards and Rogers, 2001). That is why in the Audiolingual Method, *"speaking is taught by having students repeat sentences and recite memorised dialogues from the textbook. Repetition drills - a hallmark of the Audiolingual Method - are designed to familiarise students with the sounds and structural patterns of the language"* (Bailey, 2005, p. 17).

The behaviourist theory, in this sense, encourages teachers to develop good speaking habits in their learners. Speaking correctly is emphasised and mistakes are treated quickly to avoid fossilised inaccurate speaking habits. Bailey (ibid.) states that *"intense repetition and practice are used to establish good speaking habits to the point that they* [learners] *are fluent and automatic"*.

Audiolingualism has shown shortcomings in promoting real oral communication. Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983, p. 7) summarise the reasons behind this failure saying that

> *Learners parroted incomprehensible material, reading was deferred, the study of grammar was banned in many school systems, and pattern practice drills were the main activities of the lesson. And since students were being taught to parrot patterns they often became good at it – without communication and without interaction. In fact learners were often prevented from saying what they wanted to say because that was against the "rules" of the theory.*

1.4.2.4 Communicative Language Teaching

Meeting communicative goals has become of paramount importance. Such objectives contributed to a shift in the field of language teaching reconsidering language theories and

learning theories. Viewing language as a means of communication has led teachers, material developers and curriculum designers to move from a linguistic structured-centred approach to a communicative approach.

Communicative Language Teaching arose to meet such communicative objectives and develop communicative competence in language learners. Larsen-Freeman (2000, p. 121) states that the aim of CLT is "*to apply the theoretical perspective of the Communicative Approach by making communicative competence the goal of language teaching and by acknowledging the interdependence of language and communication*". Brown (2001, p. 43) summarises CLT under six characteristics:

1. Classroom goals are focused on all of the components (grammatical, discourse, functional, sociolinguistic, and strategic) of communicative competence. Goals therefore must intertwine the organisational aspects of language with the pragmatic.

2. Language techniques are designed to engage learners in the pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes. Organisational language forms are not the central focus, but rather aspects of language that enable the learner to accomplish those purposes.

3. Fluency and accuracy are seen as complementary principles underlying communicative techniques. At times fluency may have to take on more importance than accuracy in order to keep learners meaningfully engaged in language use.

4. Students in communicative class ultimately have to use the language, productively and receptively, in unrehearsed contexts outside the classroom. Classroom tasks must therefore equip students with the skills necessary for communication in those contexts.

5. Students are given opportunities to focus on their own learning process through an understanding of their own styles of learning and through the development of appropriate strategies for autonomous learning.

6. The role of the teacher is that of facilitator and guide, not an all-knowing bestower of knowledge. Students are therefore encouraged to construct meaning through genuine interaction with others.

It is noteworthy that speaking has gained a special status in CLT. It is treated in an integrated approach with the other skills. Communicative Language Teaching gives room to many peer-to-peer, guided, and free speaking activities which are organised around notional, functional, and/or linguistic considerations. Participants in oral communication are encouraged to make themselves understood using some communication strategies. The pivotal consideration is to achieve intelligibility privileging fluency over accuracy.

1.4.2.5 Competency Based Language Teaching

One issue that has always been present in the field of teaching is to decide what characterises successful learning. Does it have to do with how much one knows about a language or what they can do with it? Competency based education and its application to language teaching, namely Competency Based Language Teaching emerged to address "*what the learners are expected to do with the language*" (Richards and Rogers, 2001, p. 141). Nunan (2004) defines competency-based education as "*one of a number of approaches to instruction in which the curriculum is couched in terms of sets of learner performance*" (p. 213). Competency Based Language Teaching is therefore outcome-based and takes into consideration learners' needs, levels of ability and interests. It is based on a functional and interactional view of language theory and a social constructivist and behaviourist approaches to learning theory.

Auerbach (1986 cited in Richards, 2006, pp. 42-43) identifies eight features involved in the implementation of CBLT programs in language teaching:

1. A focus on successful functioning in society.

2. A focus on life skills. Rather than teaching language in isolation, CBLT teaches language as a function of communication about concrete tasks.

3. Task- or performance- oriented instruction.

4. Modularized instruction. Language learning is broken down into meaningful chunks.

5. Outcomes are made explicit.

6. Continuous and ongoing assessment.

7. Demonstrated mastery of performance objectives. Rather than the traditional paper-and-pencil tests, assessment is based on the ability to demonstrate pre-specified behaviors.

8. Individualized, student-centered instruction. In content, level, and pace, objectives are defined in terms of individual needs; prior learning and achievement are taken into account in developing curricula.

It is pivotal to highlight that CBLT draws on the notion of communicative competence and aims at enhancing functional communication skills in language learners. Several practitioners share the view that describes CBLT as a revisited version of CLT. CBLT in this sense seeks to help learners improve on the oral skills they require in order to be ready and face situations they commonly encounter in everyday life. Learners are trained in listening and speaking, including different features of pronunciation.

Having dealt with approaches and methods for the treatment of speaking, we shall cover five types of classroom speaking performance in the following section.

1.4.3 Types of classroom speaking performance

It can be very informative to identify the types of oral communication activities that are implemented in the classroom context. A number of elements can lead a teacher to opt for one type of speaking or another. Such elements can be bound to the learners' linguistic competence, their age, and the physical arrangement of the classroom.

Several methodologists (Brown, 2001; Hedge, 2000; Nunan, 2003) have given a clear picture of the types of speaking performance and speaking tasks that may take place within the classroom context. Five types have been identified in the literature, namely imitative, intensive, responsive, interactive, and extensive.

1.4.3.1 Imitative

The learners, in this sense, are more like parrots. They are involved in speaking tasks based on repetition. They are encouraged to reproduce some language items for the purpose of improving certain aspects such as some segmental or suprasegmental features of pronunciation. Brown (2001, p. 271) stresses this characteristic of imitative speaking which "*is carried out not for the purpose of meaningful interaction, but for focusing on some particular element of language form*". Learners involved in imitative speaking tasks can be doing minimal pair repetition, word/phrase repetition and/or sentence repetition.

It is clear that this type of performance is based on drilling. The point is to decide to what extent drilling can lead to genuine communication. Several practitioners agree to say that drilling is a necessary evil. The teacher in this case will be expected to include graded activities so that learners move from guided to semi-guided and then free production of language whose raison d'être is genuine communication and not conformity with the pattern taught there and then.

1.4.3.2 Intensive

Intensive speaking covers tasks in which learners are required to produce stretches of oral language designed to practise specific aspects of language. According to Brown (ibid.), this type of speaking performance is meant "*to practice some phonological or grammatical aspect of language*". Hence, learners are encouraged to practise the new

teaching point under the teacher's control so that the answers are fixed and mastery is gained and reinforced. Intensive speaking can also mean that learners can initiate the speaking inside or outside the classroom context and in pair work or group work. Examples of activities emphasizing the intensive aspect of speaking can be

- directed response tasks,

- read aloud tasks,

- sentence/dialogue completion tasks, and

- dialogue completion tasks.

1.4.3.3 Responsive

This type of classroom speaking performance describes situations in which the learner responds to different types of prompts in short limited form of language. Brown (2001) stresses the fact that *"these replies are usually sufficient and do not exceed into dialogues…such speech can be meaningful and authentic"*. The responsive type of speaking can be realized when spoken performance takes the form of small talk, standard greetings, simple requests and comments. The tasks in this case can include

- picture description and elicitation of directions,

- question and answer,

- elicitation for instructions, and

- paraphrasing.

1.4.3.4 Interactive

Interactive speaking can be described as an extended form of responsive speaking. Spoken exchanges are longer and more complex. Brown (ibid.) highlights the negotiative nature of this type of oral performance. Interaction can be associated to (a) the transactional form of language, with the purpose of exchanging specific information or (b)

the interpersonal form of language, with the purpose of maintaining social relationships. Interactive speaking tasks can take the form of

- role plays,

- interviews,

- discussions and conversations, and

- games.

Brown (2001) stresses the complicated and tricky aspect of interactive speaking which is due to some factors such as: a casual register, colloquial language, emotionally charged language, slang, ellipsis, and sarcasm. He gives an interesting example of a dialogue to illustrate this level of difficulty.

Amy: Hi, Bob, how's it going?

Bob: Oh, so-so.

Amy: Not a great weekend, huh?

Bob: Well, far be it from to criticize, but I'm pretty miffed about last weekend.

Amy: What are you talking about?

Bob: I think you know perfectly well what I'm talking about.

Amy: Oh, that…How come you get so bent out of shape over something like that?

Bob: Well, whose fault was it, huh?

Amy: Oh, wow, this is great. Wonderful. Back to square one. For crying out loud, Bob, I thought we'd settled this before. Well, what more can I say? (p. 274)

This dialogue can be challenging for learners if they are not familiar with the aforementioned factors. Learners need to be informed about the type of relationship between the interlocutors. They should also be proficient in decoding the casual style and sarcastic form of such a dialogue.

1.4.3.5 Extensive

The last type of classroom speaking is meant to describe performance wherein learners are to speak for a longer period of time producing longer stretches of language. Learners face their audience to deliver a speech in a formal and careful way. It can, in some cases, take the form of an informal register. We should note that listeners are left with little or no room for interaction. Extensive speaking can be compared to monologues which can either be planned or ad-libbed. The tasks that can be used in this type of speaking are but not limited to

- oral presentations,

- storytelling,

- retelling a story/news/ event, and

- reporting information.

In the previous section, we have covered types of classroom speaking practice. We shall deal with teaching communication strategies for successful speaking in the following section.

1.4.4 Teaching communication strategies for successful speaking

For many EFL learners, language structures may not be automated, which may result in having learners struggle to think about what to say and how to say it. Consequently, learners have recourse to their working memory to recall and retrieve the necessary structures (grammatical, phonological, etc.) to express their thoughts with correct utterances.

Such an action may not take place smoothly because learners have not developed the necessary mechanism to compensate for this deficiency. The process of retrieving vocabulary and grammatical knowledge from the long-term memory and keep it in the short-term memory long enough to refine them and produce correct sentences is particularly demanding in real time speech where there is little time for planning.

One of the remedies can be to teach students some strategies to help them optimise their communicative potential. Faucette (2001, p. 1) defines communicative strategies as "[t]he ways in which an individual speaker manages to compensate for this gap between what she wishes to communicate and her immediately available linguistic resources". There seems, however, that researchers are divided over the constituent elements to be considered in the communication strategies. In this sense, Natakani and Goh (2007, p. 207) note:

> [i]n the last three decades, interests in CSs has engenders scholarly discussion and studies that address issues related to CSs description, use, and teachability. There is, however, little agreement about what CSs really are, their transferability from L1 to L2, and whether they can be learnt in the classroom.

Pawlak (2015, p. 123) identifies four main approaches to the conceptualisation of communication strategies:

> 1. The traditional view, in which CSs are viewed as verbal and non-verbal devices that can be drawn upon to compensate for insufficient knowledge of the target language system;

> 2. The interactional view, according to which CSs can be employed to deal with difficulties involved not only in production but also comprehension, thus including as well what is referred to in the literature as negotiation of meaning;

> 3. The extended view, [according to which] CSs include problem-solving devices which are related to inadequate TL proficiency,

difficulties in one's own output production, mechanisms used for negotiation of meaning when comprehension problems arise, and strategies employed to gain processing time and lessen the pressure on the interlocutor;

4. The cognitive view, which focuses on psycholinguistic process underlying the use of CSs.

An important number of scholars (Canale and Swain, 1980; Faucette, 2001; Scattergood, 2003) links communication strategies to strategic competence claiming that the former plays an important role in the development of the latter. Hence, many researchers (Bialystok, 1990; Dörnyei, 1995; Dörnyei and Thurrel, 1991; Littlemore, 2001; Oxford, 2001; Tarone, 1984) stress the positive impact of communication strategies in teaching and learning a foreign language, namely achievement, reduction, and avoidance strategies.

Interactional perspectives and psycholinguistic perspectives are two major approaches [1]to communication strategies considered in research (Dörnyei and Scott, 2007; Ellis, 2008; Nakatani and Goh, 2007; Nakatani, 2010). Nakatani and Goh (2007, p. 207) explain that the

> interactional view focuses on the way learners use strategies during interaction that could help to improve negotiation of meaning and the overall effectiveness of their message. The psycholinguistic view addresses mental processes that underlie learners' language behaviour when dealing with lexical and discourse problems.

Understanding these strategies can enlighten EFL pedagogy. Embracing such views entails not only considering communication strategies as problem-solving devices but also as techniques used in order to make communication more effective (Pawlak, 2015).

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[1] We have included two tables under Appendices 1a and 1b. They are adapted from Dörnyei and Scott (2007) as an inventory of the main communication strategies and strategic language devices identified in the literatures.

Practitioners should have a positive view of the communication strategies and encourage and train learners in using them in order to overcome linguistic obstacles in English. Learners' speaking confidence will thus be boosted, which is bound to impact their speaking skills enhancement significantly.

In the following section, we shall tackle classroom practice and discuss how else it could be oriented.

1.4.5 Classroom speaking practice

The success of teaching speaking skills depends greatly on the types of activities dealt with in the classroom setting. Practitioners should therefore question whether their input provides examples of communication strategies (discussed in Section 1.4.4), whether the activities generate practice, and whether learners get the chance to practise within carefully selected activities (Hedge, 2000, p. 273). Hence, we try and improve learners' speaking competence by designing and implementing communicative activities that are both fluency-based and accuracy-based. In the following two sub-sections, we will discuss these two types of practice. We will start with accuracy-based practice.

1.4.5.1 Accuracy-based practice

Accuracy refers to how correctly learners use a language in the productive skills, speaking and writing. As for our concern, speaking English accurately implies making very few mistakes. In this sense, EFL learners are expected to produce clear spoken English free of or with few grammar mistakes and use correct pronunciation (segments and suprasegments). The language used should be appropriate and suit situation and context.

Larsen-Freeman (2003) describes accuracy-based activities as a way of pushing learners to practice a particular area of language. Learners are, hence, meant to produce spoken language through controlled activities. These activities can be designed to have learners practise particular grammar structures or phonological features of English. One of the tenets of this methodology to teaching speaking is based on the repetition of newly introduced forms and grammatical structures.

Hedge (2000) advocates an approach that makes accuracy-based practice meaningful. For activities to fit such an approach, Hedge (ibid.) suggests the consideration of four requirements:

- contextualised practice,

- personalising language,

- building awareness of the social use of language, and

- building confidence.

The same four elements above may be applicable to improving pronunciation accuracy since the aim is the adequate use of the target-language pronunciation features. Learners are to be trained in using the adequate pronunciation for a given purpose. That feature is developed in Chapter Three when we will deal with the top-down and the bottom-up approaches to teaching pronunciation. In this section, however, it suffices to note the importance of introducing EFL learners to natural, authentic and correct spoken English with its pronunciation characteristics from an early stage.

1.4.5.2 Fluency-based practice

According to Hedge (2000), the term fluency has two meanings. The first is related to the speakers' ability to relate units of spoken language together easily without cumbersome repetitions, pauses, hesitations or an inadequate rate of delivery. The second meaning is a more holistic definition of fluency which describes the natural language use occurring when speaking activities focus on meaning and its negotiation, when speaking strategies are used, and when over correction is minimized. Faerch, Haastrup, and Phillipson (1984, p. 143) list three types of fluency:

- *semantic fluency: linking together propositions and speech acts*

- *lexical-syntactic fluency: linking together syntactic constituents and words*

- *articulatory fluency: linking together speech segments*

ELT research has addressed the importance of implementing fluency-based activities. Goh and Burns (2012, p. 140) state that "[f]*luency should be the target of beginning learners and should continue to be the target as learners move towards more advanced stages in their language acquisition*". ELT practitioners may set fluency as an objective for oral-aural classes from early stages. The point is to expose learners and get them used to listening and to producing authentic natural English. Fluency activities can serve as a training opportunity for learners to take part in communication situations. Pawlak (2014, p. 92) explains that

> *the rationale behind the use of fluency-oriented tasks is to provide learners with opportunities to engage in message conveyance, which can be aimed at enabling them to gain greater control of and automize the knowledge of preselected features or simply to participate in unfettered communication in the TL without clear focus on a specific aspect of the code.*

It is noteworthy that producing a fluent speaker is the dream of EFL teachers worth their salt. That is why the implementation of a variety of activities consistent with this purpose is pivotal. Hedge (2000) advocates the use of three types of activities that are adequate for fluency-oriented practice: free discussion, role-play, and 'gap' activities. In the same line of thought, Richards and Burns (2012, p. 6) posit that

> *[f]luency became a goal for speaking courses, and this can be developed through the use of information-gap and other tasks that involve negotiation, interaction, feedback, and the use of communication strategies that require learners to attempt real communication despite limited proficiency in English.*

1.4.5.3 Balancing fluency and accuracy

Diverging views have been identified amongst language teachers and practitioners. One view supports the enhancement of fluency-oriented practice. From this viewpoint, small grammatical or pronunciation errors can be ignored since mutual intelligibility has been achieved. Moreover, attempts to correct those errors can be found to be

counterproductive wherein learners may feel inhibited and choose not to speak. The other view encourages accuracy by targeting grammatical and pronunciation correctness. Such an approach is geared by the assumption that language learning is optimised when learners are trained on the correct form of language from early stage and will, hence, avoid the fossilisation of errors.

In reality, accuracy and fluency are both important. It is desirable to target a balanced approach that promotes at the same time fluency-based and accuracy-based practice. Hadfield (2014) encourages the use of activities that provide density of practice and that include accuracy- as well as fluency- based activities. Such objectives can be achieved with, for example, the presentation, guided and free practice, production procedure. The practice phase may include accuracy-based practice and fluency-based practice may be devised for the production phase. We may also have the same activity that targets both fluency and accuracy. Brown (2001, p. 269) explains that

> *The fluency/accuracy issue often boils down to the extent to which our techniques should be message oriented (or, as some call it, teaching language use) as opposed to language oriented (also known as teaching language usage). Current approaches to language teaching lean strongly toward message orientation with language usage offering a supporting role.*

1.5 Conclusion

Speaking skills are indeed amongst the most important skills to develop in any language training curriculum. Speaking represents a challenge to many learners to acquire and teachers to teach. One of the aims of a speaking course can be related to getting learners engaged in successful speaking.

It is important to note that defining speaking is not an easy task. It is more than just combining grammatical structures and lexical items together and then pronouncing them. Speaking is a complex active process that involves a range of skills put together to achieve some functions in real time and more often than not in an unplanned manner. Our definition of speaking and the skills that compose it assumes that understanding the nature

of speaking together with its characteristics and functions helps inform practical classroom applications.

Chapter One has been designed to present the speaking skills. Chapter Two addresses the listening skills.

2.1 Introduction

Effective listening is undeniably one of the most important skills to have for successful communication. Personal and professional interactions require interlocutors to be competent listeners. Poor listening skills may result in communication breakdown. Moreover, language learners need listening to improve on different aspects of learning. They have to listen effectively in order to process the variety of content they are exposed to in classroom settings. More particularly, EFL learners' success depends greatly on how effective their listening skills are. Listening is precursor to speaking, which means EFL students' listening skills will impact their speaking and pronunciation skills.

Listening is the central theme discussed in this chapter. We shall examine issues related to listening: its nature, process, competence, types, importance, and teaching by providing a thorough overview of relevant state-of-the-art literature. We shall provide an account of the role of listening as an element that can enhance communication and language learning. We shall also present a pedagogical model of listening skills that reflects the complexity of these skills and their instruction.

2.2 The Meaning of successful listening

The previous sections have given an account of the nature of speaking and its teaching to develop spoken language proficiency and fulfil oral communication needs. Since spoken language includes both oral and aural skills, it is necessary now to shed light on the listening skills.

2.2.1 The nature of listening

Any lay person would define speaking as the skill of understanding spoken language. This definition is true, yet it is far too simplistic. We often take listening for granted, forgetting its difficulty and challenging aspect. According to Lee & Hatesohl (1993), we spend about 45% of our waking hours listening, which makes of listening an important

skill in our everyday life. In the same line of thought, Lindsay and Knight (2006, p. 45) give a list of examples of listening situations. They are

- *what someone says during a conversation, face to face or on the telephone;*

- *announcements giving information, for example, at an airport or railway station;*

- *the weather forecast on the radio;*

- *a play on the radio;*

- *music;*

- *someone else's conversation;*

- *a lecture;*

- *professional advice, for example, at the doctor's, in the bank;*

- *instructions, for example, on how to use a photocopier or other machinery;*

- *directions; and*

- *a taped dialogue in class.*

Likewise, for Waks (2015, p. 6) an individual listens to "*obtain information, to interpret text, to learn how to do things, to sustain and improve our human relationships, to enjoy and appreciate, and to critically evaluate*". The variety of reasons leading a person to listen will probably lead them to listen in different ways. They may involve a varied array of sub-skills changing according to the context they are in. This prompts us the notion of a variety of listening types which will be discussed in Section 2.3.

Chapter Two: The Listening Skills in the EFL Context

A key notion to clarify before delving into the heart of the matter is the difference between listening and hearing. For Barkley and Staples (2012) *"hearing is the psychological process through which sound waves are collected through the ear and auditory information is transmitted to the brain.* [However] *listening is a primary conduit by which individuals acquire information"* (p. 4). To put it another way, hearing is linked to the perception and reception of sounds whereas listening is about linking sound to meaning. One example to clarify this distinction is a situation where a baby is crying. Hearing describes the phenomenon of receiving sound, the baby's cry. Listening, on the other hand, is applicable when a person links the cry to the fact that the baby is hungry or dirty. The following table summarises the main differences between listening and hearing (Kline, 1996).

Hearing	Listening
Unconscious process	Conscious process
Reception of sound (The act of perceiving and receiving sound waves or vibrations through the ear)	Assignment of meaning (The act of hearing a sound with understanding the meaning)
Passive process	Active process

Table 2.1: The main differences between hearing and listening

Consequently, listening involves hearing, seeing, comprehending and interpreting communication. This means that verbal as well as non-verbal cues are taken into consideration in the listening process. Moreover a listener has recourse to his previously acquired knowledge -schemata- to assign sound to meaning. It is like having a set of drawers; and the listener opens the particular drawer which fits this or that particular situation or event. Waks (2015) states that *"listening is something we do as active creatures bringing our energies and learning histories into each situation as we act with purpose-to achieve our ends"* (p. 6).

Since speaking represents the productive aspect of oral communication, listening is its receptive aspect. According to Helgesen (2003, p. 24), *"listening is an active, purposeful process of making sense of what we hear"*. Vandergrift and Goh (2012, p. 4)

state that listening "*...enables language learners to receive and interact with language input and facilitates the emergence of other language skills*".

The bulk of literature unanimously describes listening as a process involving a set of sub-skills or operations from the moment a speaker receives sound until the time they respond. Petress (1999) describes listening as an active cognitive process. Similarly, Brown (2001) states that listening is "*an interactive process*" (p. 250). Hirsch (1986) views listening as a neurological response and interpretation of sound that include understanding and assigning meaning.

Not only is speaking considered a complex cognitive skill (Rost, 2005; Vandergift, 2010; Vandergrift, 2011), the notion of difficulty is also accrued due to its ephemeral and implicit nature (Graham, 2006). In this sense, listening is a multi-dimensional phenomenon involving a cognitive nature and a social nature. The listener tries to deal with a varying set of competences ranging from processing, interpreting and evaluating the message they receive to managing interaction with their interlocutors and the context they are in. Buck (2001 cited in Vandergrift, 2011, p. 456) defines this process saying that listening is

> *an active process of meaning construction in which listeners, based on their purpose for listening, attend to and process aural and relevant visual input, automatically in real time, in order to understand what is unequivocally stated and to make all necessary inferences implied in the input.*

The notion of process in listening is discussed further in the following section.

2.2.2 The Listening process

Based on the discussion above, it should be clear that listening is an interactive process. The conceptualization of this process can be seen both as a covert cognitive behaviour and as an overt behaviour. This process has been described by several scholars. Some of the models suggested are discussed below.

2.2.2.1 Brown's model

Brown (2001, pp. 249-250) lists a set of eight processes that take place when an individual is listening to a spoken text or message.

1. The hearer processes what we'll call "raw speech" and holds an "image" of it in short-term memory.

2. The hearer determines the type of speech event being processed [...] and then appropriately "colors" the interpretation of the perceived message.

3. The hearer infers the objectives of the speaker through consideration of the type of speech event, the context and the content.

4. The hearer recalls background information relevant to the particular context and subject matter.

5. The hearer assigns a literal meaning to the utterance.

6. The hearer assigns an intended meaning to the utterance.

7. The hearer determines whether the information should be retained in short-term or long-term memory

8. The hearer deletes the form in which the message was originally received.

Except for the first and the last phases, the others take place almost simultaneously. The reception of sounds triggers the process. The listener should be able to identify the type of register to decide what type of message they are dealing with. Then the function and the purpose of the speech are identified. The speaker will draw on a set of schemata so that they can interpret the message. This is based on lifetime experiences and knowledge. After meaning is assigned to the spoken text, the listener decides whether to keep this information or delete it.

On the Relationship Between Teaching Pronunciation and Teaching Speaking: From Technicality to Fluency

2.2.2.2 Rost's model

In a more simplified way and yet comprehensive description of the process of listening, Rost (2005) gives an account of three basic processing phases: decoding, comprehension, and interpretation which take place in a simultaneous and parallel manner.

The first phase, decoding can be compared to the two first phases in Brown's model. The listener perceives speech and tries to translate those sounds into images that represent the words and their grammatical functions. Not only does recognition of words allow identification of phonological and lexical properties of the word, it also provides "*proactive processing, indicating syntactic and semantic constraints that are used to recognize the immediately following word*" (ibid., p. 507).

The second phase, comprehension, shows another similarity with Brown's model wherein the listener draws on prior knowledge. The relevant schemata are activated and logical inference is involved to comprehend speech. The listener tries to identify salient information through a constructive process that takes place in their short-term or long-term memory. The process of comprehending takes place in an ongoing cycle because the listener has to update references to follow the speaker.

The last phase, interpretation, describes the action of using the information collected to draw conclusions. It is a phase in which the listener opts for a meaning supposedly in relevance with the topic, the setting, the event, and the purpose. This meaning is compared with prior expectations to evaluate discourse meanings. Interpretation determines the listener's response which is part of the listening process.

Interpretation   Decoding

Comprehension
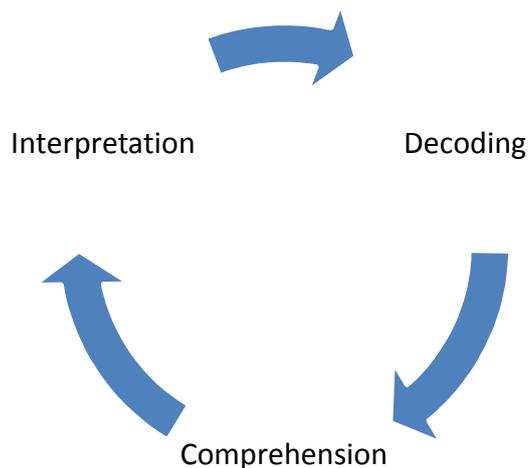
Figure 2.1: Rost's model of the listening process

2.2.2.3 Nunan's model

The third model for the listening process comprises six stages. According to Nunan (1989, pp. 23-25), these stages occur in sequence and rapid succession. They are listed as follows: hearing, attending, understanding, remembering, evaluating and responding.

Hearing is a stage that describes the reception of sound waves by the ear. Hearing, here, paves the way to listening. The brain focuses on these sounds which represent aural stimuli. The fact of processing these stimuli and deciding which is of relevance to get meaning is part of the second phase: attending. The third stage is understanding. It is all about assigning meaning to what the listener heard and perceived. As in the aforementioned models, to achieve such a purpose, the listener draws on previously acquired knowledge and experience. The main objective of this phase is to get an accurate understanding of the intended meaning. After having identified the message and meaning of the speech, the next phase is to decide whether to keep the information. Remembering has to do with storing information in the short-term or long-term memory. We should note that the meaning of the message is stored but not its form. Then, the penultimate phase is evaluating. The listener, in this step, uses some critical principles and active listening skills to weigh the value of the interpreted spoken text. The listener decides whether it is a fact or an opinion, objective or subjective and the degree of bias. This evaluation is important

because the listeners will respond accordingly. Then comes the last phase which is responding. The listener provides verbal or non-verbal feedback. Feedback will be greatly based on the listener's understanding of the message and the direction they opt for. This feedback can have several functions. The listener can, therefore use checking, back-channelling strategies, etc.

Nunan's model of processing listening is much similar to the hierarchy established to describe the cognitive levels of learning. The listener is expected to apply some competences in an effort to process listening. The use of previously acquired knowledge and problem-solving skills to help understand speech are quite similar to the actions described in Nunan's model. Another similarity is that of evaluation whereby the listener judges the adequacy, value, logic, or use of the intended meaning. The figure below gives a visual representation of Nunan's model.
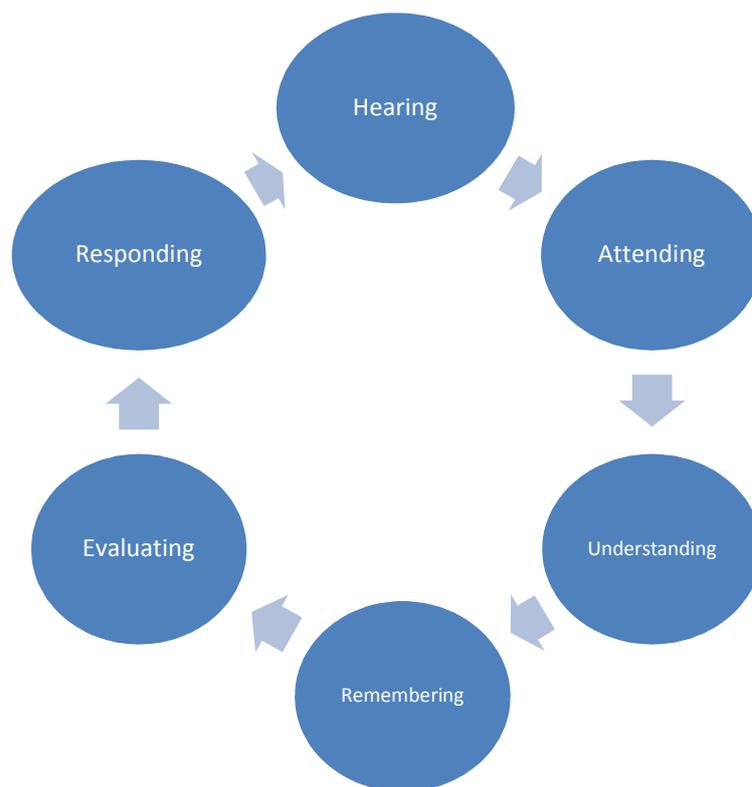
Figure 2.2: The listening process stages

2.2.2.4 Vandergrift and Goh's model

The cognitive processing, showing how listeners construct meaning, is well described by Vandergrift and Goh (2012). The discussion below will cover the concepts of a) reception, parsing, and utilisation; b) metacognition; and c) bottom-up processing and top-down processing. The figure below shows the model's constituent elements.
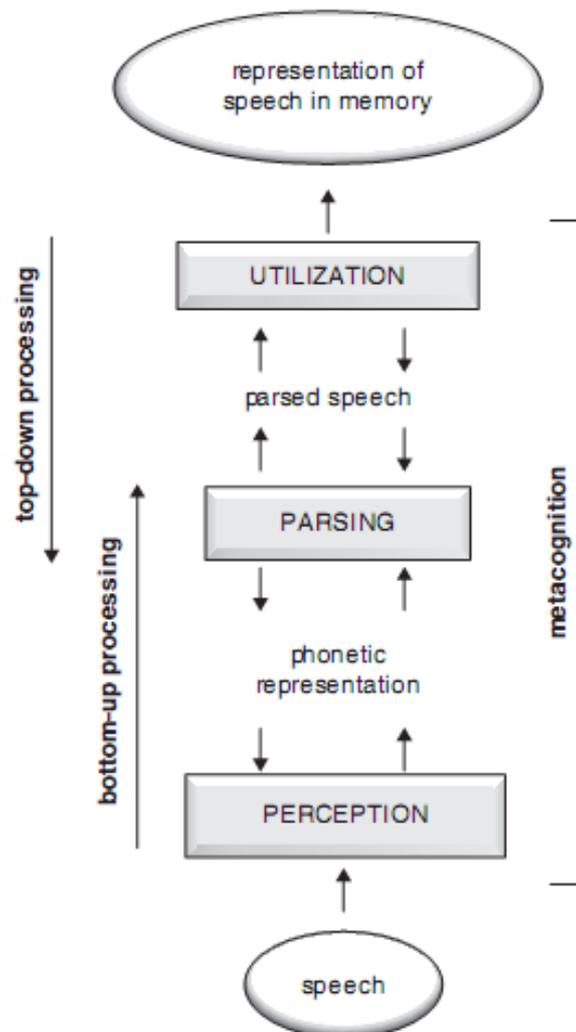
Figure 2.3: Cognitive processing in L2 Listening (Vandergrift and Goh, 2012, p. 17)

a) Reception, parsing and utilisation

This model is greatly influenced by Anderson's (1995) three-phase language comprehension model, originally based on L1. Anderson analysed the process of language

comprehension breaking it into three stages: reception, parsing, and utilisation. Anderson (2015, p. 313) defines them as follows:

> *The first stage involves the perceptual processes that encode the spoken (acoustic) or written message. The second stage is termed the parsing stage. Parsing is the process by which the words in the message are transformed into a mental representation of the combined meaning of the words. The third stage is the utilization stage, in which comprehenders use the mental representation of the sentence's meaning.*

The three phases are interconnected and have a two-way relationship with one another. The perception phase is linked to the decoding of speech. The listeners pay attention to the spoken text and segment the phonemes in that speech. It is a quite difficult task for listeners. Identifying word boundaries when exposed to spoken language requires commensurable effort, knowledge of the phonology of English, and mastery of word segmentation skills. There are features such as stress patterns, elision, assimilation, and weak forms that complicate the identification of word boundaries even further.

In the second stage, parsing, meaningful mental representations are formed from words. The listener matches the sounds retained in the memory with words. For Vandergrift and Goh (2012, p. 22), listeners "*use the parsed speech to retrieve potential word candidates from long-term memory, based on cues such as word onset, perceptual salience, or phonotactic conventions (rules that apply to the sequencing of phonemes)*".

In the last phase, utilization, information gathered in the previous two phases is related to existing knowledge in the form of schemata. Listeners weight the interpreted meaning against their previous knowledge for congruency, coherence and cohesion.

b) Metacognition

Metacognition is meant to describe the listener's ability to manage the different parts and stages of the process. Goh (2008) links it to the listener awareness of the cognitive process involved in comprehension, and the capacity to oversee, regulate, and direct these

competences. Vandergrift and Goh (2012) precise that "*the control dimension of metacognition involves use of cognitive processes such as planning, monitoring, problem-solving, and evaluating to effectively regulate listening comprehension*" (p. 23). If listeners apply metacognitive knowledge of the listening process, they will be able to manage the cognitive processes more efficiently.

c) Top-down processing vs. Bottom-up processing of listening

We can also describe the listening process in terms of top-down and bottom-up processes. These processes can be applied equally well to treat other language skills and sub-skills. This is our case in this paper where these two approaches are being tackled in this section with listening, and they will be discussed more elaborately with pronunciation in Chapter Three, Section 3.5.1.

The bottom-up process of listening is applied when listening is based on identifying the pronounced individual sounds, words or phrases. Vandergrift and Goh (2012) state that "*listeners gradually build meaning from phonemes to words to increasingly larger units of meaning (full sentences and larger chunks of discourse)*" (p. 18).

Listeners will use their knowledge of the language, including phonological, lexical, morphological and syntactic knowledge to get meaning from those linguistic units they have heard. In this case, listeners will give importance to particular details so that understanding will be achieved by grouping these details to get the whole meaning.

Conversely, the top-down process to listening is based on understanding the general meaning of speech without paying attention to a particular linguistic element, be it a sound, word, or phrase. It is more about getting the gist of the message than focusing on any specific detail. Flowerdew and Miller (2005, p. 25) posit

> [t]*his suggests that listeners rely on more than just the acoustic signal to decode a verbal message; they rely on prior contextual knowledge as well.* [In their interpretation of the utterance,] *listeners use pre-established patterns of knowledge and discourse structure stored in memory.*

When approaching listening in a top-down manner, listeners draw on their appreciation of the context and their prior knowledge to interpret the message. That is to say, listeners can use a variety of types of knowledge, including: *"prior (world or experiential) knowledge, pragmatic knowledge, cultural knowledge about the target language, and discourse knowledge (types of texts and how information is organized in these texts)"* (Vandergrift and Goh, 2012, p. 18).

There is a clear position in literature (Rumelhart, 1975 and Flowerdew and Miller, 2005; Wilson, 2008) which favours a positive attitude towards parallel processing which includes both bottom-up and top-down processes to listening. This type of processing is known as the interactive model. In the same line of thought, Vandergrift and Goh (2012, p. 19) declare

> *The degree to which listeners may use one process more than another will depend on their purpose for listening. A listener who needs to verify a specific detail such as the price of an item or driving directions, for example, may engage in more bottom-up processing than a listener who is interested in obtaining an overview of what happened at a particular event. Research on these cognitive processes suggests that L2 listeners need to learn how to use both processes to their advantage, depending on the purpose for listening, learner characteristics (e.g., language proficiency, working memory capacity, age) and the context of the listening event.*

The interactive processing of listening is a different model from the hierarchical way to process listening. One of its advantages is its flexibility and adaptability to heterogeneous classes with different learning styles and preferences. Although this model of processing listening can be interesting and practical, methodologists have not developed much framework on how exactly it can be applied to classroom context.

According to the models discussed above, we can say that the listening process can be viewed as a cycle comprising a set of phases. This cycle draws upon metacognitive,

cognitive and social strategies. First, decoding the input, which has to do with the identification of sounds from the stream of speech. Second, employing listening competence[2] to describe the skills and strategies used by the listener to process the received speech. Third, deriving meaning, which represents the phase whereby the listener interprets the message and draws conclusion, thus making sense of the received message. The penultimate phase is about checking and evaluating the interpreted meaning by comparing it to previous knowledge and experience. The last phase is responding. The listener gives feedback that can take different forms (either verbal or non-verbal).

2.2.3 Listening competence

This section aims to answer the question related to listening competence. We have to know what a listener does to comprehend speech. In order to be efficient in the listening act, the good listener draws on five sources of knowledge. They are linguistic knowledge, pragmatic knowledge, prior knowledge, discourse knowledge and kinetic knowledge.

2.2.3.1 Linguistic knowledge

Linguistic knowledge is pivotal to successful listening. Broadly speaking, linguistic knowledge describes what the listener knows about the language. We can also describe in terms of listener's use of that knowledge in real time. Vandergrift and Goh (2012) underscore three sub-elements in linguistic knowledge that are fundamental to listening comprehension: phonological knowledge, syntactic knowledge, and semantic knowledge. They state that "*application of all three elements of linguistic knowledge helps listeners assign meaning to word-level units and to the relationship between words at the discourse level*" (p.24).

2.2.3.1.1 Phonological knowledge (Processing sound)

A listener cannot process a sound they do not know. Phonological knowledge is, therefore, necessary in "*listening comprehension to be able to segment the message into its*

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[2] The concept of speaking competence will be discussed in Section 4.3

component sounds” (Flowerdew and Miller, 2005, p. 30). This skill represents a serious level of difficulty for listeners. Field (2008 cited in McDonough et al., 2013, pp. 142-143) presents an inventory of the skills necessary to the listener in order to process sound and segment speech.

- *Segment the stream of sound and recognize word boundaries.*

- *Recognize contracted forms.*

- *Recognize the vocabulary being used.*

- *Recognize sentence and clause boundaries in speech.*

- *Recognize stress patterns and speech rhythm.*

- *Recognize stress on longer words, and the effect on the rest of the word.*

- *Recognize the significance of language-related (‘paralinguistic’) features, most obviously intonation.*

- *Recognize changes in pitch, tone and speed of delivery.*

It is clear that these skills cannot be used separately; they should rather be viewed in a more holistic approach. Consequently, listeners should develop understanding and mastery of both the segmental and suprasegmetal features of English pronunciation.

2.2.3.1.2 Syntactic knowledge

Syntactic knowledge refers to knowledge of the grammar of the English language. In our case, it describes the listener’s ability to identify grammatical patterns in the words that have been decoded. Moreover, it considers how the listener uses grammatical structures to build those words together forming longer stretches of speech (phrases, clauses, and sentences). Similarly, Flowerdew and Miller (2005) posit that “*as we process incoming message, the brain applies its knowledge of syntactic rules to parse sentences and make sense of them*” (p. 35).

Syntactic processing takes place at two levels, sentence level or discourse level (Rost, 2011). The first level deals with immediate utterance, whereas the second level occurs at a larger scale dealing with the extended text. This leads us to say that listeners can anticipate and predict the grammatical functions of incoming utterances.

2.2.3.1.3 Semantic knowledge (Processing meaning)

Semantic knowledge describes the capacity of knowing the meaning of the words and the meaning of the relations between the words in the sentence. This can be applied at a larger level when describing the relations between the meanings of the individual sentences and their combination to build discourse.

An important body of literature (Bonk, 2000; Chung and Huang, 1998; Kelly, 1991; Mecartty, 2000; Johnson, 2005) agrees on the importance of vocabulary in achieving successful listening comprehension. In the same line of thought, Flowerdew and Miller (2005) explain that "*in normal sentence processing, indeed, semantic considerations tend to dominate understanding, while syntax plays a minor role in confirming any problematic semantic relations where necessary*" (p. 38).

The three elements of linguistic knowledge are closely interconnected. For example the phrase [maitrein] may cause confusion to the listener. They can either interpret it as 'my train' or 'might rain'. Phonological knowledge alone cannot help identify word boundaries. Unless such an utterance is spoken in isolation, and there is no context to indicate which one is meant by the speaker, the listener can and does use other sources of knowledge and consider the other grammatical functions of words neighbouring this phrase. It is also important to note that lexis and phonology may compensate for syntactic failure, as in e.g. "John give you many money yesterday?"

2.2.3.2 Pragmatic knowledge (Context and knowledge)

It is noteworthy that a spoken message or text can vary in meaning according to the context it is uttered in and the speaker's intention. We cannot pretend to rely on linguistic sources of knowledge alone to interpret meaning and achieve successful listening

comprehension. Here comes pragmatic knowledge which can be applied for such a purpose. Crystal (2008, p. 379) defines pragmatics as

> *the study of language from the point of view of users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effect their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication.*

The main point is that pragmatic knowledge refers to knowledge of the relationship between linguistic form and speaker's intention. The listener, in this sense, cannot rely merely on the interpretation of meaning at the sentence level. They should consider a higher level and interpret meaning within the utterance dimension in the communication act, implying that the meaning of the utterance is larger than the sum total of the words that compose it. Vandergrift and Goh (2012) state that *"listening comprehension involves far more than just understanding words. Listeners use pragmatic knowledge when they apply information that goes beyond the literal meaning of a word, message, or text to interpret the speaker's intended meaning"* (p. 24).

Pragmatic knowledge is a good tool for the listener to infer the speaker's declared or/and undeclared intentions. It thus helps to decipher the speaker's attitude by processing tone and decide whether the speech conveys sarcasm, irony, surprise, and other attitudinal functions. That is why the listener should use social knowledge and consider the cultural aspects conveyed by the language and the speaker. Listening, therefore, is not only the connection between language and the brain; it also requires activation of contextual information and prior knowledge.

2.2.3.3 Prior knowledge

Prior knowledge refers to previously acquired knowledge and past experiences that a learner has internalised before meeting new information. A listener's understanding of a spoken passage can be improved by activating their prior knowledge. Prior knowledge is conceptualised and organised in the form of schemata.

Several researchers (Chiang and Dunkel, 1992; Hadfield, 1984; Long, 1990; Macaro et al. 2005; Tsui and Fullilove, 1998; Vandergrift and Goh, 2012) stress the important role of prior knowledge in successful listening. This source of knowledge can be used as a framework to compensate for missing information as listeners are exposed to speech. For pedagogic considerations, Vandergrift and Goh, (2012, p. 67) posit

The research on prior knowledge in comprehension provides ample evidence for its crucial role in listening comprehension. Activating this vital resource is particularly important when teaching adults. Because of their life experiences, they bring to their language learning a great deal and a wide range of prior knowledge on which they can draw to facilitate comprehension. On the other hand, younger language learners, because of their more limited life experience, may need to be provided with more information during pre-listening activities.

2.2.3.4 Discourse knowledge

Discourse knowledge is closely related to pragmatic knowledge in listening comprehension. It is important for the listener to be aware of how ideas are linked together across utterances. Besides, coherence and cohesion skills can help the listener interpret meaning properly.

Discourse knowledge is important in optimising successful listening and even in compensating for linguistic knowledge failure (Goh, 2005). In other words, listeners who cannot recognise some items in a stream of sound may process other parts sufficiently to enable them to use some top-down strategies to infer or elaborate their initial interpretation (Goh, 1998).

2.2.3.5 Kinetic knowledge

Since oral communication comprises both verbal and nonverbal communication, it is judicious to consider a source of knowledge that covers nonverbal means of communication. Flowerdew and Miller (2005, p. 45) focus on *"facial expression, eye*

contact, and body movement and positioning" as the main elements involved in nonverbal communication. It is true that a smile or frown communicates quite as equally as a phrase or sentence. A listener can interpret meaning thanks to a nod of the head or a shrug of the shoulders. Rost (2005, p. 50) states

> *Some of the non-verbal information available to the listener is communicated independently of the language – before or after the language is uttered, and sometimes offered by someone other than the speaker. Because of the prevalence of visual information in most live discourse situations, and particularly with advancing use of visual media and multimedia, it is useful to consider how visual information enhances linguistic input, or distorts it, or replaces it, and sometimes even contradicts it.*

This can have pedagogic implications and influence the way practitioners design listening comprehension tasks. That is to say, learners may develop into competent listeners by being exposed to video material rather than sound only through audio material. They can develop listening skills by processing spoken discourse at two levels: verbal and nonverbal. Along the same line, Harris (2008) and Fukumura et al. (2010) encourage the use of visual signals as co-text and an integral part of the input that can be used by the listener for interpretation.

These signals can give additional information and meaning to the spoken message or text. However, a listener should be aware of the cultural dimension of those paralinguistic features of communication. A nod can convey different meaning depending on the context and the culture of that language. The listener should develop awareness of the cultural meaning of such nonverbal means of communication. The figure below gives a visual summary of the listening competence sources of knowledge.

Figure 2.4: Sources of knowledge for the listening competence

2.3 Types of listening

As pointed in Section 2.1, the act of listening is performed to achieve different purposes. Learners must of necessity be exposed to as many different types of listening as possible after making an inventory of these types.

2.3.1 Unidirectional, bidirectional listening and autodirectional listening

Depending on the context and the type of interaction, the listener can be performing two types of listening. The first type is one-way listening (unidirectional) and the other one is two-way listening (bidirectional).

In bidirectional listening, there is a reciprocal speech chain of speaker-listener. The listener, in this case plays two roles: a listener receiving and processing the message and then a speaker sending a message back to the speaker. Morley (2001) describes bidirectional listening as a mode where "*two (or more) participants take turns exchanging*

speaker role and listener role as they engage in face-to-face or telephone verbal interaction".

This type of listening is much more demanding where a lot of cognitive knowledge is invested (Lynch, 2002; Rost, 2011). Vandergrift (2004) describes the demanding aspect of bidirectional listening and says that "*to participate in a conversation, the listener must process the input in real time, clarify understanding when comprehension is uncertain, critically evaluate what is understood, and then respond*" (p. 15).

The unidirectional listening, however, involves a one-way flow of information. It represents situations where the listener is exposed to spoken language but cannot interact. Morely (2001) gives an account of the contexts where unidirectional listening occurs. She states "[a]*uditory input surrounds us as we move through the day. The input comes from a variety of sources: overheard conversations, public address announcements, recorded messages, [...] the media, [...] instructional situations of all kinds, and public performances*" (p. 73).

In autodirectional listening mode, the listener attends to their own internal language as they plan something in their mind and make decision. Morley (2001) describes this kind of listening "*as self-dialogue communication in which we may not be aware of our internal roles as both speaker and listener/reactor in our thought processes*" (p. 73). This means that we go through an internal process where we speak and listen to ourselves.

Under the heading of bidirectional, unidirectional and autodirectional listening, we can identify other types of listening. Waks (2015, pp. 6-8) lists six types of listening: informative, interpretive, practical, relational, appreciative, and critical.

2.3.1.1 Informative listening

Informative listening refers to cases where an individual listens to spoken language to obtain and understand information. It represents an important part of the individual's everyday life. It can be involved in different areas, in education, at work, and at home. For example, we listen to lectures or instructions from teachers; or in the workplace, we listen to understand new practices or procedures. Informative listening, especially in formal

settings, is often accompanied by note taking – a way of recording key information so that it can be reviewed later.

2.3.1.2 Interpretive listening

Some spoken messages and texts may comprise difficulty and complexity leading to vagueness and ambiguity. Interpretive listening, therefore, takes place when the message may imply more than one possible meaning or multiple levels of meaning. The listener, in this case, tries to use interpretive skills and disambiguate unclear meaning or disentangle multiple levels of meaning (Waks, 2015).

2.3.1.3 Practical listening

In practical listening, the aim is to understand procedures and practices in order to perform an action in the best way possible. Waks (2015) stresses the role of practical listening to optimise learning and states that improvement can be achieved "*through attitudes of docility, willingness to trust and submit to guidance and emulate others, development and attentiveness and care, and repetition of lessons through drill and practice routines*" (p. 7).

The listener is involved in a process whereby they act and listen attentively to feedback and correction. The listener's success to do the action is linked to how well they listen to the instructions.

2.3.1.4 Relational listening

The purpose of relational listening is to help sustain or improve relationships. Although we are required to listen for information in this type of listening, the focus is directed more towards understanding the other rather than understanding the message.

The listener uses the skill of empathic interactions. Combining listening and empathising may help improve relationships between the listener and the speaker. The following aspects are typical characteristics of such a type of listening:

- acknowledgement of the speaker,

- care not to interrupt,

- attention and sensitivity to the emotions expressed, and

- providing a limited but encouraging response.

2.3.1.5 Appreciative listening

In appreciative listening, the listener seeks certain information which will stimulate a feeling of enjoyment and appreciation. This can take place when an individual is listening to good music, watching a movie, or listening to poetry or a speech from some people with an appreciated style and content.

This type of listening is defined mainly by the response of the listener and less so by the spoken message itself. Listeners may react differently to the same message showing diverging levels of enjoyment. A spoken message that provides appreciation and enjoyment to one listener may lead to a completely different result with another.

2.3.1.6 Critical listening

A listener is engaged in critical listening when their goal is to come to a sound evaluation. This judgement is based on analysing the information received and weighting it against previous knowledge. The listener distinguishes facts from opinions and decides upon the value of these opinions. This form of listening requires significant real-time cognitive effort as the listener analyzes what is being said and simultaneously listens to the ongoing words from the speaker.

In critical listening, an individual processes speech critically. This means that the listener needs to identify the main ideas and their supporting arguments; how similar or different they are to the listener's belief, knowledge, or opinion; and whether to keep the information or delete it. In this sense, critical listening is pivotal to learning and listening for academic purposes.

2.3.2 Academic listening

It is undeniable that effective listening is crucial in an academic context. Learners need to improve on their listening skills in order to be able to understand people's speech in different academic situations. These situations can vary and include lectures, tutorials, presentations, seminars, etc. Developing such listening skills can help learners follow the performance and comprehend its content while coping with different delivery rates.

Littlemore (2001) draws attention on listening failure in academic contexts, especially in lectures. He describes cases of misinterpretation caused by misunderstanding on the part of L2 learners. According to him, misinterpretations are more serious than non-understanding in the sense that learners can be aware of a gap in understanding and can use clarification strategies to compensate for comprehension failure.

Listening in an academic context can, therefore, be challenging. Learners should be able to cope with varying levels of difficulty including:

- delivery speed,

- accent,

- specific vocabulary,

- long sentences,

- complex structures,

- false starts and repetitions, and

- embedded references.

2.3.3 Narrow listening

Advocated by Krashen (1996), this type of listening involves exposing learners to a large amount of listening material on the same topic so that the input becomes comprehensible. According to Macaro (2003, p. 159), "*narrow listening involves listening*

to very short texts on the same topic again and again until the listener feels he or she is confident with that topic or content". Krashen (1996, p. 97) suggests that "*narrow listening, I suppose, will be most valuable to second language acquirers who find uncontrolled casual conversation too difficult to understand*".

This approach to developing listening skills can be used in the classroom or outside the classroom context. The learner can opt for listening to English spoken material for leisure. Dupuy (1999, p. 351) posits that "*narrow listening, the repeated listening of several brief tape-recorded interviews of proficient speakers discussing a topic both familiar and interesting to the acquirers, offers them a valuable and rewarding alternative*". Learners can listen to the spoken text as many times as they wish. They can also opt for topics of their choice following their own pace.

One obstacle that may rise is the availability of recorded content of native speakers' spoken language. We believe that this obstacle can easily be overcome thanks to advances in technology. Any learners/teachers worth their salt can surf the Internet and find content to help them/ their students achieve such purposes.

2.3.4 Intensive listening

Intensive listening is applicable when we have learners listen for specific information, which involves a more detailed analysis. Rost (2011, p. 184) explains that intensive listening "*refers to listening closely – for precise sounds, words, phrases, grammatical units and pragmatic units*". We can assume that this type of listening activates bottom-up processing skills to get meaning. The learner is, therefore, required to be trained through "*techniques whose only purpose is to focus on components (like phonemes, words, intonation, discourse markers, etc.) of discourse*" (Brown, 2001, p. 255).

Rost and Candlin (2014, p. 233) identify four areas for the development of intensive listening:

> *(1) Drawing attention to language features in a text which affect interpretation of the text. This may be a phonological feature (e.g.*

segmental contrast or intonational contrast), a grammatical feature, a lexical feature, a discourse feature.

(2) Assuring that features to be focused upon are learnable by the students. (...)

(3) Providing a closed outcome in which the students select which features were displayed in the text.

(4) Allowing opportunities for student questions about the feature

In the same line of thought, Brown (2001, pp. 256-257) suggests some examples of intensive listening performance:

- *Students listen for cues in certain choral or individual drills.*

- *The teacher repeats a word or a sentence several times to "imprint in the students' mind".*

- *The teacher asks the students to listen to a sentence or a longer stretch of discourse and notice specified element, such as intonation, stress, a contraction, a grammatical structure,* etc.

We may not have recourse to this type of listening in everyday situations, but it can help develop listening strategies and build bottom-up listening skills. Beebe et al. (2015) and Hamada (2011) agree on the importance of being able to listen intensively as an essential component of listening proficiency. Intensive listening can also be used to help learners develop particular areas of pronunciation. Segmental and suprasegmental pronunciation features can be targeted through this type of listening. On the one hand learners' awareness about these features can be raised, and on the other hand, listening content can be used as model for learners to train on and reproduce.

2.3.5 Extensive listening

One way to have learners improve on their listening skills is to encourage them to engage in listening experiences beyond the classroom. For Renandya and Farrell (2011, p.

53), intensive listening comprises "*all types of listening activities that allow learners to receive a lot of comprehensible and enjoyable listening input*". Yeh (2013, p. 135) defines this type of listening as "*an individualized listening activity with large amounts of target language input of learners' interests and at their levels*". According to Rost (2011, pp. 193-194), extensive listening

> *refers to listening for an extended period of time, while focusing on meaning (...) it can also include extended periods of listening in the target language outside of classroom settings, paralleling what in reading instruction is referred to as 'reading for pleasure'.*

We can understand that this type of listening is directing learners towards getting the general meaning, or the gist, of a spoken text. Extensive listening can be associated to long-term goals. In order to achieve these goals, language learners are encouraged to delve into listening practice inside and outside the classroom for long periods of time. Such an approach to listening may help build new habits where learners can be listening to spoken English on their own for pleasure. Exposure can therefore be maximised and optimised. Vandergrift and Goh (2012, p. 212) put forward that

> [e]*xtensive listening (...) can help to develop a listening routine and instil commitment to listening practice beyond the classroom. Learners who do not have a habit of practicing their listening beyond the classroom may begin to do more of it on their own. For learners who are already attempting to improve their listening proficiency through extensive listening, the skills and thinking processes they develop (...) will help them become more effective.*

Whether extensive listening is carried out in an academic or in an autonomous learning context, learners can try to improve their processing skills at their own pace. Students can enhance automaticity in aural language processing. Extensive listening can also contribute to build confidence and foster listening enjoyment in the target language (Brown et al., 2008). Moreover, learners can indirectly improve on some pronunciation features including intonation and rhythmic aspects of the English language. For that

purpose, Vandergrift and Goh (2012) suggest a project-based approach to extensive listening. It is summarised in the table below.

Project	Description
Peer Listening Task	Learners work in pairs to design a listening lesson for the rest of the class. They select appropriate listening materials from a variety of texts and prepare some relevant listening tasks.
Facilitated Independent Listening	Learners select listening materials from a teacher-prepared resource package to practise listening individually. They meet after each phase of the project to share what they have learned about their listening, the contents and ideas in the materials, and new vocabulary.
Listening Buddies	Learners work in pairs to plan their extensive listening program by selecting materials from a wide range of text types. They also co-monitor their listening development.
Authentic Interview	Learners plan structured interviews with competent speakers in their community so that they can practice interactive listening skills and use appropriate strategies to support their learning and understanding.

Table 2.2: Projects for extensive listening (Vandergrift and Goh, 2012, p. 202)

Learners, if left on their own, may react differently to extensive listening. They can show varying degrees of interest, involvement, and achievement. An effective implementation of extensive listening relies greatly on the availability of listening input. This input has to fit learners' interests, needs and levels of ability so that they can reasonably understand something on their first listening. This is important to ensure a reasonable level of learners' sense of achievement and have them involved in this type of listening for a long period of time.

It is important to note that teachers are required to provide their learners with some assistance and guidance. Teachers should facilitate extensive listening practice by directing learners to set a plan for their listening activities, adhere to it and monitor listening material selection. Teachers can provide their learners with whatever preparation required or requested during the listening process, and they can help develop strategies to improve

skills in extensive listening. Rost (2015) suggests developing metacognitive strategies of planning, inferencing, and reviewing. They are presented in the table below.

Strategy	Description	
Planning	Definition: Developing an awareness of the steps necessary to accomplish a listening task, anticipating content that should be introduced in a pre-listening phase, coming up with an "action plan"	
	Advance organizing	Clarifying the goals of the task before listening
	Self-management	Rehearsing the steps to follow to deal with a listening task
Inferencing	Definition: Using information in the input to guess the meaning of unfamiliar language, to predict content, or to fill in missing information	
	Linguistic inferencing	Using words you know to guess meanings of unknown words or blurs of sounds
	Contextual inferencing	Consciously using knowledge of the setting and extralinguistic features to create or amplify meaning
	Speaker inferencing	Using the speaker's tone of voice, paralinguistic cues (stress, pause, intonation, repetition) or facial expressions, body language, and baton signals to guess the intended meanings
	Multimodal inferencing	Using background sounds, visual cues, supplementary text, and intuitive sense of the input to infer meaning
	Predictive inferencing	Anticipating details in a specific part of the input, or anticipating the gist of what is coming in the input
	Retrospective inferencing	Thinking back over a large chunk of input to fill in gaps and consolidate one's understanding
Reviewing	Definition: Condensing, reordering or transferring from one modality to another, of what one has processed to help understanding, memory storage, and retrieval	
	Summarisation	Making a mental or verbal summary of information presentation
	Repetition	Repeating or paraphrasing part of what was heard as part of a listening task
	Noting	Writing down key words or ideas in another form to assist in recall or performance of a task
	Mediating	Rendering ideas from the input to the listener's L1 orally or in writing

Table 2.3: Strategies to develop with extensive listening (Rost, 2016, p. 181)

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2.3.6 Autonomous listening

Rost (2011, p. 200) defines autonomous listening as "*a self-directed listening activity in which learners choose what to listen to, seek feedback on their comprehension, respond in ways they choose, and monitor their own progress*". Based on this definition, we can say that autonomous listening may include the types of listening discussed previously. This type of listening is used by learners in an independent manner where little or no room is left for the teacher. Yet, it is important to note that the teacher plays an important role in the success of such a type of listening.

This notion of autonomy requires some state of readiness on the part of the learners. In autonomous listening, learners are responsible for the selection of the listening content, how to use it, and for deciding on the criteria and indicators to be used for self-assessment. This can be a demanding task since it involves skills related to the learner. Developing autonomous learning in general and autonomous listening in particular necessitates teachers ready and willing to involve their learners in a teaching/learning environment that fosters autonomy practices. Rost and Wilson (2013, p. 17) posit that "[l]*anguage advising is now part of the expended role of the modern teacher. In addition to classroom teaching and coaching, instructors now are expected also to assist learners in finding learning paths outside the classroom*".

Autonomous listening can be helpful to language mastery enhancement, including speaking and pronunciation. This type of listening can be seen as an answer to some deficiencies since EFL classroom settings seldom offer sufficient practice for learners to improve on their listening skills. Rost and Wilson (2013, p. 17) list some implications of autonomous listening:

> *1. Autonomous listening is essential for sustained progress in listening. To maximise effectiveness, some form of teacher monitoring and assessment is necessary.*
>
> *2. Out of class listening can help learners expand their identity as L2 users. Social context listening tasks that encourage planning,*

self-discovery and reflection provide students with the challenges and benefits of real-world learning.

3. New technologies and particularly internet technologies allow for individualisation of learning resources and tasks. Various support technologies enable learners to access a range of authentic sources and communities.

4. The instructor's role in autonomous learning is active, as is the student's role. Instructor tasks include planning, advising, mentoring, providing coaching and feedback.

5. Learning strategy instruction will enhance the learners' experience with autonomous listening. In particular self-management strategies need to be promoted.

After having discussed some types of listening, we shall cover some barriers likely to hinder listening in the next section.

2.4 Barriers to listening

Obstructions to listening can be identified at different stages of the listening process. At the reception level, environmental factors can alter input. At the interpretation stage, some kind of information may be hard to link to previous experiences, which can hinder understanding. At the evaluation phase, biases and beliefs can distort the listener's understanding of the intended meaning. In this section, we will try to identify and discuss factors that can hamper effective listening.

2.4.1 Physiological

Physiological barriers are related to the limitations of the human body. Some people may suffer from genuine hearing impairment or deficiencies that prevent them from hearing and therefore listening properly. Another form of constraint is linked to the way people process information. They may have difficulties to process, save and retrieve information due to some memory related problems.

Other aspects connected to some feeling of discomfort on the part of the listener may lead to a poor listening performance. This can include different forms of pain, illness and fatigue.

2.4.2 Psychological

Some psychological factors may jeopardise the chance to listen effectively. Emotional disturbance including anxiety, anger, or frustration may cause an individual to listen poorly. People's state of mind is very important for the optimisation of listening success. Rizvi (2005, p. 66) explains that "[a]*s listening is a purposeful activity, any psychological or emotional turbulence or disturbance can prove to be a barrier to effective listening because it leads to a lack of interest and concentration*".

2.4.3 Physical

Physical barriers comprise external distractions to listeners that render the task of listening difficult. We refer here to the distractions present in the environment where listening takes place. If an individual does not feel comfortable because of noise, poor lighting, uncomfortable sitting, a room that is too hot or too cold, or a bad smell, their concentration and listening ability may be greatly affected.

2.4.4 Linguistic

The linguistic capacity of a learner to decode the spoken message affects effective listening. Jaffe (2015) emphasises the fact that linguistic barriers comprise both language and vocabulary differences between the listener and the speaker. The first aspect is related to the variety and accent the speaker uses whereas the second aspect has to do with the type of vocabulary and register. Listening to some jargon or specialist language with complex vocabulary can be challenging to lay listeners.

Linguistic constraints may also include complex sentences, especially when combined with badly organised content. Listeners can have difficulties understand such a form of spoken English. Listeners may get uninterested if the speech delivered is monotonous, or they can be misled if the tone is inappropriate. Speech delivery may also

pose a problem in case the delivery rate is not well adapted, too quick or too slow, or when the sound is too loud or too soft.

2.4.5 Attitudinal

The attitude we have towards a speaker may also alter our interpretation of the message. The kind of rapport with the speaker can lead to viewing any particular behaviour from an angle that can decrease the listener's objectivity. It is difficult for people to interact without biases and overgeneralisations. As a result, listening is affected by these attitudes. Glatthorn and Adams (1983, p. 9) suggest the following questions should be asked to check whether a listener is biased:

- *Do you have trouble listening to a colleague of the opposite gender?*

- *Do you have trouble listening to co-workers from different ethnic groups?*

- *Do you have trouble listening to someone much older, or much younger than you?*

- *Do you trouble listening to co-workers with whom you feel competitive?*

- *Do you have trouble listening to someone whose manner or personal appearance displeases you?*

- *Do you have trouble listening to co-workers whom you judge to be less competent than you?*

The above questions are directed to some aspects that may influence our perception of the other person. We can be subject to some attitudinal biases fed by ethnic, age, or gender issues and answer 'yes' to one of those questions. The wrong assumptions people have are likely to prevent them from listening effectively.

2.4.6 Cultural

Communication that involves interlocutors from different cultures can be problematic. This can be accrued in case the listeners share dissimilar values. Rizvi (2005, p. 67) explains that in oral communication, "*it is the listener who assigns meaning to message cues and meanings are assigned in terms of the listener's frame of reference. This interpretation of meaning can create misunderstandings during intercultural communication due to differences in norms and values*". Our cultural norms and values may push us to shape our thoughts accordingly, which in a way can influence our interpretation of the message.

It is noteworthy, that one aspect of training learners to listen effectively is to focus on the perception of cultural aspects in decoding spoken language. A listener needs to be careful with cultural differences and to consider the speaker's values and norms in the interpretation of speech. A listener interpreting the message from their angle solely may lead to misunderstandings. One way to remedy is for the listener to put themselves in the speaker's position.

2.4.7 Bad listening habits

People, most of the time, have listening habits that may affect their interpretation of the spoken message. These can be signs of poor listening skills. Hamilton (2014, p. 120) lists some of them:

- *Calling the topic boring*

- *Criticising the speaker's delivery*

- *Orally or mentally interrupting to disagree*

- *Listening only for facts*

- *Taking detailed notes for everything*

- *Pretending to listen*

- *Tolerating or creating distractions*

- *Avoiding difficult material*

- *Reacting emotionally and tuning out the speaker*

- *Daydreaming during long presentations*

Learners are to be made aware of those habits that may be the cause for poor listening. They may not be conscious that they actually have those habits and do not feel the need to change or abandon them. Teachers' role is pivotal in drawing their learners' attention towards such bad habits and train learners to become informed listeners.

It is necessary for teachers and learners alike to be aware of listening obstacles. Understanding them may help minimise eventual problems and overcome some listening failure. We discussed some factors causing poor listening skills; we shall tackle the importance of listening in the following section.

2.5 Importance of listening

Listening is an important skill to individuals in all aspects of their lives. It is a skill that is central for academic, professional, and personal purposes. It plays an essential role in preventing miscommunication. Knowing how to listen properly can ensure a higher level of success in an individual's ability to communicate effectively. In this sense, Bozorgian (2012, p. 657) explains that

> (...) *listening skill provides the primary impetus to initiate first, second and foreign language learning and later the medium of communication to sustain the long and often tedious learning process. Without adequate listening input, it is more likely for individuals not to accomplish long-term goals*.

It is undeniable that listening occupies quite an important part in communication. We have to pay attention to the time we spend listening to others speak. Moreover, with advances in technology, we are exposed to considerable content in varying forms and

formats. It is clear that we constantly use our receptive skills, which leads us to say that we should become competent active listeners. Every individual has to develop strategies and promote non-linear processing of language.

Similarly, listening skills are of critical significance to language learners in general and EFL learners in particular. Wallace et al. (2004) highlight the importance of listening through which learners receive information and gain new insights. For Nunan (1998), listening is a basic skill in language learning. According to Rost (1994, pp. 141-142), listening in the language classroom is important for four main reasons: 1) listening provides input to the learner, 2) spoken language represents a means of interaction to the learner, 3) authentic spoken language challenges the learner since they have to be able to understand language the way it is uttered by native speakers, and 4) listening activities can help teachers draw learners' attention to new language points.

Feyten (1991) inquired into the importance of listening skills, their impact on language learning in general and the relationship between listening skills and oral proficiency skills. The findings clearly underscore the significant relationship between listening competence and good foreign language acquisition. The relationship between listening comprehension skills and foreign language oral proficiency skills is statistically established.

Since listening skills are crucial for individual development in general and language learning in particular, it is necessary to give listening instruction its due place in language teaching curricular and syllabi. Teachers are expected to reflect on how to incorporate listening practice in their teaching and create opportunities for learners to work on their listening skills both inside and outside the classroom. Exposing learners to significant listening input can help them boost their listening competence.

However, several scholars (Janusk, 2002; Pinell and Jaggar, 2003; Vandergrift, 2007; Goh, 2008) state that listening is most of the time tested rather than taught in language classrooms. Closely aligned with this, Brown (2008) posits that listening is the least understood and researched skill in language learning and is often neglected by EFL and

ESL teachers. Cheung (2010, p. 3) lists the reasons behind the neglect of the skill of listening:

- Listening is considered a skill that will be acquired naturally by teaching speaking and reading.

- Teaching listening comprehension is not a neatly laid-out method to use.

- Listening may be viewed as passive and is only incidental to learning to speak which is viewed as active.

- Language teachers themselves have had grammar classes, pronunciation classes, civilization classes, but hardly any listening comprehension classes.

Most EFL classes, therefore, focus on developing speaking skills while listening is superficially treated. They believe that by developing their learners' speaking skills, listening skills will follow naturally and automatically. This is quite probably due to a poor understanding of the listening process. Teachers assume listening is passive and its development does not require an overt direct manipulation. This inevitably leads to little or inappropriate material devoted to listening instruction.

We therefore have to be careful not to limit listening in the language classroom to listening comprehension purposes only. Other purposes linked to language acquisition can be taken into consideration and implemented. In this sense, practitioners can plan and design listening practice that targets both listening for comprehension and listening for language development. There is evidence that improving listening comprehension can yield increased development of other language skills. The implementation of certain strategies and awareness raising on the part of learners concerning those strategies and their conscious application can help achieve the purposes aforementioned. These strategies will be discussed next as part of Section 2.6.4 which is devoted to teaching listening.

2.6 Instructing listening

Several authors (Field 2008; Goh 2010, Vandergrift and Goh, 2012) have called for more teaching of listening as a skill in its own right, rather than something which teachers

assume will develop on its own. Vandergrift and Goh (2012) compare listening with the other skills – reading, writing, and speaking – and rightly state that "*the development of listening receives the least systematic attention from teachers and instructional materials*" (p. 4).

Learners are not taught how to approach a listening passage. Most of the time, when learners are trained in listening, they are exposed to listening texts and asked to do tasks. Unfortunately, these tasks are not planned within a strategy aiming at developing learners' listening ability. Learners are left to develop this ability and other listening strategies by themselves. This is clearly noticeable with listening activities in language classes. Teachers, generally, implement them in a form akin to testing where learners are tested on how much they have understood rather than training them on how to listen better.

The discussion below will revolve around the different frameworks adopted for the instruction of listening. They are based on the work of Vandergrift and Goh (2012) and are tackled under three headings: a) text-oriented instruction, b) communication-based instruction, and b) learner-oriented instruction.

Research in Second Language Acquisition in general and teaching English as a foreign or second language in particular has concluded that learners exploit listening for two main purposes: comprehension and acquisition (Sun, 2008). It is important for teachers and practitioners to understand this overlapping notion of listening. The classroom pedagogy should be directed differently according to the purpose set.

2.6.1 Text-oriented instruction

According to Brown (1987), teaching listening was greatly impacted by the pedagogy of reading and writing. The following table presents the main characteristics of text-oriented instruction of listening.

Learning objectives	Decode sounds: phonemes, word stress, and sentence-level intonation
	Listen to, imitate, and memorize sound and grammar patterns
	Identify relevant details from oral input
	Demonstrate understanding of the meaning of the passage
Listening input	Words, phrases, and sentences read aloud
	Written passages read aloud
Classroom interaction	Learner–teacher
	Individual listening
Learner response	Discriminate sounds at word- and sentence-levels
	Write dictation of written passages
	Answer comprehension questions based on the listening passage
	Complete written texts with details from the listening passage
Challenges for learners	Listening is not taught as a language skill
	Learner comprehension is constantly assessed informally
	Listening passages are often dense and do not reflect the linguistic features of spoken texts

Table 2.4: Features of text-oriented listening instruction (Vandergrift and Goh, 2012, p. 7)

From the table above, we can say that in this type of instruction the main objectives are linked to identifying sounds, words, grammar patterns and meaning. The listener moves from smaller to larger units to build meaning. There is dominance of written forms over oral ones. Written texts are used to train learners in listening. This is not very representative of what really takes play in authentic listening situations where the grammatical structure is less complex and the lexis less elaborate. This dominance is present in learners' answers too. Almost all listening tasks require learners to respond in a written form.

2.6.2 Communication-oriented instruction

A shift in language pedagogy has led to more focus on developing learners' communicative competence. For proponents of such an approach, the key tenet is that learners should communicate all the time if they are to learn by communicating. Hiep (2007) lists three main points accepted by practitioners as the essence of communicative language teaching:

- we need to focus on learners and learning;

- we need to help learners to use the language effectively for their own communicative needs; and

- this is most likely to happen when classroom activities are real and meaningful to learners.

Littlewood (2014) pleads for the implementation of a broader, non-prescriptive conceptual framework which can lead to create experiences that are real and meaningful to learners and help them to fulfil their communicative needs. This approach is called communication-oriented language teaching and represents a refined version of communicative language teaching.

Teachers, therefore, are encouraged to use more authentic material to teach listening, especially with the advances in technology and the possibilities it offers for pedagogical applications. Listening is no longer viewed as a passive skill but rather as an active skill of constructing meaning comprising a set of micro and macro skills. The development of the latter, together with the acquisition of specific enabling skills for listening, represents the focus of the learning objectives. Listening is used to serve the construction of other communicative purposes. Listening however is still disregarded in favour of speaking in lessons with communicative purposes. Vandergrift and Goh (2012) deplore the fact that "*in oral communication activities, where both listening and speaking were involved, the emphasis was mostly on the speaking component [and] listening was often the sleeping partner in the business of oral communication*" (p. 9). The table below summarises the key features of the communication-oriented instruction of teaching.

Learning objectives	Develop both macro and micro skills for listening
	Develop specific enabling skills for listening
Listening input	Spontaneous learner–learner talk
	Scripted or semi-scripted texts with a high degree of authenticity
	Authentic listening/oral interaction materials
Classroom interaction	Learner–learner
	Learner–teacher
	Individual listening
Learner response	Respond to spoken texts in socially and contextually appropriate ways (e.g. inferring attitude, taking notes, identifying details)
	Complete missing information in texts or discourse
	Use information from listening text for other communicative purposes
Challenges for learners	Listening often neglected in thematic lessons
	Language learners integrating all four language skills
	Listening neglected in oral communication activities which focus more on speaking
	Learners indirectly assessed for comprehension

Table 2.5: Features of communication-oriented listening instruction (Vandergrift and Goh, 2012, p. 9)

2.6.3 Learner-oriented instruction

A learner-oriented approach to teaching is identified when the focus is on the student as a learner and on the process of learning. It addresses the distinct learning needs, interests and levels of ability of individual learners and groups of learners. It is not a teaching method in its own right, since many different instructional methods do use a learner-oriented approach.

It is worth noting that this approach has impacted the teaching of listening positively. Focus has been directed towards the aspects that lead to more successful listeners, especially the listening strategies that make good language learners. That is why listening lessons in the learner-oriented instruction are built around the use of listening strategies in order to improve understanding and resolve issues that may rise. Similarly, there is focus on developing metacognitive awareness about second language listening.

Unfortunately, even if learners become aware of the strategies, they are not given much room for using these strategies in a more concrete way. Vandergrift and Goh (2012, p. 11) criticise the learner-oriented listening instruction saying,

> [t]*his approach, which focuses mainly on the use of cognitive strategies, may not go far enough in helping learners develop the metacognitive aspects of learning. These include awareness and the use of a range of strategies, as well as developing habits of mind that improve self-regulated learning, both within and beyond the classroom.*

A summary of the main features of teaching listening under the learner-oriented approach is summarised in the table below.

Learning objectives	Use listening strategies for enhancing comprehension and coping with problems
	Develop metacognitive awareness about L2 listening
Listening input	Spontaneous learner–learner talk
	Scripted or semi-scripted texts with a high degree of authenticity
	Authentic listening/oral interaction materials
Classroom interaction	Learner–learner
	Learner–teacher
	Individual listening (self-directed)
Learner response	Respond to spoken texts in socially and contextually appropriate ways (e.g., inferring attitude, taking notes, identifying details)
	Complete missing information in texts or

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	discourse
	Prepare reflections and self-reports on use of strategies
Challenges for learners	Learners become aware of strategies but the lessons do not always allow them to experience the use of these strategies in more tangible ways
	Learning to listen is often an individual affair and listeners do not benefit sufficiently from the knowledge and experience of others
	Learners lack the kind of structural support that could assist them in their overall development of listening abilities

Table 2.6: Features of learner-oriented listening instruction (Vandergrift and Goh, 2012, p. 11)

2.6.4 Strategy and process-oriented instruction

Vermunt (1995) defines process-oriented instruction as "*instruction aimed at teaching thinking strategies and domain-specific knowledge in coherence*" (p. 325). The use of such strategies in listening under pedagogic guidance represents a shift in approaching listening comprehension instruction. An effective implementation of such an approach to listening instruction relies on the understanding of how learners approach listening tasks, what listening strategies they can or cannot use, and how their strategy relates to their listening abilities (Flowerdew and Miller, 2005; McDonough, 1999).

An important body of literature (Field, 2001; Goh, 2002; Vandergrift, 2003) on teaching listening insists on adopting a process approach to help learners become more competent listeners and face real-life listening situations. Vandergrift and Goh (2009, p. 402) state,

> *Raising metacognitive awareness through listening diaries, process-oriented discussions, and questionnaires are indirect methods for improving listening performance. Learners step back from real-time listening, examine their listening processes and develop their own thinking about what it takes to be an effective listener.*

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We have discussed how successful listeners use listening processes, including the bottom-up process and the top-down process (Section 4.2). We believe curricula and syllabi should consider listening as an active and constructive process. The aims and the objectives for the programme will have to be set accordingly. Teachers can then plan process-oriented activities as part of their listening lessons.

Teaching listening skills can prove to be successful when the learners are involved in the process. They may become competent listeners by consciously developing and employing strategies which are goal-directed. Hence, learners should be taught how to listen and not merely be tested on the listening skills. Instruction of listening strategies, as defined below, can represent one approach to teaching listening.

According to Macaro (2006), a strategy is a conscious mental activity that can be employed to achieve a learning goal with the possibility to transfer it to other situations or tasks. As for listening strategies specifically, Rost (2011) suggests they are the implementation of conscious plans to manage the incoming spoken form of the language.

Several models used in classifying language learning strategies have been presented in the literature (O'Maley & Chamot, 1990, O'Maley et al., 1985; Oxford, 1990; Rubin, 1981). Two models for listening by O'Malley et al. (1985) and O'Malley and Chamot (1990) have received considerable attention and have been extensively used to study learning strategies and effective listening. Both categorise three main types of strategies: metacognitive, cognitive and social strategies.

2.6.4.1 Metacognitive strategies

Metacognitive strategies refer to a conscious and attentive processing of listening where the individual is aware of their learning and thinks about their thinking. In other words, metacognitive strategies are meant to help the learner understand the way they learn. Holden (2004, p. 260) explains that "[s]uch an orientation is pedagogically sound, and, in so far as it serves to direct learners towards a consistent approach to planning, monitoring and evaluating their comprehension, highly advisable".

A substantial body of literature (Goh, 2000; Goh & Taib, 2006; Graham & Macaro, 2008; Cross, 2009; Vandergrift & Tafaghodtari, 2010) underlines the importance of metacognitive strategies for successful listening comprehension and favours their enhancing role in listening skills instruction.

According to Vandergrift (1997), the difference between a skilled listener and a less skilled one is the capacity of the former to use metacognitive strategies such as analysing the requirements of a listening task, activating the appropriate listening processes required, anticipating by making appropriate predictions, monitoring their comprehension and evaluating their success. According to Goh (2008), metacognitive instruction offers two benefits. First, learners increase their motivation thus leading them to lower anxiety and higher confidence. Second, with increased confidence, listening performance improves.

Not only do metacognitive strategies raise learners' awareness of how to become proficient listeners, but they also help promote autonomy. Implementing metacognitive strategies in listening instruction may give learners the possibility to set a direction to their learning in general and listening skills development in particular. Learners can, therefore, be able to monitor their progress, accomplishments, and future learning directions.

Vandergrift (1997) suggests four categories to build metacognitive strategies: planning, monitoring, evaluation and problem identification. Anderson (2012), on the other hand, proposes the division of metacognitive strategies into five categories which are preparing and planning, deciding when to use particular strategies, monitoring strategy use, learning how to manage various strategies, and evaluating strategy use. Adapted from Vandergrift (1997), a model is suggested by Flowerdew and Miller (2005). It comprises three categories, planning, monitoring and evaluating.

The first category, planning, includes four strategies which are advanced organisation, directed attention, selective attention, and self-management strategies. The listener uses the advanced organisation strategy to identify the objectives set for the listening task. While listening, learners can use, on the one hand, the directed attention skill to get the main idea in the listening task, and on the other hand they can use the selective

attention skill to get details. The fourth strategy, self-management, is meant to help listeners control their motivation for the listening task.

The second category is monitoring. It covers three strategies: comprehension, auditory, and double-check monitoring. Comprehension monitoring is used by the listener in order to check their understanding of the spoken text by asking confirmation questions. Auditory monitoring helps the listener decide whether what they hear is right or not. Last but not least, double-check monitoring is used to check the listener's monitoring across the task and its completion.

The third category, evaluating, comprises two strategies, namely performance evaluation and problem identification. In the first one, listeners judge how well they perform in the task. The second, problem identification, is meant to help listeners decide what problems still persist and prevent them from understanding the content in the task.

The figure below summarises the model for the metacognitive strategies that can be used for successful listening.
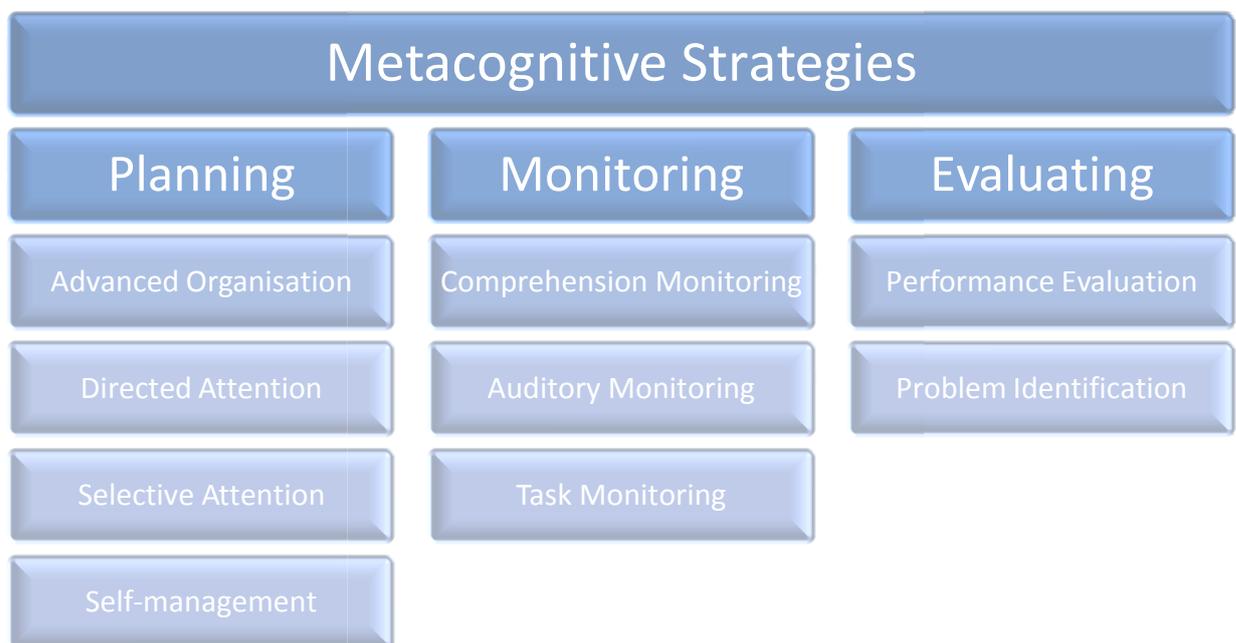
Figure 2.5: Cognitive strategies to develop listening

2.6.4.2 Cognitive strategies

Cognitive strategies refer to mental processing used to understand the linguistic input and acquire knowledge. In the case of listening comprehension, cognitive strategies are those used for the cognitive processing of listening. According to O'Malley and Chamot (1990), they are strategies that reveal how learners mentally manipulate a task thus enabling them to understand and produce new language. In his description of listening ability, Buck (2001) explains that cognitive strategies are *"those mental activities related to comprehending and storing input in working memory or long-term memory for later retrieval"* (p. 104). He classifies them into three categories: comprehension processes, storing and memory processes, and using and retrieval processes.

Several researchers have studied this phenomenon from two angles. The first angle (Chan et al., 1992; Chi et al., 1989) aimed at comparing the performances of proficient and less proficient learners. The results clearly show that they have diagnosed a significant difference in strategy use among the two profiles of learners. The second angle (Brown et al., 1996; Graham et al., 1995; Guthrie et al., 2004; Langer, 2001) focused on examining the effects of training students to learn by using a set of strategies. The findings noted a higher level of success in learners who used a set of strategies.

Cognitive strategies involved in processing listening are multiple. The listener can use inferencing strategy to guess meaning. Flowerdew and Miller (2005) list different types of inferencing which are linguistic, voice, paralinguistic or kinetic, and extralinguistic inferencing. Another strategy, elaboration strategy, is meant to describe how listeners use their prior knowledge gained from different circles of life to comprehend the spoken text. Other strategies can be listed as follows: summarisation, translation, transfer, repetition, resourcing, grouping, note taking, deduction/induction, and substitution.

2.6.4.3 Social affective strategies

According to Vandergrift (2003) social affective strategies refer to the techniques listeners use to collaborate with others, to verify understanding or to lower anxiety. In other words, they are means whereby listeners involve others or maximise the affective conditions in order to achieve understanding.

Chapter Two: The Listening Skills in the EFL Context

It is of paramount importance for listeners when involved in listening tasks to lower anxiety, increase confidence and promote personal motivation in order to improve on their listening competence (Vandergrift, 1997). O'Malley & Chamot (1990) highlight the role of social and affective strategies employed in listening to influence the learning situation immediately. According to Hauck (2005), learners who have developed their social affective skills are likely to become more successful language learners. In the same line of thought, Chamot (2005) posits that less successful learners do not have the social affective knowledge necessary to select the appropriate strategies. Goh (2002) explains how these strategies are important by arguing that learners' social affective strategy is related to effective learning in all contexts.

Social affective strategies in listening comprehension can include questioning for clarification where learners can ask their teacher questions or by cooperating with classmates to find out more information. Affective strategies, such as identifying one's mood and anxiety level, talking about feelings, rewarding oneself for good performance, are also essential strategies that can be used to improve learners' listening comprehension.

It is noteworthy that listening strategies are pivotal to successful listening. They, therefore, should be granted their due share in language teaching practices. It is the duty of syllabus designers and textbook writers to offer teachers material and procedures and ideas so that listening strategies are introduced in language classes. Flowerdew and Miller (2005, pp. 72-80) explain that a major aim assigned to listening instruction

> *is to make the learners aware of the strategies they use while completing the tasks and how they might develop their language-learning strategies. Exposing learners to a range of language learning strategies gives them the opportunity to find out which strategies work best for them. These language-learning strategies can then serve as the basis of future language development and, it is hoped, be used when learners listen to content subject lectures.*

Teaching listening should be viewed in a more holistic approach. Learners should be the core element in the process. Catering for such differences leads, inevitably, to the

consideration of individual learning styles, thereby considering the pedagogical implications of learning and listening strategies. Both cognitive and metacognitive strategies are to be developed so that learners can become responsible for their learning and practise their listening skills inside and outside the classroom context.

2.7 Conclusion

Listening skills are difficult to master and use competently for communicators in general and EFL learners in particular. Listening is important for both communicative and learning purposes. Since listening is an active process, it is crucial that learners do a lot of listening in order to improve their listening ability.

Listening can be used as a basis for developing speaking and pronunciation alike. Our inquiry into the listening skills has helped shed light on an array of areas covering the listening process, its acquisition, its types and its barriers. We have also tackled the actual necessity to teach listening in an EFL context. Training learners on higher cognitive levels, metacognitive strategies (such as inferencing) and self-monitoring strategies can help students overcome some of their listening deficiencies.

Clearly, students need a more focused approach to listening instruction. Recent research indicates that top-down approaches (activating prior knowledge), bottom-up approaches (decoding sounds), and metacognitive approaches (predicting, monitoring, and planning) are all essential for students to become good listeners. These are some of the guidelines we relied on to devise the course for the experimental group.

After having dealt with the listening skills and their processing in the EFL context, we will now cover pronunciation and its treatment in the next chapter.

Chapter Three: Pronunciation with Communicative Perspectives

3.1 Introduction

Pronunciation plays an essential part in second and foreign language learning. It intersects with other language skills such as speaking, listening, morphology and spelling. Learners' pronunciation proficiency is as important as the other components of the linguistic competence. We should therefore aim for and develop an appropriate form of pronunciation in EFL oral classes.

Having a good pronunciation can truly help achieve successful communication. Pronunciation greatly influences communicative competence in learners. It is, most of the time, the first feature people notice when interacting with each other. More often than not, listeners are impacted not only by the content of the message but also by the way it is delivered. Limited pronunciation skills may affect learners' self-confidence, inhibit them and prevent them from airing their views and voicing their opinions.

In this chapter we shall delineate pronunciation and its constituent elements. We shall discuss the importance of pronunciation and the status given to pronunciation and its instruction in language teaching. Some room will be devoted to the role of pronunciation in improving the learners' speaking and listening proficiency.

3.2 Defining pronunciation and its components

We have dealt with its oral-aural aspects of the language, namely the speaking skills and the listening skills. In this section we are going to examine the pronunciation of the English language, an important step towards successful oral communication.

In general, pronunciation refers to the sounds we make in speaking. Nunan (2003) defines pronunciation as the way certain sounds are produced by speakers of a language and perceived by the hearer so that they can understand each other with relative ease. Similarly, Schmitt (2002) sees pronunciation as a term used to describe all aspects of how speech sounds are employed for communication. For Thornbury (2005), it refers to the learner's ability to produce comprehensible utterances to achieve certain tasks.

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Pronunciation is important since it gives life and meaning to what is being uttered. Incorrect use may lead to misunderstanding or even offence. Goodwin (2001) and Rahimi (2008) describe pronunciation as a filter through which others see speakers and discriminate against them. Listeners, in this sense, rely on certain aspects of pronunciation to interpret meaning.

There has been a surge in empirical studies to decide what aspects characterise pronunciation and establish the extent to which these aspects are instrumental in communication. For Ur (2012), "*The term pronunciation as it is understood here includes not only the sounds of the language, but also the rhythm, intonation and stress patterns*" (p. 128). According to Wong et al. (2007), sounds are less critical for understanding than the way they are organised.

Pronunciation, therefore, refers to the production of sounds that are used to convey meaning. It includes attention to the particular sounds of a language (segments), aspects of speech beyond the level of the individual sound, such as, stress, rhythm, intonation, juncture (suprasegmental aspects), how the voice is projected (voice quality) and, in its broadest definition, attention to gestures, facial expressions and body movements (paralinguistic features) that are closely related to the way one speaks a language.

Any definition of pronunciation includes both suprasegmental and segmental features. Brazil (1994) recognises their interdependence as being "*closely related ... to the end of the efficient communication which they serve*" (p. 2), and that work in one area supports and reinforces work in another. Laroy (1995) reinforces their importance by saying that in the same way as it is impossible to speak without sounds, it is equally impossible to speak without rhythm and intonation, and these "*deeply affect the quality of speech sounds*" (p. 39). Although these different aspects of pronunciation are treated in isolation here, it is important to remember that they all work in combination when we speak, and are therefore usually best learned as an integral part of spoken language. The segmental aspects of pronunciation are presented first.

3.2.1 Segments

Learning to produce the sounds of English is a crucial part of learning pronunciation in English. Many learners may have difficulty with particular sounds, sound combinations or clusters, or pronouncing a particular sound or its allophone in certain positions.

The sound system of English comprises phonemes, or individual sounds which carry the potential to make meaning, and these may be vowels, glides (combinations of two or three vowel sounds) or consonants. They combine one after the other to form syllables, words, and longer stretches of speech.

Consonants are made by a blockage or partial blockage of the air stream. These segments are usually described in terms of where the sound is made in the mouth, or place of articulation; how the sound is made, or manner of articulation; and whether or not the vocal cords vibrate, that is the presence or absence of voice. According to Brown (2014), "*Consonant segments can be divided into those that involve vibration of the vocal cords (are voiced) and those that do not (are voiceless)*" (p. 6).

One difference between writing and speech is the way people view vowels. Crystal (1999, p. 237) states,

> *A good example of the speech-writing difference is the way we have to rethink the idea that there are five vowels when we begin to discuss speech. There are in fact some 20 or so vowels in most accents of English (...) and their sound qualities can vary enormously from accent to accent.*

Vowels are usually described in terms of length, the relative position of the tongue from high to low and front to back, the degree to which the lips are rounded, spread or neutral. Vowels are voiced, syllabic sounds made with the vocal tract more open than it is for consonant articulations (Dobrovolsky and Katamba, 1996). They may be tense or lax, depending on the degree of vocal tract constriction during their articulation. English vowels are divided into three types, simple vowels or monophthongs, and glides or diphthongs, and triphthongs.

The description of the segmental features of pronunciation can be summarised in the following figure.
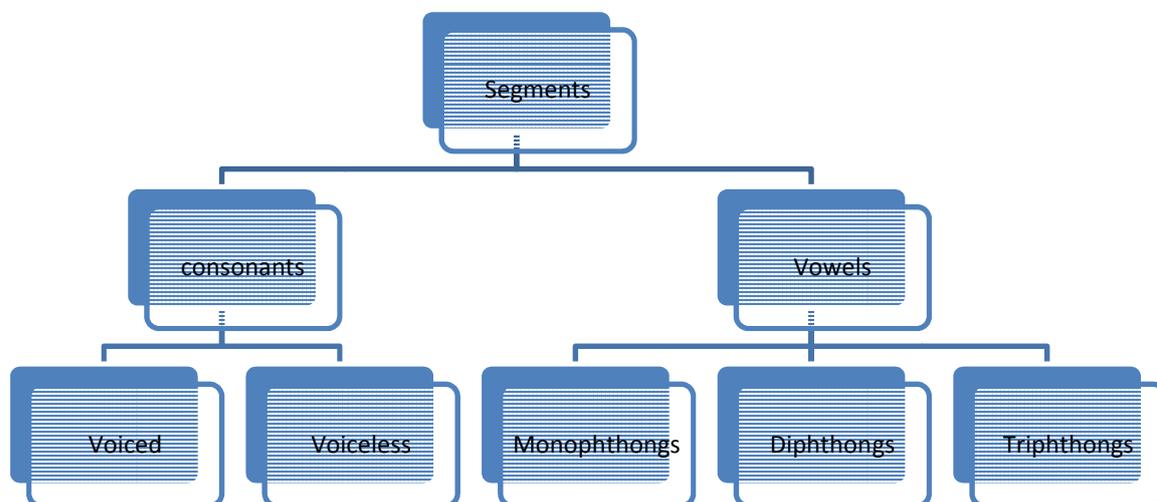
Figure 3.1: The segmental features of pronunciation

We now examine the suprasegmental features of pronunciation.

3.2.2 Suprasegments

It is self-evident that speech includes a broader range of phenomena than just strings of individual segments. The suprasegmental features are those which operate over longer stretches of speech than the sound, such as, stress, rhythm, intonation in connected speech. The study of these features is also known as prosody. They are presented below in succession.

3.2.2.1 Stress

Flowerdew and Miller (2005) define stress as "*the application of greater force to a syllable [and] occurs at the level of word and of sentence*" (p. 31). In other words, stress can be described in terms of syllable prominence within words of more than one syllable. It is signalled by increased strength, length, loudness, and pitch movement.

Stress is important at the word level. It helps in speech perception to identify the parts of speech of words. For example when the same phonemes serve to form a noun and a verb, stress can be a decisive element to distinguish them. This is the case for example in present /ˈpreznt/, the noun or the adjective and present /prɪˈzent/, the verb.

One noticeable feature of English is the reduced nature of unstressed syllables. Thus, stressed syllables are longer, louder, stronger and carry a different pitch, while unstressed ones are shorter, softer, weaker and often display a difference in quality. This change in the quality of the sound is caused by the influence of stress (or the absence of it) on sound. Content words (also known as lexical or full words) usually have one fixed realization with usually one major stressed syllable. Function words (also known as empty or grammatical words) are usually unstressed except for contrast, and they have more than one realization. Flowerdew and Miller (2005, p. 32) posit "*clearly, stress, in identifying content words, is important for comprehension. Stress patterns give a language its overall rhythm. Standard English is said to be one of those languages that tends toward a stress-timed rhythm*".

De Lacy (2014, p. 169) states that "*word stress and its realisation interact with phrase-level prominence and intonation*". It may often be the failure to 'unstress' syllables appropriately that makes learners' pronunciation difficult to understand because, unlike some other languages, English tends to maintain a perceptible isochrony from one stressed syllable to the next stressed syllable by unstressing the syllables in between. This specific beat gives English its characteristic rhythmic isochronic pattern.

3.2.2.2 Rhythm

When native English speakers produce spoken language, we perceive prominent units occurring at regular intervals. Roach (2009) describes rhythm as a notion involving "*some noticeable event happening at regular intervals of time; one can detect the rhythm of a heart-beat, of a flashing light or of a piece of music*" (p. 107). This definition is based on the fact that English is a stress-timed language referring to the perceived regularity of stressed syllables in speech. Roach (2009, p. 120) adds,

> *It has often been claimed that English speech is rhythmical, and that rhythm is detectable in the regular occurrence of stressed*

syllables; of course, it is not suggested that the timing is as regular as a clock – the regularity of occurrence is only relative.

In the same line of thought, Crystal (1999, p. 249) explains that

> [a]*ll forms of spoken English have their rhythm, though in spontaneous speech it is often difficult to hear, because hesitations interfere with the smooth flow of words. In fluent speech, however, there is a clear underlying rhythm. This is often called a stress-timed (or isochronous) rhythm – one based on the use of stressed syllables which occur at roughly regular intervals in the stream of speech.*

For rhythmical purposes, "*the speaker must adjust delivery to ensure utterance of the stressed syllables is in time, virtually regardless of how many syllables there may be between stresses*" (Orton, 2000, p. 1). The degree of rhythmicality may vary according to the style of speech and the context the speaker is in (Roach, 2009). When in public speaking, the level of rhythmicality may be high whereas at other times the individual may speak arhythmically because of hesitation or nervousness.

Many authors insist on the importance of rhythm in language acquisition and competent language use. Although rhythm is a difficult feature to master by foreign teachers and learners alike, it remains essential to be taught in language classrooms. Classroom activities should be directed to raising learners' awareness of the very important difference in the English language between strong and weak syllables.

3.2.2.3 Intonation

Unlike rhythm which has often been compared to the drums of the orchestra, intonation represents the violin and its melodious tunes. Avery and Ehrlich (1992, p. 76) explain that "*intonation is often called the melody of language since it refers to the pattern of pitch changes that we use when we speak*". Roach asserts that "*no definition is completely satisfactory, but any attempt at a definition must recognise that the pitch of the voice plays the most important part*" (2009, p. 119).

Chapter Three: Pronunciation with communicative Perspectives

It is commonly agreed that intonation is linked to the change of the moving tonic in a given sense group. Speakers tend to group words together in chunks that make sense, called 'sense groups' or 'tone groups' or 'breath groups'. Sense groups are often bounded by short pauses, and are said within a single intonation contour or tune. Within each of these, there is usually one tonic. The tone is important because it carries the major pitch change, also called moving tune, and it changes according to the speaker's intended meaning. The major changes of pitch take place on the tonic syllable. Five major patterns of tones are traditionally identified: fall (low, high, and mid), rise (low, high, and mid), fall-rise, rise-fall and level (robots).

Intonation is crucial in performing several functions related to the attitude of the speaker towards the listener or towards the subject matter. *"Intonation conveys rather basic information (e.g., that an utterance is a question rather than a statement). However, it also gives more subtle information about a speaker's attitude, such as disbelief, disapproval, or sarcasm"* (Bailey, 2005, p. 145). Crystal (1999, p. 249) declares that intonation serves to achieve six functions.

Emotional	One important role of intonation is to express attitudinal meaning like sarcasm, surprise,, impatience, etc.
Grammatical	Intonation enables us to identify grammatical structure in speech similar to the role of punctuation in writing. Units such as clause and sentence often depend on intonation for their identification in speaking.
Informational	Intonation helps draw attention to what meaning is given and what is new in an utterance. Prominence signals new information by the speaker.
Textual	Intonation helps larger units of meaning than the sentence to contrast and cohere.
Psychological	Intonation helps improve our perception and memorisation process by organising speech into units.
Indexical	Intonation, along with other prosodic aspects, plays an important role in making personal or social identity. Occupations are readily identified through their distinctive prosody.

In a similar categorisation, Roach (2009, p. 146) lists four major functions conveyed by intonation.

Attitude	Intonation enables us to express emotions and attitudes as we speak, and this adds a special kind of meaning to spoken language. It has been given much importance by scholars especially since it overlaps with the discourse function below. Besides, it helps vehicle the speakers' feelings, emotions and attitudes. A sentence said differently may indicate different feelings such as boredom, anger, puzzlement, or happiness. It explains why people say: "It is not what he said that irritated me. It is how he said it."
Prominence	Intonation helps to produce the effect of prominence on the one stressed syllable in a sense group that will mark out the tonic stress in the word considered as the most important in the tone-unit. The latter has been called the 'accentual function' of intonation.
Grammar	The listener is better able to recognise the grammar and syntactic structure of what is being said by using the information contained in the intonation: for example, such things as the placement of boundaries between phrases, clauses or sentences, the difference between questions and statements and the use of grammatical subordination may be indicated.
Discourse	Looking at the act of speaking in a broader way, we notice that intonation can signal to the listener what is to be taken as new information as opposed to what is given or old information. Here are examples of the 'discourse function' of intonation: It can suggest when the speaker is indicating some sort of contrast or emphasis. In conversations, it can convey to the listener what kind of response is expected such as mere confirmation for instance.

The two models presented above highlight the role of intonation in depicting the grammatical construction of spoken language. They also explain how intonation can be decisive in conveying feelings, emotions and attitudes. Thanks to intonation, the listener can identify new or important information. Most specialists in phonetics and phonology agree that intonation in particular has the greatest likelihood of impeding intelligibility in a learner's perception and production of speech.

3.2.2.4 Connected speech

Learners often complain that native speakers of English have too fast a rate of delivery, and they face difficulties understanding them. Yet they can usually easily comprehend the same sentences when they see them written. The reason is that speech is in a continuous stream where identifying word boundaries requires a certain knowledge of the mechanisms of connected speech. It implies much more than just decoding a string of

individual segments joined together in series, and in which each segment is likely to influence the neighbouring segments and be influenced by them. Rowe and Levine (2015) explain that "[c]*onnected speech is continuous, and the listener decodes the speech by knowing where words begin and end and by knowing the rules of packaging utterances*" (p. 56)

Textbook designers and practitioners, to name but a few, are fully aware that in natural connected speech, words are pronounced differently from the way they are pronounced in isolation or in a context-free form (Roach, 2009). But when it comes to the classroom situation, there is a tendency to neglect the features of the stream of speech as un-academic elements "*typical of rapid, casual, speech [or as] something which foreign learners do not need to learn*" (ibid., p. 127).

Cauldwell and Allan (1995) however state that such 'negligible' features of the stream of speech which are considered 'worthless' and assigned to rapid casual speech, do in fact also occur in slow careful speech. Three aspects of connected speech are examined below: assimilation, elision and juncture.

3.2.2.4.1 Assimilation

The characteristics which sounds have when pronounced in isolated words can be subject to changes caused by neighbouring sounds when they are parts of a stream of speech. According to Roach (2009), we identify assimilation when we find "*a phoneme realised differently as a result of being near some other phoneme belonging to a neighbouring word*" (p. 110). Assimilation can vary greatly according to the type of speech. We can find cases of assimilation where there is noticeable distortion of phonetic properties of the sound in rapid casual speech. This is, however, less apparent in slow careful speech.

Assimilation is a process that happens typically, though not exclusively at word boundaries and which causes initial or final speech sounds to be modified in a way which makes them more similar to their neighbours, in manner of articulation such as palatalisation, or in place of articulation such as bilabialisation, or in voice or voicelessness as explained below.

The case where the phoneme that comes first is affected by the one that follows it, or regressive assimilation, e.g. 'this ship' /ðɪs ʃɪp/ in careful speech is realised as /ðɪʃʃɪp/ in rapid speech where the sound /s/ of /ðɪs/ is palatalised or the /s/ of bless is palatalised by the /j/ of 'you' in 'bless you'. Another realisation of regressive assimilation concerns the place of articulation and the bilabialisation of /t/ as in 'football' (where the /b/ of 'ball' /bɔːl/ affects the /t/ of 'foot' /fʊt/ to produce /fʊpbɔːl/).

The second case, or progressive assimilation, is when the phoneme that follows is affected by the preceding one. An instance of this type of assimilation is the progressive assimilation in which the suffix 's' is devoiced or voiced in agreement with the preceding sound. For example, the suffix 's' is pronounced /s/ if the consonant preceding it is voiceless (e.g. 'puts' /pʊts/) and it is pronounced /z/ if the consonant preceding it is voiced ('cleans' /kliːnz/).

The phenomenon of assimilation represents a higher degree of difficulty to EFL learners. They cannot rely on a fixed rule to replicate and apply in their listening and speaking. It is unclear whether the result of assimilation is supposed to be a different allophone or a new phoneme altogether. In other cases, assimilation can be found to spread over many sounds instead of being restricted to two neighbouring sounds.

3.2.2.4.2 Elision

As mentioned in the preceding section, there are many cases where sounds which are produced in words in isolation, or in slow, careful speech, are not found in other styles of speech. This refers to the deletion, or elision, of sounds in connected speech. According to (Roach, 2009, p. 113), explains the nature of elision stating that "*under certain circumstances sounds disappear; one might express this in more technical language by saying that in certain circumstances a phoneme may be realised as zero, or have zero realisation or be deleted*".

Both consonants and vowels may be affected, and sometimes whole syllables may be elided. Unstressed function words like 'and' realised in its strong form as /ænd/ may be realised as /n/ in rapid connected speech. Another instance of elision is with /h/ in

unstressed function words such as auxiliary verbs or personal pronouns, e.g. 'Tell her' /tel hɜː / may be realised as / tel ə/ in connected speech.

It is possible to find examples of elision, but very difficult to state rules that govern which sounds may be elided and which may not. It is up to teachers and practitioners to decide whether students have to learn to produce speech with aspects of elision. We believe, however, it is necessary for learners to be accustomed to listening to spoken language where this phenomenon is present. They will, therefore, become aware of these features, and will be better equipped to face situations where such features occur.

3.2.2.4.3 Juncture

Roach defines junctures as "*the relationship between one sound and the sounds that immediately precede and follow it*" (2009, p. 115). In other words, juncture refers to how closely attached one sound is to its neighbours. In English native speakers link and blend sounds at word boundaries in a way which is quite distinct from that of other languages, and these features help to manage the patterns of stress, unstress and pitch change discussed above. These linking devices are not trivial, as they help learners to avoid the breathy, choppy delivery that can impede communication.

A case of juncture is that of 'inclusive r'. The phoneme /r/ does not occur in final position in RP, but when a word's spelling ends in 'r' or 're' and a word beginning with a vowel follows, the common realisation for RP speakers is to pronounce /r/ before the vowel. For example:

'more' /mɔː/ but 'more elements' / mɔːr elɪmənts/.

Another case is the 'intrusive r', when a sound 'r' is placed between two neighbouring words where the first finishes with a vowel and the following begins with a vowel. For example: India and China is realised in RP as / ɪndɪə rn tʃaɪnə /

Rowe and Levine (2015, p. 54) give interesting examples of perceived juncture changes and how they affect meaning.

Pronunciation	Spelling
[gredet]	gradate
[gre + det]	gray date
[gred + et]	grade eight
[ɪlektrɪk]	electric
[ɪlekt + rɪk]	elect Rick
[ɪts + lɪd]	its lid
[ɪt + slɪd]	it slid
[ðæt + stʌf]	that stuff
[ðæts + tʌf]	that's tough
[ɪt + swɪŋz]	it swings
[ɪts + wɪŋz]	its wings
[ðə + sændwɪʃ + ɪz + wet]	the sandwich is wet
[ðə + sænd + wɪʃ + ɪz + wet]	the sand which is wet

Table 3.1: Examples of perceived juncture changes

The chart below summarises the aforementioned suprasegmental features.
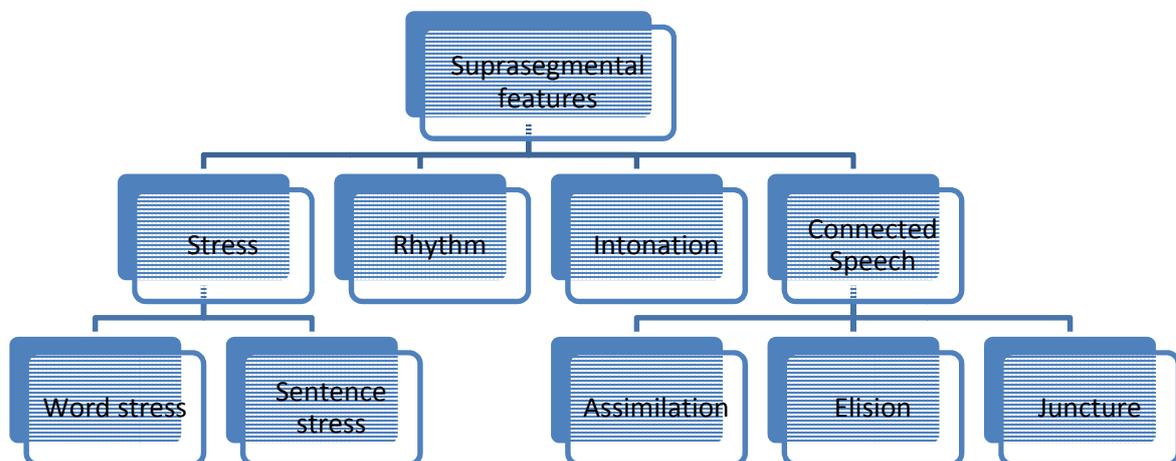
Figure 3.2: Suprasegmental features of pronunciation

Having examined three aspects of connected speech, we now turn to discuss the importance of pronunciation and its teaching.

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3.3 A historical description of pronunciation instruction

The status of pronunciation and its instruction in EFL classroom practices has gone through different periods showing varying degrees of importance and integration. This is due, as explained by Morley (2000, p. 100), to *"changes in theoretical paradigms* [including changes] *in learning models, in linguistic models, in instructional models"*.

One change is linked to learners. They are no longer perceived as passive recipients that can be spoon-fed by teachers. Learners are active elements in the learning process using cognitive and metacognitive competences. That is why a shift from teacher-centred instruction to learner-centred instruction is inevitable.

Another change has to do with the way classes are to be treated. Theorists and practitioners describe EFL classes as contexts where mixed abilities coexist. Consequently, there has been a shift from group focus to individual focus. In that sense, teaching strategies should vary to meet learners' learning styles, preferences, and multiple intelligences.

A third change deals with how language is viewed. Focus on language as a formal system has shifted to focus on language as both a formal and functional system used to meet communicative needs. Instructional models put emphasis on the use of language intelligibly, hence shifting from an instructional focus on linguistic form and correct usage to focus on function and communicatively appropriate use.

Based on these changes, Morley (2000) and Murphy (2003) identify three main periods referring to three primary orientations that have characterised the teaching of pronunciation over the past fifty years: a) from the 1940s to the 1960s, b) from the 1960s to the 1980s, and c) from the 1980s and beyond. We will discuss the three periods in succession below.

1940s - 1960s

The first period was greatly influenced by theories of behaviourism. Teaching pronunciation, therefore, was based on having learners imitate the sounds they hear. Most

lessons were built around activities where learners had to listen and repeat. Murphy (2003, p. 113) explains "[b]*ased upon scripts and dialogues to be memorized, language lessons feature teacher-led presentations of language samples, substitution drills, intensive practice with sentence patterns, and so forth*". This can be described as an aspect of the intuitive-imitative approach which will be discussed in Section 3.6.2.1.

This period coincided with the rise of Audiolingualism in the United States and of the Oral Approach in Britain. Pronunciation was given paramount importance in classroom practices within both the Audiolingual and Oral approaches. In the same line of thought, Morley (2000, p. 101) posits "[i]*n fact, along with correct grammar, accuracy of pronunciation was a high-priority goal in both systems*". Describing the features of pronunciation targeted, Morley (ibid.) explains that the pronunciation class "*gave primary attention to phonemes and their meaningful contrasts, environmental allophonic variations, and combinatory phonotactic rules, along with structurally based attention to stress, rhythm and intonation*" (p. 101).

1960s to 1980s

During this period, pronunciation rebecame the 'Cinderella' of language teaching. Some EFL programmes and curricula gave very little attention to pronunciation instruction and others dropped it completely. This shift was due to the cognitive approach, influenced by Chomsky's transformational-generative grammar and cognitive psychology which considered language as a set of structures and rules. Celce-Murcia et al. (2010, p. 5) explain that such an approach to language teaching

> *deemphasised pronunciation in favour of grammar and vocabulary because its advocates argued (1) nativelike pronunciation was an unrealistic objective and could not be achieved (…); and (2) time would be better spent on teaching more learnable items, such as grammatical structures and words.*

However in the 1970s, a growing literature questioned again some issues concerning pronunciation and its instruction. Morley (2000, p. 102) summarises the issues and topics raised by a number of EFL and ESL publications:

These articles all addressed topics that were to be issues of continuing concern into the 1980s: (a) basic philosophical considerations for teaching pronunciation; (b) the importance of meaning and contextualised practice; (c) learner involvement; self-monitoring, and learners' feelings; (d) learner cognitive involvement; (e)intelligibility issues; (f) variability issues; (g) correction issues; (h) increasing attention to stress, rhythm, intonation, reductions, etc.; (i) expanded perspectives on listening/pronunciation focus; (j) attention to the sound-spelling link.

1980s and beyond

The advent of communicative and task-based language teaching brought new insights into language teaching and pronunciation instruction. Morley (2000) signals a growing interest in pronunciation and its instruction, which was clearly apparent through a considerable increase in both journal articles and teacher resource books. This literature leads us to say that the pendulum swung back and pronunciation received a renewed consideration in the instruction equation. Intelligible pronunciation, then, could not be dissociated from communicative competence.

This implies that learners were directed towards using their abilities to learn through doing. To that end, Kolb (1984) identifies four main abilities to develop in learners:

a) be willing to be actively involved in the experience,

b) be able to reflect on the experience,

c) possess and use analytical skills to conceptualise the experience, and

d) possess decision making and problem skills solving.

The focus on language as communication made it necessary to give pronunciation higher consideration. Celce-Murcia et al. (2010) explain that this renewed urgency to the teaching of pronunciation was due to a threshold level of pronunciation for non-native

speakers of English which, if not reached, may cause communication breakdowns. Learners, therefore, were encouraged to use the various aspects of pronunciation as interactively as possible. In this sense, teachers were advised to have little recourse to technical explanations of pronunciation features and give learners "*increased opportunities to begin conversing with one another while using the targeted sounds*" (Murphy, 2003, p. 115).

This represented a challenge for learners who were required to incorporate newly learned aspects of pronunciation into more opportunities to speak. For the success of such a challenge, Celce-Murcia (1987) suggests a process based on four stages:

1) identifying sounds or sound patterns apposite for bettering pronunciation,

2) providing authentic contexts for natural language use of the identified sounds or sound patterns,

3) designing communicative-based classroom activities of real language use that includes the targeted sounds, and

4) developing focused instructional tasks apt to recycle the teaching point while providing new contexts for further training on the identified sounds.

3.4 The importance of pronunciation and its instruction

One may question the extent to which pronunciation is important in the EFL teaching/learning process and the development of life coping skills. We will study the impact of pronunciation with relation to four aspects. Firstly, we will highlight the importance that pronunciation knowledge has in optimising communication. Secondly, the notion of perceived competence will be explained. Thirdly, some discussion will be devoted to the effect of some psychological and social aspects on pronunciation and vice versa. Fourthly, some light will be shed on its role in EFL learning, especially in the enhancement of other skills such as listening and lexis.

3.4.1 Communicative value

A growing body of literature (Brazil, 1997; Celce-Murcia et al., 2010; Dalton & Seidlhofer, 1994; Dewing & Munro, 2009; Morley, 1991) aims at raising awareness of the role pronunciation plays in communication. Pennington and Richards (1986) criticise EFL teaching where pronunciation is treated incidentally and posit "*it is artificial to divorce pronunciation from communication and from other aspects of language use, for sounds are a fundamental part of the process by which we communicate and comprehend lexical, grammatical, and sociolinguistic meaning*" (p. 208).

Pronunciation is essential to successful communication. Segmental features and to a greater extent suprasegmental features have a key communicative significance in discourse. Prosodic features of spoken language can be decisive in the listener's interpretation of the message intended by the speaker. Brazil (1997) devotes a whole to prioritise the communicative function of intonation. A listener may perceive a speaker's attitudes or emotions based largely on intonation patterns or contours.

Incorrect pronunciation may cause misunderstanding and hinder communication flow. Misuse or absence of rhythm in speech can also hamper communication. Graham (1992) explains how rhythm, stress and intonation are critical elements without which conveying meaning successfully is difficult. In this sense, listeners are required to perceive rhythmicality from an ongoing stream of speech if they are to understand spoken language.

Dalton and Seidlhofer (1994) explain how important prosodic features are to discourse and communication. They deplore the fact that teachers neglect the suprasegments and focus more on segments which "*are relatively easy to teach, but relatively less important for communication*" (ibid., p. 73). In terms of balance between teachability (Discussed in Section 3.4) and communicative importance, it is suggested to focus on stress as an area of maximum overlap since stress is important for the quality of sounds and intonation alike (ibid.). McNerney and Mendelsohn (1992, p. 186) explain this position very clearly:

> a (…) pronunciation course should focus first and foremost on
> suprasegmentals as they have the greatest impact on the

comprehensibility of the learner's English. We have found that giving priority to the suprasegmental aspects of English not only improves learners' comprehensibility but is also less frustrating for students because greater change can be effected in a short time.

3.4.2 Perceived competence

Pronunciation competence can impact both the speaker and the listener. In other words, there is a dual psychological dimension that involves both the speaker's self-perception of their actual competence and the listener's perception of the speaker's pronunciation competence. The former may enhance the learner's self-confidence and reduce the feeling of anxiety, as will be discussed in Section 3.4.3.

'Good' pronunciation can give a value added quality to the speakers in more ways than one. It is naturally the first thing people notice when listening to others. Limited vocabulary or slight grammar problems may be overlooked, but the quality of pronunciation is certain to be noticed from the very first words an individual utters. They can arouse a positive impression in their interlocutors or do just the opposite.

People are generally more receptive when the speaker's accent is pleasant to listen to. This will not cause any unpleasant burden on the listener's ears and comprehending the message will require no extra effort. Otherwise, they may get uncomfortable asking the speaker to repeat several times.

According to Henderson (2014, p. 69) "[s]*uccess is most of the time measured against the native speaker norm, with impressionistic yet durable judgements about a speaker often based solely on their accent*". We can assume that not only can successful pronunciation be positive to the speaker's perceived accent, but it can also help create a social and emotional bond with the interlocutors.

3.4.3 Enhanced self-confidence

A large body of literature (Liu, 2006; Mak, 2011; Woodrow, 2006) report the feeling of anxiety caused by oral performance. This feeling is due to several factors. Most EFL learners agree on the aspects of English pronunciation as the main factor to increase their

anxiety (Burgess & Spencer, 2000; Rogerson-Revell, 2011). According to Baran-Lucarz (2014, p. 38), anxiety caused by pronunciation is

> *a feeling of apprehension experienced by FL learners either in the FL classroom or natural setting, deriving from negative FL pronunciation self-perceptions, fear of negative evaluation, and beliefs about the importance of pronunciation, difficulty of learning and the sound of the FL pronunciation*

A learner's pronunciation self-perception and self-efficacy are of paramount importance to increasing self-confidence. Moreover, a learner who has positive attitudes towards pronunciation and pronunciation learning may show growing willingness to communicate. In the same vein, Fraser (2006) highlights pronunciation impact on learners with integrative motivation enhancing their confidence and sense of achievement as far as communication is concerned.

3.4.4 Enhanced learning

Literature outlining ideas and frameworks for integrating pronunciation practice with other language skills instruction has helped shift paradigms in pronunciation teaching. In the same line of thought, Celce-Murcia et al. (2010, p. 365) posit

> *We believe that the intersection of the sound system with these three areas – listening, grammar and spelling – is extremely important since the English sound system cannot be learned (and thus should not be taught) in a vacuum. The sound system, a resource for creating meaning and for expressing a variety of functions, relates to every other aspect of the language. These natural connections must be understood by teachers if they wish to help learners develop good listening comprehension and intelligible pronunciation as a natural part of their communicative language proficiency.*

Consequently, pronunciation aspects cannot be taught in isolation. It is more effective to introduce them to learners in an integrated approach. We try in the following to highlight the role of pronunciation in fostering language learning, through early exposure to natural authentic pronunciation, and the development of some language aspects such as vocabulary and grammar[3].

Several scholars (Baker, 1992; Baker, 2006; Celce-Murcia et al., 2010) agree that learners should pay attention to pronunciation at an early stage of the language learning process. This assertion is based on the observation of varied cases where advanced learners can improve several aspects of their proficiency in English, but not their pronunciation due to fossilised mistakes which become very difficult to unlearn and eradicate.

Nation and Newton (2009, p. 75) defend the idea of developing a stable pronunciation of a new language. Pronouncing a word or a phrase repeatedly helps learners memorise them and store them in the long-term memory. This mechanism is called the phonological loop. Several scholars (Ellis and Beaton, 1993; Baddeley et al., 1998; Singleton, 1999) agree that absence of a stable pronunciation can prevent learners from entering the new words pronunciation in the long-term memory and retaining them in the phonological loop.

The two notions of fossilisation and phonological loop reinforce the principle of exposing learners to an authentic form of pronunciation of the English language as early as possible. When learners acquire and use one form of pronunciation, it is hard to change it. It is usually more difficult to unteach than to teach language points in case they are wrongly taught and inappropriately conceptualised and internalised.

It is important to note that pronunciation plays an important role in developing learners' acquisition of vocabulary. Gilbert (2008) states that "*English language learners tend to ignore stress when they learn vocabulary. And failure to learn the stress of new words often leads to an inability to recognize those words in spoken form*" (p. 14). This can

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[3] We deliberately leave the integration of pronunciation with listening and speaking to be discussed in Section 3.8.

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result in learners failing to understand the words correctly or conveying the message accurately. Training students in pronunciation features may help to optimise vocabulary learning since they become aware of some pronunciation patterns such as word stress. Learners can, then, be able to apply their knowledge of those patterns to pronounce new words.

Similarly, the sound system interacts with grammar. Instances of inflectional and derivational morphology can be put forward to explain the intersection between grammar and pronunciation. Concerning inflectional morphology, we can cite the pronunciation of final 's' and the pronunciation of final 'ed'. Learners can be taught the same set of pronunciation rules that can be applied to regular plural forms, the third person singular in the present simple, and the possessive case as far as the 's' inflectional ending is concerned. As for derivational grammar, stress shift linked to derivational suffixes can be targeted. For example stress on the second syllable of the noun Japan /dʒəˈpæn/ shifts to the third syllable with the adjective/noun /ˌdʒæp.ənˈiːz/. Another instance of intersection is linked to intonation patterns that can be taught with different types of questions ('wh' questions, 'yes/no' questions and tag questions) and statements. A third case concerns spelling and doubling the final consonant 'r' in stressed CVC ending of verbs (e.g. occur occurred or deter deterrent).

It is clear from the discussion above that pronunciation is a key element in the development of oral skills. Most of the time correct pronunciation is deep-rooted in competent speakers, yet we still need to help learners develop pronunciation competence. The integration of pronunciation in teaching practice can play a significant role in supporting the learners' overall communicative skill. Having discussed the importance of pronunciation and its instruction, we address now the teachability of pronunciation components in the following section.

3.5 Pronunciation teachability

Pronunciation teachability is one of the most challenging conundrums of EFL and ESL pedagogy. Szpyra (2015) draws attention to the fact that "*the teachability/learnability argument should be approached with due caution, as what is teachable to some learners*

may be unteachable to others" (p. 15). Literature dealing with EFL and ESL pedagogy shows a wide divergence of opinion as to the treatment of pronunciation. There are two sides to this debate: proponents who are in favour of teaching pronunciation and opponents who are against the inclusion of pronunciation instruction in curricula.

The belief that pronunciation is neither teachable nor learnable is shared by a considerable number of practitioners. They put forward pronunciation difficulty and demanding technicality, which lays considerable burden on the shoulders of teachers and learners alike. This view is confirmed by Brown (2014, p. 196) who claims

> [m]*any teachers treat pronunciation as if it were not important, by sweeping it under the carpet. Common remarks from teachers are that they are not good at teaching it, they do not like teaching it, they do not teach it often, and, as a result, the pronunciation work they do carry out is probably not enough to meet the learners' needs.*

Thus, the easiest option for such reluctant teachers is to exclude pronunciation aspects or, in some cases, teach those aspects believed to be teachable such as sounds and word stress. Similarly, Dalton and Seidlhofer (1994, pp. 72-73) state

> [s]*ome things, say the distinction between fortis and lenis consonants, are fairly easy to describe and to generalise—they are teachable. Other aspects, notably the attitudinal function of intonation, are extremely dependent on individual circumstances and therefore nearly impossible to isolate out for direct teaching.*

The point here is that those teachable aspects are practised in the classroom whereas the other aspects considered unteachable are left to be acquired by the learners without the teacher's intervention. The success of such an approach depends largely on the learners' motivation and exposure span to English. Besides, some suprasegments like intonation and rhythm that are pivotal to communication are not targeted at all, which may only lead to failure.

We believe we need to countenance what Morley (1991) posits about pronunciation treatment. The issue cannot be whether or not to teach pronunciation, but instead what pronunciation aspects to teach and how. The immediate questions that arise are (a) how to prioritise features of pronunciation, (b) what teaching approach to adopt, and (c) what pronunciation model to target to achieve successful intelligible communication.

Pronunciation instruction may not help achieve native-likeness, if that were to be the objective, since there can be extraneous factors such as for example the learners' age or tone deafness. However, there is a considerable body of literature that suggests explicit instruction of pronunciation features may improve learners' pronunciation skills and support mother tongue accent reduction to a great extent. EFL pronunciation can be taught under a framework which sets mutual intelligibility as a reasonable aim. The notion of intelligibility will be discussed in Section 3.7. The next section addresses approaches to teaching pronunciation.

3.6 Approaches to pronunciation instruction

EFL teachers approach the teaching of pronunciation in different ways. This multiplicity of approaches may be influenced by the beliefs and attitudes they have about what language is, what it is used for, and how learning takes place. Besides, they may differ in their views about the importance of pronunciation, its instruction, and its role. The point in this section is to discuss some of the approaches that most scholars have shown interest in, claiming their effectiveness in pronunciation instruction to achieve oral mastery and enhance communication.

Five major approaches dealing with the teaching of pronunciation are discussed in the following lines, namely the bottom-up approach, the top-down approach, the intuitive-imitative approach, the analytic-linguistic approach, and the integrative approach.

3.6.1 The top-down approach *vs.* The bottom-up approach

One major question that needs answering is what strategies and procedures learners use to process information and structure their knowledge. Psychologists and psycholinguists alike have addressed this issue putting forward two main approaches,

namely top-down and bottom-up approaches. EFL researchers cannot come to a conclusion, and they have tried to inquire into the impact of these two approaches on the teaching/learning process of the English language. Pronunciation, as a skill which is part of this process, has received some attention aiming at studying how it should be approached and taught.

According to Pennington & Richards (1986), an effective teaching of pronunciation must include segmental features, voice-setting features and prosodic features. It is clear that both segmental and suprasegmental features should be included in EFL syllabi. The point is to decide which order to implement. Dalton and Seidlhofer (1994) state that there are two approaches aimed at pronunciation teaching, the bottom-up approach and top-down approach. They differ in the order, gradation and way the features of pronunciation are instructed.

When the reference is made to a bottom-up approach, one can understand that the teaching strategies are designed to move from the smallest unit to the largest. As far as pronunciation instruction is concerned, such an approach treats pronunciation by teaching segments initially, and then moving to suprasegments as a further skill to instill. More precisely, it is based on beginning with the articulation of individual sounds or phonemes and building upward with stress, rhythm, and intonation. Dalton and Seidlhofer (1994) put forward that the assumption behind such an approach is that if the segmental features are taught first, the suprasegmental features will subsequently be acquired without having recourse to formal instruction.

However, a considerable number of scholars stress that pronunciation should be taught using a top-down approach, i.e. focusing on the rhythm and intonation of entire phrases and sentences (Pennington & Richards, 1986; Pennington, 1989). The justification of such pedagogical sequencing is based on research showing that prosodic or suprasegmental features of language contribute more to intelligibility than do segmental features that can be more easily decoded through context (Anderson-Hsieh & Koehler, 1988; Anderson-Hsieh, Johnson, & Koehler, 1992; McNermey & Mendelsohn, 1992; Gilbert, 1993).

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In a top-down treatment of pronunciation, the process is primarily based on the larger units of meaning in manipulating and comprehending language. In this sense, patterns of intonation and rhythm are introduced first with the possibility of focusing on sounds and phonemes as and when required. Advocates of this approach assume that once suprasegmental aspects are in place, the needed segmental discriminations will follow accordingly. Bian (2013) suggests the inclusion of strategies that pay more attention to suprasegmentals. Pennington and Richards (1986) agree that segmental accuracy should not be the fundamental aim of teaching because *"accurate production of segmental features does not in itself characterize native-like pronunciation, nor is it the primary basis for intelligible speech"* (p. 218). Derwing and Rossiter (2003) clearly posit in favour of more emphasis on suprasegments instruction and state "[w]*e do not advocate eliminating segment-based instruction altogether, but, if the goal of pronunciation teaching is to help students become more understandable, then this study suggests that it should include a stronger emphasis on prosody*" (p. 14).

In the same vein, Gilbert (2008) with her prosody pyramid highlights the importance of teaching suprasegmental features within a top-down strategy. Also, Lee (2008) claims that there needs to be more focus on the suprasegmentals of stress, rhythm, intonation and juncture as practised in discourse beyond the phoneme level. The assumption that learners are to be trained in prosodic features is also necessary to optimise their communicative language ability. Gilbert (ibid., p. 8) summarises this position saying

> [w]*ithout a sufficient, threshold-level mastery of the English prosodic system, learners' intelligibility and listening comprehension will not advance, no matter how much effort is made drilling individual sounds. That is why the highest priority must be given to rhythm and melody in whatever time is available for teaching pronunciation. If there is more time, then other lower priority topics can be addressed (e.g., the sound of the letters th, the difference between the sounds associated with r and l, etc.), but priority must be given to prosody.*

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The basic idea in both bottom-up processing and top-down processing is that there is overt attention and treatment of one type of features (sergmentals or suprasegmentals) and the other type will take care of itself. Teachers need to be knowledgeable about and trained in both approaches so that they can implement the appropriate processing to reach the targeted objectives. Dalton and Seidlhofer (1994, p. 90) explain "[c]*learly, a particular direction (bottom-up/top-down) is not likely to be rigidly adhered to throughout the entire course: different purposes and stages in learning call for different priorities*".

3.6.2 Intuitive-imitative, analytic-linguistic and integrative approaches

According to Celce-Murcia et al. (2010), three approaches to pronunciation instruction are generally proposed. These are the intuitive-imitative approach, the analytic-linguistic approach, and the integrative approach. These approaches combine traditional methods and modern techniques.

3.6.2.1 The intuitive-imitative approach

The intuitive-imitative approach to teaching pronunciation "*depends on the learner's ability to listen to and imitate the sounds of the target language*" (Franklin Thambi, 2016, p. 10). The learner's inherent ability and their exposure to spoken language "*will give rise to the development of an acceptable threshold of pronunciation without the intervention of any explicit information*" (Hismanoglu & Hismanoglu, 2010, p. 984).

Such an approach relies on an implicit and indirect manipulation and instruction of pronunciation features. Learners are supposed to be involved in 'listen and repeat' activities in the form of phonetic drills.

The effectiveness of this approach depends greatly on two aspects. First, learners should be exposed to a 'good' model of pronunciation. This presupposes native-like competence on the part of the teachers and the availability of audio material to expose learners to natural authentic spoken English. Two, the capacity of learners to listen and reproduce the same pronunciation features they are trained on. In Chapters One and Two, we tried to stress the complexity of the speaking and listening skills, which leads us to say that learners differ in their competence and processing skills. We cannot assume naively to

have optimised our learners' performances in terms of pronunciation simply by exposing learners to spoken English, although it could work for some.

3.6.2.2 The analytic-linguistic approach

Research in different fields of L2 learning and teaching has shown that the use of explicit instruction can have useful effects in learning (Murphy, 2003). We can, therefore approach pronunciation by opting for a teaching where explicit information about pronunciation is implemented. Literature in the field of second language learning qualifies this approach as analytic-linguistic. According to Celce-Murcia et al. (2010, p. 2), the analytic-linguistic approach

> *(1) utilizes information and tools such as a phonetic alphabet, articulatory descriptions, charts of the vocal apparatus, contrastive information, and other aids to supplement listening, imitation, and production.*

> *(2) explicitly informs the learner of and focuses attention on the sounds and rhythms of the target language.*

> *(3) was developed to complement rather than to replace the intuitive-imitative approach, which was typically retained as the practice phase used in tandem with the phonetic information.*

The explicit treatment of the features of pronunciation can help reduce negative transfer. Instead of relying solely on learners' phonological interpretation based on the patterns of their mother tongue, teachers can raise learners' awareness of the target language phonological specificities.

We believe a combination of both intuitive-imitative and analytic-linguistic approaches can participate in improving the learners' perception of the pronunciation features. Adopting a teaching that relies on principles from both approaches may help meet different learning styles and intelligences. For some learners, just the fact of being exposed to an amount of spoken language can be sufficient to get them conceptualise pronunciation rules and patterns. Most learners, however, may necessitate a direct explicit treatment of

pronunciation features before they become aware of them and can use them in their spoken language.

3.6.2.3 The integrative approach

Several scholars plead in favour of an integrative approach to teaching pronunciation. Gilbert (1987), for example, privileges the linking of pronunciation practice with the teaching of listening. This may lead to the use of pronunciation-focused listening activities to optimise pronunciation learning. Watts and Huensch (2013) support an integrated teaching of pronunciation, listening and speaking. They believe that "*an integrated SPL* [speaking/pronunciation/listening] *curriculum can offer a meaningful way to contextualize pronunciation points in addition to providing opportunities for students to connect the various pronunciation topics covered*" (p. 273).

A broader integration of pronunciation can be achieved through the inclusion of meaningful task-based activities and communicative speaking activities (Ellis, 2003). Lee (2008) believes that "*in the integrative approach, pronunciation is viewed as an integral component of communication, rather than an isolated drill*" (p. 1). Morley (1994) is in favour of a teaching program that promotes oral communication with a dual focus: a) a micro level focusing on linguistic (phonetic and phonological) competence by practicing segmental and suprasegmental features and b) a macro level targeting more global elements of communicability by improving on discourse, sociolinguistic, and strategic competence. In the same vein, Setter and Jenkins (2005, p. 12) state

> [f]*rom a broad point of view, pronunciation needs to lose its isolated character and be treated pedagogically as part of communication and discourse. This would mean focusing on what will help a learner make meaning in communicative situations at the same time as learning about other aspects of language.*

3.7 Intelligible pronunciation vs. Native-like pronunciation

One of the major issues in teaching pronunciation is to decide what accent to target in an EFL classroom. We are not questioning the variety – General American English or

RP English – to teach in our English classrooms. This is linked to another rationale which is outside the scope of our research. The point is to decide whether to train learners to become native-like speakers of English or work on an accent which allows them to be understood.

It is a truism that native-likeness or near native-like pronunciation represents a desired objective for any learner of English as a foreign or second language. Such learners, who tend to give high importance to the way they sound, strive to lose or reduce their original / mother tongue accent when speaking English. Some of these learners tend to show a negative attitude about their non-native accent and feel ashamed of their oral performance. Moreover, some teaching approaches and methods, including Audiolingualism and the Direct Method, set native-like competence as the aim to reach.

Nevertheless, the idea that learners should speak and sound like native speakers is an unrealistic goal for an important number of scholars (Derwing and Munro, 2005; Derwing and Munro, 2009; Goodwin, 2001; Moyer, 2004; Munro, 2011; Scovel, 2000). McDonough & Shaw (2013, p. 160) ascertain that "[c]*ertainly a native speaker model is unrealistic for the majority of learners, and 'perfection' is an unattainable goal*".

This does not imply that pronunciation cannot be learned, it should however be learned and taught with the objective of communicative ability in mind. Non-native users of English legitimately feel they have the right to understand and be understood when involved in oral-aural interactions.

In this sense, teachers and learners should set realistic goals for pronunciation teaching. Burns and Claire (2003) are in favour of a teaching of pronunciation that prioritises intelligibility, comprehensibility, and interpretability. In the same line of thought, Howlader (2010) argues that mutual intelligibility, comprehensibility, and neutral accent can enhance oral communication.

There is a growing body of empirical evidence that draws attention to the importance of the clarity and intelligibility of one's pronunciation in successful communication. 'Good' pronunciation is of paramount importance in optimising intelligibility. Derwing and Munro (2005) explain how essential intelligibility is to communication. Munro (2011,

p. 7) rightly describes intelligibility as "*a fundamental requirement in human interaction*". Besides, the notion of intelligibility is tackled by most specialists in pronunciation and pronunciation teaching. Munro (ibid.) highlights the connection between intelligibility and pronunciation teaching saying that "*intelligibility is a much-touted concept in current research on second-language pronunciation teaching and instruction of World Englishes*" (p. 7). In the same vein, Morley (1991, p. 488) stresses the importance of intelligible pronunciation as an essential component of communication competence. Similarly, Fraser (2006) emphasises its role in enhancing comprehensibility claiming that the mastery of the finite number of sounds, sound clusters and intonation patterns enables an infinite use. The discussion above can be best summarised by Celce-Murcia et al. (2010, p. 9):

> *The goal of teaching pronunciation to such learners is not to make them sound like native speakers of English. With the exception of a few highly gifted and motivated individuals, such a goal is unrealistic. A more modest and realistic goal is to enable learners to surpass the threshold level so that their pronunciation will not detract from their ability to communicate.*

This being said, the issue, then, is to decide what pronunciation framework to implement in order to ensure intelligibility. It is largely agreed that certain suprasegemetal features can undermine intelligibility and communication (Derwing et al., 1998; Hahn, 2004). Deterding (2012) asserts that the use of full instead of reduced vowels enhances and does not impede intelligibility. In this sense, non-native speakers of English do not need to be trained on weak and strong forms and vowel reduction (Cruttenden, 2008; Jenkins, 2000).

This view is motivated by the status of English as a Lingua Franca or English as an International Language where English is treated as a syllable-timed language rather than a stress-timed language. This might be applicable when non-native speakers are interacting with other non-native speakers. The situation is completely different in communication involving native speakers and non-native speakers of English. This issue is tackled by Rogerson-Revell (2011) who suggests the teaching of weak forms to learners so that they

can understand native speakers and develop their listening competence in English. In the same line of thought, Low (2015, p. 85) explains that

> *the introduction of weak forms in the (...) pronunciation classroom is not meant to prioritise native English speech but as a means to emphasise them for non-native speakers to understand this concept if they have to listen to and understand the speech of native speakers of English.*

In the light of the above discussion, intelligibility has become an empirically sound concept in the field of EFL pedagogy, which justifies its being taken into consideration when setting aims and objectives to EFL pronunciation instruction. It is imperative that EFL learners be trained to reach reasonably intelligible pronunciation which can give them communicative empowerment. This objective can be acceptable for learners who have to use English for communicative purposes. We firmly believe the case of would-be teachers is genuinely different. These learners should be trained to become reasonably good models of pronunciation for their future learners. We do not think intelligibility per se is a satisfactory objective for such a population.

3.8 Pronunciation instruction to improve speaking and listening skills

A considerable number of learners of English express how difficult it is for them to make out spoken words in a stream of speech. This is due to the fact that individual sounds of spoken English are altered when submitted to the pressures of communication inherent in the prosody. A learner may be puzzled when they try to look up a word and check its pronunciation in a dictionary then realise that the word sounds different in connected speech. Gilbert (2008) explains that "*it is important to realize that actual pronunciation of that word may be dramatically changed depending on its importance to the speaker at a particular moment*" (p. 7). Brown (1977, p. 159) gives an insightful explanation of the problem,

> *From the point of view of understanding ordinary spoken English, the failure to move beyond the basic elementary pronunciation of spoken English must be regarded as disastrous for any student who*

wants to be able to cope with a native English situation. If the student is only exposed to carefully articulated English, he will have learnt to rely on acoustic signals which will be denied him when he encounters the normal English of native speakers.

Since the realisation of individual sounds is affected by suprasegmental features, achieving successful listening comprehension can greatly be enhanced by overtly teaching the prosodic features of the English language pronunciation. Gilbert (2008) stresses the fact that "[i]*nstruction should concentrate on the way English speakers depend on rhythm and melody to organize thoughts, highlight important words, and otherwise guide their listener*" (p. 8). Moreover, increased knowledge of such features of pronunciation can help listeners improve the listening process. They can become more competent at interpreting meaning and remedy some issues of misunderstanding. This is why Wong (1993) argues that the importance of pronunciation is even more distinct when the connection between pronunciation and listening comprehension is taken into account.

Not only can good pronunciation instruction benefit successful listening comprehension, it also helps speakers become more intelligible. Listening is precursor to speaking. Successful listeners who prove to be competent in processing prosody of the English language are likely to become competent speakers. They can reach an acceptable form of pronunciation which does not hinder oral communication. Gilbert (2008) clearly favours the teaching of suprasegmental features over segmental ones as recourse to improve the learners' listening and speaking skills.

Speaking activities which focus on the pronunciation of isolated linguistic elements should be replaced in favour of opportunities for learners to produce more oral language likely to be experienced in authentic contexts. Teachers must help their students become more competent at speaking by training them adequately on segments and suprasegments alike. Most pronunciation courses focus on the segmental features of pronunciation, which does not help enhance the speaking ability of learners on the one hand and their communicative language ability on the other. (Nation, 2011, p. 448) explains that "[t]*his unfavourable attitude has also been the result of pronunciation teachers taking too narrow a view of what is included in pronunciation*". He adds "[a]*lthough speaking is a meaning-*

focused activity, there is value in giving deliberate attention to a range of language features to improve the quality of spoken output. Most obvious of these is pronunciation". (ibid., p. 448)

3.9 Perception, recognition and production

An emphasis on speech perception has resulted from an attempt to understand the process of phonological learning. In this sense, Munro and Bohn (2007, p. 5) state that "[m]*uch work on L2 speech learning has focused on segmental distinctions that pose perceptual difficulties for L2 learners*". More research has been done to include the acquisition and perception of tone (Sereno and Wang, 2007), prosody (Aoyama and Guion, 2007), and word recognition (Walley, 2007).

The relationship between the perception, recognition, and production of speech should be thoroughly studied. Such an investigation will help enlighten the field of pronunciation teaching and offer insights for more enhancement and betterment. Odisho (2014) explains that "[a]*ny teaching of pronunciation should thoroughly follow the three-stage procedure of sound acquisition: perception, recognition and production in the sequence indicated*" (p. 87).

Before discussing the relationship between these three concepts, we ought to define them first. Perception is used to indicate the condition of feeling and sensing the presence of a given sound. Recognition comprises the condition of perception as well as the condition of being able to distinguish the given sound from others. It can even include the condition of identifying the difference(s) in comparative/contrastive situations. Production includes the conditions of perception and recognition as well as the ability to retrieve the sound and produce it when needed in an accurate form (Odisho, 2014).

Several scholars have tried to shed light on the relationship between perception and production and identify how they affect one another. Strange (1995, p. 40) notes that perception changes slowly over time in relation to input and use but these changes do "*not necessarily mirror changes in production patterns*". In the same line of thought, Wang (2002) claims that improved perception may not lead to improved production.

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Other scholars (Bradlow et al., 1997; Rochet, 1995; Yamada et al., 1996) however posit that changes in perception do lead to changes in production. For (Goto 1971; Sheldon and Strange 1982) production can precede perception. Yet, for (Leather 1997; Mathews 1997), production training has an effect on perception. Fledge (1995) assumes that perception leads to production in L2 speech and that greater perceptual accuracy leads to changes in production.

Learners' understanding of EFL phonological categories is dependent on a variety of variables. Hence, it is difficult to get a clear description of the relationship between perception, recognition and production. Although inquiry into perception, recognition, and production falls short of agreement on their relationship and how they affect one another, findings are insightful and worth considering.

This can have several implications for teaching. Insufficient exposure to pronunciation features may result in learners' failure to reproduce those features. Understanding speech perception may provide teachers with insights so that they can help their learners develop from listeners into proficient performers. A teacher of oral expression need not be a speech specialist or a phonetician. Yet, one needs to have sufficient knowledge about the perception and production of the pronunciation features of English.

To that end, exposure to a substantial amount of high-quality input as well as training in the perception and production of the English pronunciation features can be considered as important factors that contribute to success.

3.10 Conclusion

We cannot deny the fact that pronunciation is one of the most complicated and challenging aspects of EFL teaching and learning. That is why it has been considered the 'Cinderella' of several ELT approaches and curricula. Such a view needs to change by giving pronunciation and pronunciation instruction their due status.

We have tried to define English pronunciation including its segmental and suprasegmental features. Some focus has been drawn on the treatment of pronunciation

within some EFL/ESL teaching approaches and methods. We have underlined the communicative value of pronunciation and the importance of teaching pronunciation to enhance learners' communicative ability. We have also discussed the teachability of pronunciation and the possible approaches to its instruction. We have attempted to shed light on the necessity to decide upon a framework that describes the type of pronunciation we target for our learners.

Consequently, it is of paramount importance to train learners on pronunciation so that their communication competence can be optimised. For that purpose, teachers need to be aware of the importance of pronunciation and its instruction. Instructors, therefore, need to opt for the appropriate teaching practices in order to improve their effectiveness in pronunciation instruction. The methodology of teaching pronunciation needs to be carefully considered. We need to decide what aspects of pronunciation and competences to focus on and how to present them to learners.

Chapter Three has covered the constituent elements of pronunciation and their treatment in an EFL context. In the next chapter, we will deal with an analysis of the situation and the fieldwork.

Chapter Four: Analysis of Current Situation and Fieldwork

4.1 Introduction

English is taught in the Algerian context at different levels: middle, secondary and tertiary. The Algerian language policy has always given an important status to the English language and its teaching.

We shall give a description of the linguistic situation in Algeria with the language policies in effect since independence in 1962. We shall also attempt to draw a picture of the EFL status in the Algerian education system in general and the tertiary level in particular. We shall give an overview of the curriculum including the subjects and objectives set for freshmen university students in the department of English at the University of Mostaganem.

In addition to that, we shall deal with the fieldwork and explain the methodology adopted for this research, the informants, and the statistical measurements. We shall describe the experiment we conducted with freshmen university students at Abdelahmid Ibn Badis University of Mostaganem. To that end, we will explain the different phases included in the experiment. As survey tool, an interview will be included and described. We will also say a few words about the informants who kindly accepted to take part in the interview and answered our questions.

4.2 Linguistic situation in Algeria

Algeria is an interesting context for linguistic and sociolinguistic studies. The linguistic situation is clearly characterised by multilingualism, a result of Algeria's history as a coveted country that attracted numerous colonisers under different forms of colonisation. Across the country, we can find different languages with different linguistic and constitutional standings. A word of caution is necessary here to describe a complex linguistic situation with conflicting views. Our aim is to make an inventory of the linguistic varieties present in Algeria. We will, briefly, present the three main languages spoken in Algeria, namely Arabic, Berber or Tamazight, and French.

4.2.1 Arabic

Arabic is a Semitic language which was introduced in Algeria as part of the Islamic conquests in the seventh century. Arabic has gained a strong status in the Algerian context due to religious ties making it a symbol of Arabo-Muslim identity. The variety of Arabic used in the Koran is described as Classical Arabic, CA, as opposed to its modernised form, Modern Standard Arabic, MSA, which is used in most formal and official events in Algeria. MSA is grammatically and phonologically based on CA. As for vocabulary, we can identify loan words from mainly English and French, especially in scientific and technological fields. MSA has been the official language of Algeria since 1963[4].

We need to be cautious when we use the term Arabic. A lot of Algerians, when asked about the language they speak, they unhesitatingly answer 'Arabic'. They should be using the concept Algerian Arabic instead. A variety of dialects can be identified across the country. They happen to have an extensive oral literature.

Applying Ferguson's (1959) framework, Algeria can be described as a diglossic situation where MSA is used as the high variety for formal purposes and Algerian Arabic as the low variety for everyday interactions. We can summarise the functions of the two varieties in the table below.

MSA (High form)	Algerian dialects (Low form)
Religious activities	Conversations with family, friends and colleagues
Political speeches and official speeches	
Education	Conversations on the street
News broadcast	Folk literature
Newspapers	Songs
	Some movies, serials, and plays

Table 4.1: Functions of MSA and Algerian dialects (Adapted from Ferguson, 1959, p. 236)

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[4] Article 5 in the Algerian Constitution (1963): The Arabic language is the national and official language of the State.

4.2.2 Berber

Greek people were the first to use the word Berber to refer to people of North Africa. Romans and Arabs continued to use the same term for the same function. Berbers, therefore, are the earliest recorded inhabitants of the region.

Several Berber varieties are spoken in different parts of the country. The major berber-speaking groups in Algeria are identified in the Kabylie Mountains in Tizi Ouzou and Bejaia, the Chaouia in the Aures, Rifi or Tharifit near the Moroccan borders, and Mozabites in the region of Ghardaia. These groups speak different dialects, the Kabyle, the Chaouia, the Tamasheq, and the Mozabi.

The Algerian authorities are in the process of standardising and generalising Tamazight for teaching purposes. The language is of Hamito-Semitic origin like the other varieties, but it has the advantage of being geographically neutral and not displaying any regional connotation. It was first recognised as a second national language in the revised Algerian Constitution of 2002. Its status was raised to make it the country's second official language in 2015[5].

4.2.3 French

The presence of the French language is linked to the colonial history of Algeria when the French invaded it in 1830. Yet even after the French left in 1962, their language is still present in the Algerian linguistic context. Although its international status is recognised, the qualification of its significance in Algeria, whether a foreign language or a second language, is controversial. This situation is sensibly described by Taleb Ibrahimi (1995, p. 50 cited in Benmoussat, 2003, pp. 107-108)

Oscillating constantly between the status of a second language and that of a privileged foreign language, between the denial, the expressiveness of its symbolic power

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[5] Article 4 in the revised Algerian Constitution (2015): Tamazight is also the national and official language of Algeria.

and the reality of its use, the ambiguity of the place assigned to the French language is one of the marked facts of the Algerian linguistic situation.

Whether as a foreign language or as a second language, French is still present in the Algerian context. It is taught as a compulsory subject in the different levels of the educational system. It is used in mass media. We can also find French as a second language to Arabic in some public administrations and even used in official documents. French is the dominant language is certain circles like business, economy, industry, and scientific research. It is still part of the Algerian linguistic profile.

4.3 Language policy and education in Algeria

Independent Algeria has gone through different phases in terms of language planning and language policy. Benrabah (2007) describes three phases (early independence, late 1960s to late 1990s, and early 2000s to present) each of which impacted the educational system.

a) Phase one

Phase one goes back to the early days of independence. Naturally, schools then were dominated by the French language, which was a consequence of more than one century of colonisation. Indeed, this inherited policy imposed a pedagogic context where the French language was the unique medium of instruction. All the subjects at school are taught in French, except for religious courses in Islam. Yet there was also a steady grow of importance of Arabic.

As far as higher education is concerned, the period between 1960s until the late 1970s shows the spread of French for all disciplines, because the teachers working at that time were francophones trained during the colonial period.

b) Phase two

The second phase, from the late 1960s to the late 1990s, "*corresponded to the socialist-era central planning economy, called the nationalist transition*" (Benrabah, 2007, p. 225). The Arabic language started gaining more concern and a higher status. This

coincides with President Benbella's (1962-1965) speech on October 5th, 1962 in which he proclaimed Arabic as the national language of independent Algeria. Since Islam as a religion and Arabic as an official national language were clearly stated in the constitution, a set of actions was undertaken to cease a policy built upon colonial objectives and implement another one built upon arabisation. The process of arabisation began with some objectives which are summarised by Aitslimani (2006) as:

- to name Arabic as a national and the official language of the state and enforce it in all public sectors namely in the government, education and administration purposes;

- to displace and devalue the dominance of French language and culture, through a process called linguistic cleansing. This process has been the result of Language shift, where Arabic displaced French in various areas of social life; and

- to reduce the influence of all vernaculars i.e. spoken varieties of Arabic and Tamazight, seen as degraded forms which cannot enjoy official status.

This led to a gradual imposition of Arabic in the educational sector. The implementation of the process of arabisation resulted into a shift from a bilingual to a monolingual approach in the pedagogic context. Arabic was then the only medium of instruction for all subjects at primary, middle and secondary schools. For a lot of educated Algerians at that time, including some decision makers, the shift in the language planning did not mean the exclusion of the French language which was still considered the language of technology and openness.

At university level, the successive governments called for a total arabisation of year one in social and political sciences, law and economics, (Grandguillaume, 2004). This strategy was meant to give learners the opportunity to continue their studies in Arabic. There was an attempt in vain to arabise the technical and scientific faculties. This strategy was characterized by the implementation of some measures and actions. Effectively, in 1980's a centre for translation was created in order to develop scientific terminology in Arabic (Abid, 2006). Another instance is the recruitment of 1500 Iraqi teachers in 1991 to

pursue the process of arabised scientific faculties (Benrabah, 2014). To a certain extent the strategy did not yield the expected results, and French remains the medium of instruction.

c) Phase three

Phase three started in the early 2000s. Algeria at that time went through a transitory period moving from one economic system, based on socialistic principles, to a more open and freer economic market, based on capitalistic principles. This has led to a different approach to foreign policy and relations with other countries. In order to cope with the demands of globalisation, the Algeria authorities felt the necessity to implement reforms at different levels.

The reforms in the educational system were motivated by first the aspiration to catch up with globalisation, and second the observation of some early signs of failure in education. Benrabah (2007) cites two examples confirming that conclusion. The first example is the one of ten classes of fifth grade (Final year in the primary system) learners in the city of Mascara. Not one single pupil passed the final examination (Sixth Form examination for 11–12 year olds) in June 2005. The second example refers to university norms. The Minister of Higher Education noted that an average of 80% of first year students failed their final exam because of the linguistic barrier. Benrabah (ibid., p. 226) declares

> [T]*he majority of the student population who enrol in higher education have been schooled through Literary/Classical Arabic only and are hence weak in French, the language of instruction in scientific subjects (...) the imposition of an exclusively Arabic monolingual schooling system implemented during the nationalist phase is considered to be a major source of its current ''failure''.*

Berger (2002, p. 8) qualifies language policy as ''*the most severe problem of Algeria in its present and troubled state*''. This issue represents a thorny challenge to the decision makers. What language policy to adapt in education has unleashed virulent debate among specialists and non-specialists. Two positions are clearly noted. The first one, supported by the Arabo-Islamists, favours a monolingual approach to education where Arabic should be

used as the exclusive medium of instruction in all subjects. The second position calls for a bilingual approach to education where French and Arabic can be used together to serve pedagogic purposes.

A series of reforms have been implemented. Most of them followed recommendations from the National Commission for the Reform of the Educational System[6] (CNRSE in French). They can be classified under three categories: language policy, educational structure, and teaching approach. Language policy is clearly marked by decisions giving French language instruction a new dimension. One example is the introduction of French in the second grade (for 6-7 year olds) and later in the third grade (for 7-8 year olds) instead of the fourth grade (for 8-9 year olds). This serves the purpose "*of bilingualism and biliteracy as ways of improving student achievement*" (Benrabah, 2007, p. 227). The scientific subjects can then be taught in a bilingual approach including both Arabic and French.

For the educational structure, it is important to note that the shift from the fundamental school to the new schooling system affected both national education with its three levels and university. Now, a learner goes through five years in the primary school, four years in the middle school, and three years in the secondary school. At the tertiary level, students can pursue a three level curriculum divided into three parts: Licence (three years), Master (two years), and Doctorate (three years).

Concerning the approach to teaching in general and teaching languages in particular, decision makers implemented one based on the development of competencies. Competency Based Approach and Competency Based Language teaching have been implemented in Algeria since 2002.

We have tried to give a picture of the language policy adopted by independent Algeria. We did not include English since it will be our concern in the following section.

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[6] 'Commission Nationale pour la Réforme du Système Educatif', the French name for National Commission for the Reform of the Educational System, was appointed in 2002 by the government to assess the educational system then.

4.4 ELT in Algeria

The status of English as an international language is a convincing enough argument to justify its consideration in the language policy of any country aiming for international visibility. Algeria cannot be singled out and indeed implemented the teaching of the English language in the curriculum as part of a policy to promote foreign language teaching. English is considered as a second foreign language.

English continued to be part of the educational system after the independence of Algeria in 1962. It was taught as a mandatory foreign language to learners beginning in the in the middle school, from the end of 1962 to the early 1990s. In 1993, the Ministry of National Education opted for a different order for foreign language teaching. Pupils and their parents had the possibility to choose which foreign language (French or English) to start with in the fourth grade, implying that the other language would be taught in grade seven. We could find then learners who had English as a first foreign language (French being their second foreign language) and other students who learned English as their second foreign language (French being their first foreign language).

It is clear that the Ministry of National Education aimed at promoting the English language instruction due to its role as the language of science and technology. Such an objective still represents a challenge to most institutions to date. Besides, English imposed itself in many fields. A lot of business is carried out in English. Algerian companies have opted for partnerships and joint ventures with foreign operators where most of their exchanges are in English

Today, English language teaching in Algeria starts in the first year in the middle school (grade 6) and continues until the third year in the secondary school (grade 12). It is taught under the competency based approach. At the tertiary level, learners can choose to enrol and major in English. Even if English is not the main focus, the majority of programmes at university include English as a mandatory subject matter.

An important number of people call for a higher status for the English language at the expense of the French language. Such reactions are motivated by the functions fulfilled by English. English displaces French as the language of knowledge and communication in

most fields in an international dimension. This view is summarised by Miliani (2000, p. 13)

> *In a situation where the French language has lost much of its ground in the sociocultural and educational environments of the country, the introduction of English is being heralded as the magic solution to all possible ills - including economic, technological and education ones*.

This growing quest for the mastery of English has encouraged the launching of a growing number of private language schools. They propose different training courses to meet the demands of companies from diverse sectors. These companies have realised how vital it is for successful business to have qualified personnel who can communicate in English. The higher status assigned to the English language in Algeria is confirmed by Benmoussat (2003) who states "[i]*t must be acknowledged that, particularly over the last ten years, there has been a great increase in the number of 'outside' short English courses offered by private schools*" (p. 118).

4.4.1 ELT in the tertiary level

As mentioned earlier, English is taught in all faculties in all universities around the country. It can either be found as the major specialty in departments of English or as a minor secondary subject in other departments where ESP is targeted. The programmes at university are structured according to the LMD system.

4.4.1.1 LMD: A myth or reality?

Authorities blamed the classical (former) system for failing to meet the social, economic, and technological demands of 21st century Algeria. It was, therefore, considered obsolete, and the need to implement a more appropriate system became urgent. This resulted in the implementation of a new system, LMD, deemed to be more internationally compatible.

The LMD reform was launched as a pilot project in 10 Algerian universities in collaboration with a number of European universities during the academic year 2003-2004.

The new system is similar in structure to the reforms undertaken in Europe under the Bologna Process. It represents a series of meetings involving European countries aiming at establishing a framework that can ensure comparability in standards and quality in higher education training. This represents a legitimate objective to call for since those European countries are united under one open space. Such a system can ensure mobility to European individuals and ease the burden of establishing certificates of qualifications equivalence:

- *licence*, corresponding to three years of study beyond the *baccalauréat* (bac+3);

- *master*, corresponding to two years further study beyond the *licence* (bac+5);

- *doctorat*, corresponding to three years of research beyond the *master* (bac+8).

Since then, Algerian universities have gradually, and reluctantly for some, adopted the LMD system which indiscriminately covers today 100% of the higher education environment. It is hoped that this system will ensure the implementation of mechanisms and programmes more compatible with those offered abroad, thereby increasing the international mobility of Algerian students and reinforcing the visibility of Algerian universities. This LMD system is also seen as an efficient system more attuned to bridge the gap between university and the different economic sectors. In order to achieve the aforementioned aims, Mami (2013, p. 913) lists a number of measures that have been adopted at the level of curriculum design and integration:

1. Planning and evaluation of the students' needs as well as those linked to the socioeconomic market,

2. Developing multimedia in the areas of oral expression and vocabulary,

3. Encouraging student enhancement through mobility,

4. Creating cooperation between universities which share similar objectives and interests,

5. Creating listening cells and audits in order to register students' suggestions,

6. Preparing students for vocational education through the choice of English.

LMD as an Anglo-Saxon system has proved to be successful in countries like USA and Canada. Algeria implemented it after it had been adopted by European countries. One may question the reasons behind adopting the system from a secondary source and not from the original source. Another question is linked to our readiness to manage this system successfully.

A growing number of individuals, including university lecturers and researchers, have questioned the appropriateness of such a system and its adaptability to the Algerian context (Mami, 2013; Megnounif, 2009; Miliani, 2010). Opinions are divided. Some express positive attitudes believing it is a practical system that needs time to show its full potential. Others reject it and claim it is not appropriate for the Algerian context. It is difficult to decide which position is more realistic and accurate. It is necessary to employ an empirical approach and evaluate the system objectively.

Ten years after its implementation, a national conference[7] was organized by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research to evaluate the LMD system. The conference was an opportunity for the Minister, Mr Hadjar, to explain that this evaluation was not meant to reconsider the use of the system, but it was rather directed to the identification of the weaknesses and shortcomings so that they could be corrected. In this sense, the minister states that university education should be directed towards

> *"effectiveness", "adaptation", and "quality", considering that the stimulation of the university reform requires reinforcement of the vocational dimension of university education in a framework that determines the relation between the university and the economic*

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[7] A national conference took place on January 12th – 13th, 2016 including university teachers, students and operators from the socioeconomic sector to evaluate the implementation of the LMD system

sector, in order to realize the principle of employability of graduates[8].

Four workshops discussed issues linked to four major areas: 1) improving higher education quality, 2) University and economic sector relation, 3) governance, and 4) student life. A set of recommendations[9] were made. They can be summarised as follows:

- *redefining the criteria for passage from one level to another,*

- *decreasing the number of master specialities,*

- *applying one single model for the Ph.D nationwide,*

- *relying on the scores in the written contest as the only mode to access a Ph.D programme,*

- *assigning a more important role to representatives of the economic sector in the university scientific committees,*

- *reinforcing bridges between universities and the economic sector,*

- *modernising the administrative management of universities, and*

- *setting up one and the same unified card by which the student may benefit from all university welfare facilities.*

4.4.1.2 The organisation of the LMD system

The LMD system is characterized by a new architecture, a different organization of courses, and an innovative pedagogic content. The LMD system is divided into three

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[8] The researcher's translation from 'APS' http://www.aps.dz/algerie/34794 published on January 13th, 2016. The original text is '"l'efficacité", "l'adaptation" et de "la qualité", estimant que "la dynamisation de la réforme de l'université exige un renforcement de la dimension professionnelle des enseignements universitaires dans un cadre régissant la relation entre l'université et l'entreprise, afin de concrétiser le principe de l'employabilité des diplômés".

[9] From 'APS' http://www.aps.dz/algerie/34771 published on January 13th, 2016.

training cycles: *Licence*, *Master*, and *Doctorate*. A student needs to go through three years or six semesters to get a *Licence*. For a *Master*'s degree, two years or four semesters are required. The third cycle, *Doctorate*, is built around three years. In every semester, students are expected to attend four hundred hours in a sixteen-week period (i.e. an average of twenty-five hours per week).

In terms of teaching management, every semester comprises four units of teaching, namely, the Fundamental Unit, the Methodological Unit, the Discovery Unit, and Cross-Disciplinary Unit. They represent the skeleton around which subjects are grouped. The elementary subjects are grouped under the Fundamental unit. The Methodological Unit is meant to group the subjects that are to prepare the student to cope with university work. They can improve on their study skills and acquire some basics in research methodology. The Discovery and Cross-Disciplinary Units include subjects designed to expose the learner to fields different from their major, which can help them get familiar with different subjects and expand the scope of their knowledge to other areas.

The teachings and the learners' achievement are measured in terms of credits. Each teaching unit is assigned a number of credits depending on its importance and share within the programme. In a semester, the total number of credits equals 30. It means that for a *Licence*, a student should capitalise 180 credits to graduate; and for a *Master*, they need to complete 180 credits to get their Master's degree. One important element to note is that the credits are capitalised and can be transferred in case a student moves from one university to another, which is one way to assure some of the principles of the LMD system: flexibility and mobility. The figure below offers a summary of the structure of the LMD system.
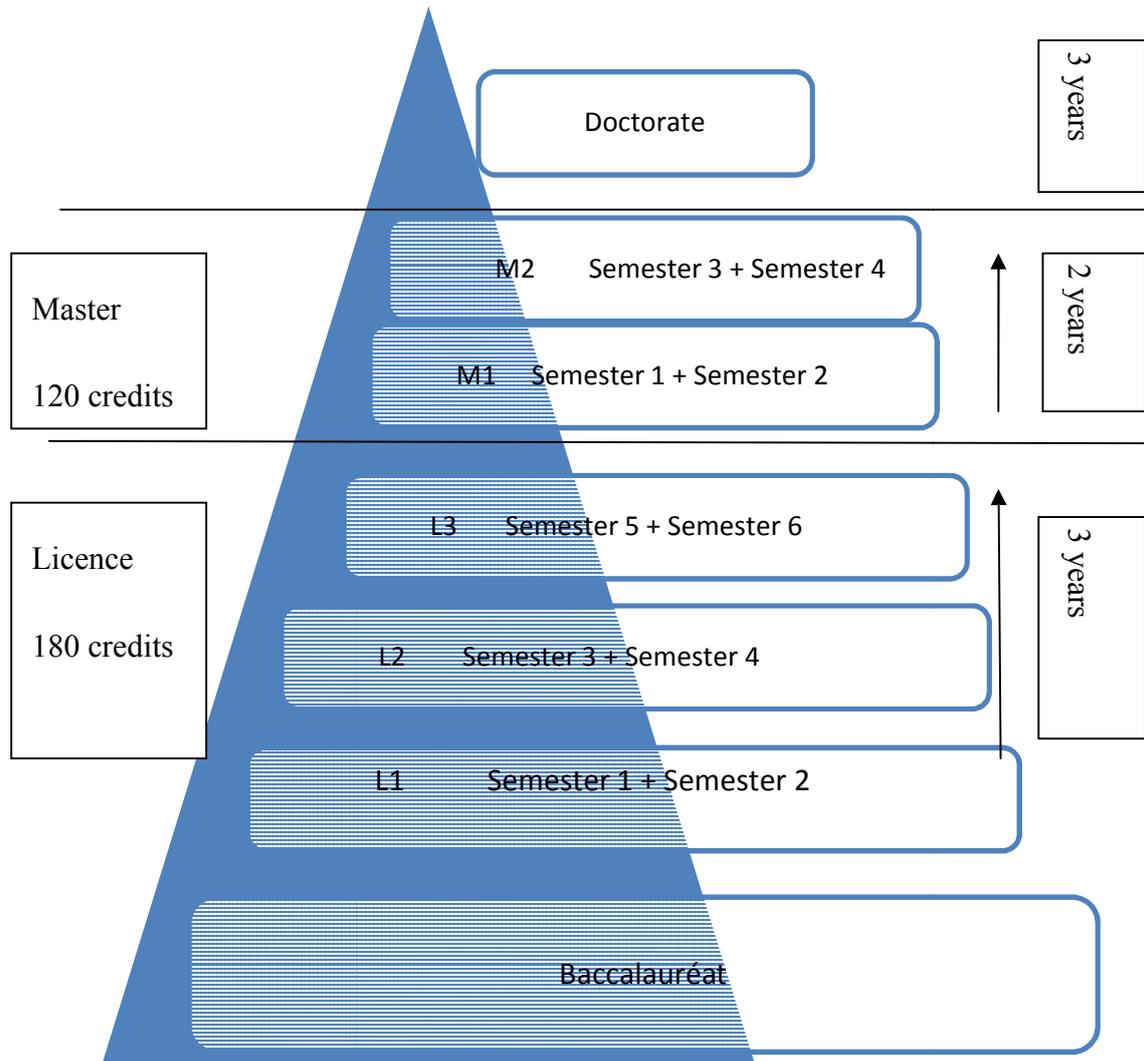
Figure 4.1: The LMD system structure

4.4.1.3 ELT in the Department of English

The Department of English where the experiment took place is situated in the Faculty of Foreign Languages at Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University of Mostaganem. The Department of English was originally part of the Faculty of Literature and Arts with three other departments, namely Arts, French, and Spanish. After the reorganisation of the University of Mostaganem in 2013, the Faculty of Literature and Arts was divided into two faculties: the Faculty of Arabic Literature and Arts, and the Faculty of Foreign Languages. The Department of English, therefore, is part of the latter with the Department of French and the Department of Spanish. Since its establishment, the Department of English trained

hundreds of students to become mostly teachers of English at middle and secondary schools.

The University of Mostagnem was amongst the first universities to implement the LMD system. The Department of English started the LMD system in 2007 with students from different wilayas including Chlef, Tiaret and, naturally, Mostaganem. Most students have Algerian Arabic as a mother tongue, as explained in Section 4.1.1. They studied English as a foreign language for seven years prior to joining the University.

After two years of a common core course, students currently go for a third year and graduate with a '*Licence Académique*' in the English language. This *Licence* comprises a set of subjects organised in units of teaching as described in Section 4.4.1.2 dealing with the structure of the LMD system. The subject matters included in the programme can be categorised and described within two groups. This separation does not infer any intention on our part to put aside the integrated consideration of all the subjects to reach common aims. The first group of subjects is designed to help learners improve on their mastery of the English language. It includes Written Expression, Oral Expression, Grammar, and Phonetics. The second group of courses is meant to train students on specific fields of study such as Linguistics, Anglo-Saxon Civilisation, Literature, ICT, TEFL and Research Methodology. The tables[10] (Lic1, Lic2, and Lic3) below represent a summary of the subjects taught at the Department of English during the three years[11] (Six semesters), including coefficients, credits, and teaching hours.

The first table shows the subjects assigned to L1 students. The same subjects with unchanged teaching hours, coefficients, and credits are designed for Semesters One and Two. Most of the teaching is organised in tutorial forms, except for the subject of Human and Social Sciences which is covered in 1h 30 in a lecture form.

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[10] We use Lic to refer to the academic year to cover in a *Licence'*s degree. Year 1, Year 2, and Year 3 are successively referred to as Lic1, Lic2, and Lic3.

[11] The numbers shown represent the students' schedule on a weekly basis.

Subjects	Teaching Hours	Coefficients	Credits
Written Expression	4h30	4	6
Oral Expression	3h	2	4
Grammar	3h	2	4
Phonetics	1h30	1	2
Linguistics	1h30	1	2
Introduction to Literary Texts	1h30	1	2
Cultures/Civilisations of the Language	1h30	1	2
Methodology	3h	1	4
Human and Social Sciences	1h30	1	2
Foreign Languages[12]	1h30	1	2
Total	22h30	15	30

Table 4.2: The subjects taught to Lic1 students

As for Lic2 students, the subject matters and their teaching hours, coefficients, and credits are similar to Lic1 with three minor changes. The first one is linked to the subject of Human and Social Sciences in Lic1, which is replaced by Introduction to Translation in Lic2. The second point has to do with the foreign language which is taught in Semester 3 but is not in Semester 4; it is replaced by Information and Communication Technology (ICT). The third difference is related to the way the courses are organised. They are presented in tutorials. The total teaching hours, total coefficients, total credits remain unchanged with 22h30 for the teaching hours, 15 coefficients, and 30 credits. The table below presents the subjects cited above with their teaching hours, coefficients and credits.

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[12] The only foreign language taught ever is French.

Subjects	Teaching Hours	Coefficients	Credits
Introduction to Translation	1h30	1	2
Foreign Languages (Semester 3)	1h30	1	2
ICT (Semester 4)	1h30	1	2

Table 4.3: New subjects introduced in Lic2

The new syllabi[13] including subject matters and the schedule for Lic1 and Lic2, the common core course, was implemented by the Ministry of Higher Education to be effective nationwide in the Academic Year 2013-2014. It is noteworthy that there is more emphasis on developing mastery of language. The subject matters targeting language skills are given considerable attention by increasing the number of teaching hours. Besides, almost all the teachings are organised in tutorials.

This represents an important shift in the training paradigm. The penultimate curriculum was directed more towards the scientific study of the language whereby learners were supposed to discuss specialised notions and concepts using English. It was clear then that learners had not reached the linguistic competence necessary to allow them achieve such aims. The current curriculum is meant to correct this dysfunction by focusing on language skills mainly during Lic1 and Lic2 so that they can delve into more specific and specialised fields of study. This can be the case with Lic3 where students are supposed to specialise in one area of interest.

As mentioned earlier there is one *Licence* major or specialty: *Licence* in the English Language[14]. Since learners are supposed to have acquired the necessary skills and have become linguistically competent, Lic3 gives much room for teaching specialised subjects. Learners are introduced to new subjects such as Translation, Didactics, ESP, and Cognitive

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[13] Decree **N°** 500 issued on July 28th, 2013.

[14] Decree N° 168 issued on August 07th, 2008 and Decree N° 502 issued on July 15th, 2014.

Psychology. Some subjects are taught both in lectures and tutorials: Linguistics, Study of Literary Texts, and Study of Civilisation Texts. Another set of subjects are taught in the form of lectures only: Introduction to Didactics, Cognitive Psychology, and Foreign Languages. The third set of subjects is taught in tutorials only: Written Expression, Oral Expression, and Translation and Interpreting.

Subjects	Teaching Hours	Coefficients	Credits
Linguistics	3h	3	4
Study of Literary Texts	3h	3	4
Study of Civilisation Texts	3h	3	4
Written Expression	1h30	2	2
Oral Expression	1h30	2	2
Translation and Interpreting	1h30	2	2
Introduction to Didactics	1h30	1	2
Introduction to ESP	1h30	1	2
Methodology	1h30	2	4
Cognitive Psychology	1h30	1	2
Foreign Languages	1h30	1	2
Total	21h	21	30

Table 4.4: The subjects taught to Lic3 students

4.4.1.3.1 The declared aims and objectives

The basic aims of teaching English at the tertiary level are linked to the acquisition of practical command of the English language. Learners should become competent users of the language. This means that they should be able to listen, speak, read, and write effectively.

Chapter Four: Analysis of Current Situation and Fieldwork

The canvas structuring the teaching of the English Language at the Department of English stresses three main areas. First, mastery of language is of paramount importance and should be given considerable attention. Students should be able to use English as a medium to complete a variety of tasks. Second, this training in English can be an opportunity for students to discover other cultures. They can, therefore, develop cultural awareness and become competent individuals as far as intercultural communication is concerned. Third, a set of competences should be developed as part of the students' vocational education and training. In other words, the institution needs to help the students acquire the skills and competences required to successfully fulfil certain jobs. The competences highlighted in the canvas can be listed as follows[15]:

- Read and produce all types of correspondences

- Initiate into a specialization in the teaching of one or several subjects

- Update or supplement mastery of one's subject

- Develop knowledge and professional skills while building on one's experience

- Analyse one's professional practice systematically

- Initiate into the intervention methods in the educational context

- Reflect on the integration of didactic and pedagogic knowledge of the subject

- Mobilise skills and knowledge in pedagogy, didactics and one's discipline to write an essay

Consequently, the possibility of employment for students can be assured in the following sectors:

- Companies: Banks, Chamber of Commerce, import-export companies,

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[15] The researcher's translation from French version of the document

- Port establishment

- Preschools and extracurricular activities: nursery, kindergarten training school

- Administration: purchasing department, auditing, etc.

- Publishing sector and mass media: advertising services, advertisers, etc.

- Tourism sector: tourist trail arrangement

- Public and private education sector

- Sector of vocational training

- Culture Sector: management companies

- The audio-visual sector

A word of caution is necessary here since we can notice a certain form of incongruity between the stated aims and the actual situation and the practices that characterise the university context. We can identify three main areas to clarify this idea: 1) the types of syllabi, 2) Teaching time compared to testing time, and 3) Teachers' preparation. The three points are discussed in succession.

First, we can notice a discrepancy between the planned objectives and the syllabi proposed by teachers in the canvas. Any practitioner worth their salt is aware of the range of syllabi choices and can, therefore, adopt and adapt the right one according to the set aims and the conditions they are involved in. In other words, practitioners need to be aware of what they have to teach (the subject matter), its sequencing, its objectives, and the methodology.

It is noteworthy that the syllabuses do not seem to be in harmony with the profile of students the institution claims to target. Most of the syllabi are content-based listing titles representing topics, notions, and concepts to be covered by the learners. There is no pretention on our part to belittle the efficiency of content-based syllabi. They certainly give learners a lot of exposure to English, which can be very beneficial. We have, however,

some doubts about whether programmes built under the content-based frame alone can help develop the competences set in the curriculum. Most of the time learners are asked to memorise the content and return it to their teachers when being tested. Only rarely are they asked to use higher cognitive levels and see what they can do with that knowledge and how they can handle problematic situations and bring that value added quality to make the difference.

Second, according to the overwhelming majority of teachers, too much time is devoted to testing and therefore little room is left to actual teaching. Teachers feel frustrated since they constantly try to find a balance between teaching time and testing time. They claim that there is too much summative assessment which impacts the quality and amount of teaching to cover with their learners. The quality of such testing, the time spent taking and administering tests and the usefulness of the results represent issues that need to be seriously and empirically studied by the community of teachers and researchers alike.

Third, teachers tend to work in isolation from each other. Most of the time, teachers are not informed about the aims nor the competences and skills planned in the canvas. Moreover, they do not seem to know what is taught in subjects other than the one/s they teach. One questions how they can design a syllabus that is congruent with the syllabi of the same level and congruent with the syllabi of the other levels so that they will achieve the set aims. One other point is that teachers have not been trained to prepare students to become proficient professionals in fields other than teaching. When we consider the different sectors for graduates to join, as mentioned above, the aims seem to be too ambitious to be fulfilled by the teachers of the Department of English. Collaboration and partnership with such sectors whereby trainers can supplement teachers and provide the necessary expertise for a successful endeavour are missing.

Having described and analysed the situation, we now describe and explain the methodology implemented in the present study.

4.5 Method

The present study has employed the self-explanatory mixed-method design which has enabled us to gather qualitative and quantitative data. Each data collection method addressed a different type of informants in the research. One part of the data was obtained from a quasi-experimental design with students and the other part from a semi-structured interview conducted with university teachers.

In the following lines, we shall describe first the experiment done with students and then the interview administered to university teachers. Concerning the experiment, we shall describe the course designed, the subjects that participated, the play used, and the data collection procedures. As for the interview, we shall describe the objectives we set and the sampling of informants we had in another section.

4.5.2 The experiment

The context of the study was the University of Abdelhamid Ibn Badis of Mostaganem. We targeted the module of Oral Expression with EFL Freshmen[16]. The quasi-experimental design seemed to be the most appropriate since we had to deal with groups already formed by the department administration. We had to conduct our research with randomly formed groups, which left little room for manoeuvre in the constituents of the groups.

This experiment is a classroom-based study, employing both an experimental group and a control group, drawing on quantitative data collected from pre-instruction and post-instruction video recordings of the same play. The use of a control group in the study has been thought to give more evidence that any progress in the experimental group students' performance in pronunciation would be due to the treatment. The researcher taught the two groups the subject of Oral Expression using two different approaches to pronunciation instruction.

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[16] The phrase 'EFL Freshmen' is preferred to the longer 'First Year LMD Students'.

The experimental group received explicit pronunciation instruction using the top-down approach, thereby training learners on the suprasegmental features of pronunciation and aspects of connected speech. The course did not deviate from its primary role of developing learners' speaking ability. We tried to experience the impact of raising learners' awareness about the suprasegments on their perception and production and the extent to which this can help them better their pronunciation and become proficient and confident speakers in English.

The control group, based on our observation of how Oral Expression classes generally take place, did not receive any explicit pronunciation instruction. We tried to involve students in varying communication situations. Learners were encouraged to speak in a relaxed atmosphere. We aimed at observing how exposure and practice can help them improve on their pronunciation competence. As for pronunciation mistakes, we corrected exclusively those dealing with mispronounced words in terms of sounds and word stress.

It is important to note that we have suggested a null hypothesis stating that the control group and the experimental group are statistically similar. This is necessary since we shall use a t-test in order to test the hypothesis. The following will give some information about the course design for the experiment.

4.5.2.1 Course description

This sub-section is meant to give a description of the course designed for the experimental group. Needless to say, the course was designed in the light of the concepts and principles of speaking, listening, and pronunciation competences extensively discussed in the literature review. This part will cover the aims, objectives, methodology, and content of the course.

4.5.2.1.1 Aims

The course aimed at enhancing learners' fluency, accuracy, and appropriateness in spoken communication in order to train them to take part more effectively and confidently in different academic, social, and vocational situations. Learners were involved in a range of communicative tasks and assignments to help them develop their oral-aural skills and

reflect on their oral performances and overcome major difficulties encountered that were linked to pronunciation, oral grammar, vocabulary, and listening.

4.5.2.1.2 Objectives

In order to improve oral-aural skills necessary for EFL freshmen, the course has been built around a variety of speaking, listening, and pronunciation activities whose aim was to achieve the following objectives.

- Boosting students' self-confidence to communicate with native and non-native speakers.

- Developing listening skills: comprehension of main ideas and important details; understanding of speaker's purpose and attitude; understanding spoken data in order to make inferences, form generalizations, and draw conclusions.

- Developing speaking skills: expressing ideas and opinions clearly; selecting, organizing and presenting information; summarizing main ideas from various sources; interviewing, debating, etc.

- Improving pronunciation: English stress, rhythm, intonation and juncture.

- Expanding vocabulary, collocations and idiomatic English.

- Increasing students' inter-cultural awareness and appreciating international values.

- Promoting thinking skills: guessing, predicting, analysing, critical listening, inferring, debating and persuasion, and last but not least, evaluation and interpretation.

4.5.2.1.3 Methodology

We believe that an effective methodology to develop speaking comprises involving learners in meaningful communicative activities with specific outcomes to be realised or tasks to be performed. In this sense, learners were to engage in the production of short and long exchanges and in transactional and interactional discourse. Learners had to be made

aware of the skills they need to develop so as to become active participants in their learning.

The course design has drawn on various methods and techniques inspired from the body of literature mentioned in the previous chapters. A variety of intensive and extensive audio-visual materials (including videos) and exercises were included in the course. Different grouping procedures were considered including pair work, group work, and class discussions. A number of interaction models encouraging the use of turn-taking, questioning and other behaviours related to class discussions were used. The course comprised interactive tasks within a collaborative learning framework.

The course naturally enough included treatment of the listening skills aimed not only to enhance the learners' listening comprehension, but also to have them consciously work on their active listening and critical listening. Learners had to engage in conversations and discussions, using active listening behaviours. To that end, the course included intensive and extensive listening practice requiring learners to watch videos and listen to conversations.

As mentioned earlier, the course was based on an explicit instruction of pronunciation features based on a top-down approach. A number of activities were planned to highlight the communicative role of those features and how to use them properly in communicative contexts. Raising the learners' awareness about the suprasegmental features has been of paramount importance in the development of teaching material. The course had to give learners the opportunity to listen to, repeat, respond to and initiate language orally using the appropriate pronunciation patterns. One way to achieve that was through identification, reproduction and experimentation with sounds, stress and rhythm, patterns in poems, chants, rhymes and songs. The course has encouraged recording learners' actual performances using their mobile phones. This has been meant to foster their awareness about what they really sound like and not how they imagine they are perceived by their interlocutors. In this way, self-assessment and autonomous learning could be promoted. Some of the techniques implemented in the course are listed below.

- Chants

- Dialogues

- Information-gap activities

- Jigsaw activities

- Opinion-gap activities

- Picture-based activities

- Poems

- Problem solving activities

- Role-playing

- Simulation

- Drama (Skits)

- Songs

4.5.2.1.4 Content

The course was designed to cover 60 meetings of ninety minutes each. The course was structured around twelve units with an average of five lessons per unit. Each unit focused on a particular main function or a certain speaking genre. These particular functions were selected because they were considered to be appropriate for freshmen EFL students at the tertiary level. Pronunciation features instruction and practice were integrated all along the twelve units. The units included in the course are listed below:

1. Exchanging personal information

2. Giving directions

3. Talking about the future

4. Giving advice and making suggestions

5. Narrating and telling stories.

6. Expressing opinions and agreeing/disagreeing with others' opinions.

7. Describing people, houses and pictures.

8. Social English (Apologizing, expressing illness and making offers).

9. Making requests and asking for permission.

10. Understanding and discussing current media and affairs

11. Debating skills: Personal and professional interviews

12. Developing self-confidence and other skills for public speaking

After having described the course, the next section will deal with the subjects that took part in the experiment.

4.5.2.2 The subjects

Two EFL freshmen classes of twenty-seven (27) students each participated in the experiment, which makes a total of fifty-four (54) subjects. Students' age in both groups ranged from seventeen (17) to twenty-two (22). As explained in the section dealing with language policy, these students are multilingual individuals showing varying degrees of proficiency in the aforementioned varieties use and usage. They can speak Algerian Arabic and/or Tamazight (mother tongue), MSA (second language – high variety and medium of instruction), French (first foreign language), and English (second foreign language).

There was no gender balance in the subjects that took part in the experiment. There were twenty-four (24) female students and three (03) male students in the control group. Almost the same ratio was identified in the experimental group with twenty-two (22) female subjects and five (5) male subjects. Female subjects (46) outnumbered male subjects (8) by nearly six to one. The table below shows the gender distribution of the subjects by groups and in total.

Groups	Male	Female	Total
Control Group	03	24	27
Experimental Groups	05	22	27
Total	08	46	54

Table 4.5: The subjects by groups and gender

The subjects have studied English as a foreign language for seven (07) years, four years in the Middle School and three (03) years in the Secondary School. A great majority of thirty-six (36) subjects passed their Baccalaureate in Literature and Philosophy Stream, thirteen (13) subjects in Foreign Languages Stream, and five (5) of them in Experimental Sciences Stream. The following pie chart gives a visual representation of the subjects' streams at the secondary school.
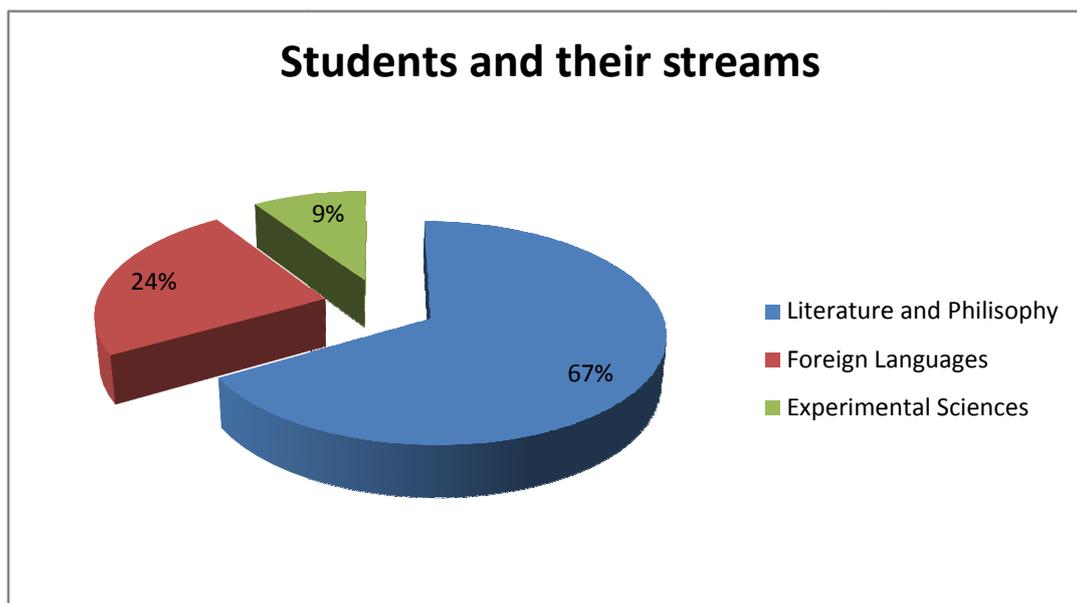
Figure 4.2: Subjects and their streams

4.5.2.3 The play

The play selected for the experiment is entitled 'Shakespeare's House' (See Appendix 1). It is a one-scene skit that takes place in a house in Stratford-upon-Avon where William Shakespeare was born. There are three characters: Sidney, Ethel, and a man. Sideny and Ethel are two tourists who come to visit that house convinced it was Shakespeare's. According to the exchanges they have with each other and with the man, we can assume that Sidney and Ethel are not very bright and know next to nothing about Shakespeare.

This play seemed to us to be convenient for the purposes of the present study. We used it to have data about the subjects' pronunciation proficiency before and after the treatment, eight months apart, in order to evaluate the subjects' progress in both the segmental and the suprasegmental features of pronunciation.

The selection of this particular play is motivated by the fact that, over and beyond the added advantages of having a total of three characters which could give us exactly nine threesomes and being hilarious, it contains most features of pronunciation. Different patterns of intonation (fall, rise, mid-rise, mid-fall, rise fall and fall rise) can be included.

They are used to express attitudinal functions such as agreement, disagreement, sarcasm, surprise, puzzlement, and happiness; grammatical functions like questioning; and discourse functions indicating new versus given information. Other suprasegmentals can be identified. This includes, in addition to stress and rhythm features of connected speech such as assimilation and juncture.

4.5.2.4 Data collection

The first step is naturally to record the performances of all the subjects and devise a user-friendly comprehensive archiving system for convenient reference. The recordings constitute the raw material to be used in the various operations planned in the research. These scores appear under Appendices 6, 7, 8, and 9. Appendices 6 and 8 represent pre- and post- treatment processed data for the control group respectively. Appendices 7 and 9 represent pre- and post- treatment processed data for the experimental group respectively. The same recording tool was used throughout the experimentation to avoid any unexpected interferences. The physical setting for the recordings was a classroom at university. This variable was outside our control. Different classrooms were used for the pre-treatment and post-treatment recordings. As can be expected, these places are far from soundproof, and the recordings lack that studio quality.

We had the students from the two groups, experimental and control, perform the play. We recorded the eighteen plus eighteen performances[17] which make up the corpus for our study.

4.5.2.4.1 Instructions given to subjects

At the start of the academic year 2014-2015, in October, we gave each subject a copy of the play (Shakespeare's House). We studied the play and hopefully understood it. We formed nine trios assigning a role to each of the 27 subjects. We made every effort to have the same trio perform together in the before and after treatments to minimise any disparity in variables. Students were given a week to get familiar with their respective roles and the

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[17] They are included in the CD that accompanies the thesis.

On the Relationship Between Teaching Pronunciation and Teaching Speaking: From Technicality to Fluency

play as a whole. We recorded trios perform the play using a Canon IXUS 155 camera (Appendix 5).

The subjects were asked to keep the play script to be used later. In May, we launched the second phase of the recordings. We recorded the same trios for the post-treatment phase. We tried to respect the same conditions as the pre-treatment phase. The subjects were asked to perform the play the way they felt it appropriate. In the following, we shall explain the coding procedures.

4.5.2.4.2 Coding

We used a neat way to archive our subjects' performances that could cater for the group (experimental and control), the characters (Sidney, Ethel, and the Man), and the phase (pre-treatment and post-treatment). We ended up with the following abbreviations.

ECT#: Code number for Ethan within the trio in the Control Group

SCT#: Code number for Sidney within the trio in the Control Group

MCT#: Code number for Man within the trio in the Control Group

EET#: Code number for Ethan within the trio in the Experimental Group

SET#: Code number for Sidney within the trio in the Experimental Group

MET#: Code number for Man within the trio in the Experimental Group

PRT_: Code for pre-treatment phase

POT_: Code for post-treatment phase

In the analysis, an abbreviation such as PRT_ECT#1 refers to a subject from the Control Group who played the part of Ethan in the pre-treatment phase; and the trio is number 1 on our list.

4.5.2.4.3 Human ear perception

Firstly, human ear perception is used. A teacher of Phonetics and the researcher listen separately, several times, to the different parts of the corpus, i.e. the 9 trios in the control group and the other nine trios in the experimental group. Instructions are given to concentrate on segmental and suprasegmental features of pronunciation. The features and the meaning assigned to them are presented in Appendix 2. The instruction given is to focus on those features and evaluate how well or poorly they are realised. The performances are ranked from 1 to 6, 1 being the poorest and 6 being the best. The final mark is the average obtained from the marks given by the two evaluators.

4.5.2.4.4 Statistical measurements

Different types of statistics were used to process the scores obtained through the human ear perception procedure. This combination of different statistical measurements is meant to depict a reliable and valid picture of what scores tell us about the participants' performances. We devised three sections for our measurements: mean, mode, and range; then standard deviation, and finally t-test.

4.5.2.4.4.1 Mean, mode, and range

The three statistical measurements are to be used in combination to read and interpret the results from different angles.

Mean: It is the average. It is calculated by adding all the numbers and then dividing by the number of scores.

Mode: It is the value that occurs most frequently.

Range: It represents the difference between the smallest and the largest values.

4.5.2.4.4.2 Standard deviation

Standard deviation is a complex operation which calculates how the data is tightly clustered or widely spread apart around the mean. It thus reveals how homogeneous or heterogeneous a group is. The closer STDV is to zero, the more homogeneous the group,

and conversely, the farther STDV is from zero, the more spread apart the data from the mean and therefore the more heterogeneous the group. Let us imagine 3 groups A, B, and C with six informants each. They get the following scores thanks to a measuring procedure.

	Informant 1	Informant 2	Informant 3	Informant 4	Informant 5	Informant 6
Group A	12	12	12	12	12	12
Group B	10	10	11	11	12	12
Group C	6	8	10	12	14	16

Table 4.6: Calculating the standard deviation

It is clear from the table that Group A is the most homogeneous, and Group C the least homogeneous. This is exactly what the standard deviation shows us. A complex operation gives the STDV for each group as follows: Group A has an STDV of zero (0.00); Group B has an STDV of zero point eight nine (0.89) and Group C has an STDV of three point seven four (3.74). What should be kept in mind is that the closer STDV is to zero, the more homogeneous the group is, and vice versa. We frequently refer to STDV to see which of control or experimental is more homogeneous as a group. In our research, we make use of the Microsoft Excel 2007 Standard Deviation function to calculate the various standard deviations we believe to be useful or necessary.

4.5.2.4.4.3 T-test

Standard deviation, mean, mode, and range may not tell the full story of whether the scores are different. A t-test is, therefore, a statistical measurement that can help us compensate for this weakness. The t-test is an analysis of two populations' means through the use of statistical examination. This test is generally used with small sample sizes, testing the difference between the samples when the variances of two normal distributions are not known. In short, the t-test is meant to assess whether the means of two groups are statistically different from each other.

We have opted for the t-test to process the data obtained from the experiment using human ear perception. We think it is an appropriate statistical examination that meets the specificities of our experiment. We had to compare the results obtained from two distinct groups (the experimental group and the control group) after two different phases: the pre-test and the post-test phases. We also had to compare data obtained with the subjects of the same group in the pre-test and the post-test phases.

Three types of t-test can be identified, the paired two sample for means, two-sample assuming equal variances, and two-sample assuming unequal variances. The first type is used when the same group is tested twice. The other two tests are performed when the results are obtained from two different groups.

The formula used to calculate the test is a ratio: The higher segment of the ratio represents the difference between the means or averages of the two samples. The lower segment of the ratio is a measurement of the variability of the scores. To compute this part of the ratio, the variance for each sample is determined and is then divided by the number of individuals that compose the sample, or group. These two values are then added together, and a square root is taken of the result.

As far as our experiment is concerned, we shall use the paired two sample means and two-sample assuming unequal variances for unpaired data. We estimate that the first one is appropriate for analysis comparing subjects from the same group, and the second one can be appropriate when working on comparing subjects from different groups. For both t-test types, we shall use the Excel data analysis tool.

Paired two sample means

As mentioned earlier, we intend to use Excel 2007 to run a t-test for paired two samples for means. We shall focus on two things: t-scores and alpha levels. A comparison of the alpha level of five percent (5%), i.e. point zero five (0.05) to the p-value can help us decide whether to reject or confirm the null hypothesis. If the p-value in the output is smaller than the alpha level, we can reject the null hypothesis. The rejection of the hypothesis can be confirmed by comparing the t-critical value in the output with the t-value and realising that the t-value is larger than the t-critical value.

Two-sample t-test for unpaired data assuming unequal variances

Similarly, we shall use the data analysis tool from Excel 2007 and run a t-test for two sample assuming unequal variances. We shall decide whether to reject or validate the null hypothesis by comparing, on the one hand, the alpha level in the output to the stated alpha level (0.05); and comparing the t-value with t-critical value on the other hand. If the alpha level in the output is smaller than the stated alpha and the t-value is larger than the t-critical value, we shall reject the null hypothesis. The table below summarised when to reject the null hypothesis.

Observation	Interpretation
test statistic > critical value (i.e. t Stat > t Critical)	Reject the null hypothesis
test statistic < critical value (i.e. t Stat< t Critical)	Cannot reject the null hypothesis
p value < a	Reject the null hypothesis
p value > a	Cannot reject the null hypothesis

Table 4.7: When to reject the null hypothesis

After having described the experiment, we now move to the interview section.

4.5.3 Interview

In addition to investigating the corpus in the experiment, we have opted for the administration of an interview to teachers of Oral Expression and teachers of Phonetics. We think that this tool is appropriate to get reliable, comparable qualitative data. In the following, we shall describe the interview, its structure, and the informants that participated in the interview.

4.5.3.1 The interview structure and objectives

We have chosen to conduct a semi-structured interview in order to be able to have in-depth conversations with the informants. We believe this is an appropriate procedure for us to get information about the informants' practices, attitudes, perceptions and views concerning speaking skills, listening skills, and the pronunciation of their learners.

A paper-based interview guide for each subject (Oral Expression and Phonetics) has been designed to assist the researcher when conducting the interviews. It comprises a set of questions and topics to deal with during the semi-structured interview to help the researcher focus and explore the areas planned during the conception phase (See Appendix 12).

The actual interviews can be found to be dissimilar to some extent from one another. In other words, the content in the guide represents a common core to all the interviews with some differences in terms of order and wording. Needless to say, another difference goes with the nature of semi-structured interviews, which allows the researcher to add or adapt questions in reaction to a given informant's responses. Since the interviews comprise questions and discussions that diverge from the paper-based interview guide, we have tape-recorded the interviews and have transcribed them. The transcriptions are listed under Appendices 13a through 13q.

Almost all the questions included in the interviews are open-ended. They are meant to help both the researcher and the teacher interviewed to delve into the issue and its variables. Our plan was to target the following aspects.

- Syllabus: The aim is to know whether teachers rely on a written syllabus to teach the subjects of Oral Expression and/or Phonetics. Moreover, we have attempted to get information about the type and structure of the syllabus if any.

- Objectives: We wanted to inquire into the objectives set in the two subjects and their congruency with the aims assigned to the 'Licence' and the profile set for the graduates in the canvas.

- Speaking: We endeavoured to unravel the interviewees' views concerning speaking skills and the pedagogy behind teaching speaking. This part of the interview, therefore, has been an opportunity to identify the speaking strategies and the speaking activities implemented in the course as a means to improve their learners' speaking skills.

- Listening: This part investigated the importance teachers give to the listening skills and their role in improving the students' oral proficiency. It inquired into the teachers' pedagogy so as to reveal whether listening is viewed as a process and, therefore given an overt treatment in the classroom or whether it is left for the learners to develop incidentally. We also wanted to learn about the learners' contact with aural English, and what sources of English they are exposed to. Does the teacher make use of audio and video material or is the teacher the one and only model?

- Pronunciation: Three aspects were targeted. The first one focused on whether pronunciation is formally taught. The second aspect dealt with the features of pronunciation included in the course. The last aspect tackled the approach adopted in the treatment of the elements of pronunciation. In other words, we have tried to shed light on the inclusion of pronunciation features, which features, and how these features are taught. As far as the subject of Phonetics is concerned, aspects two and three (which features are taught and how they are taught) only are applicable since, naturally, aspects of pronunciation are treated in Phonetics.

- Communicative language ability: This part was to seek information about the teachers' understanding of communicative language ability on the one hand and their opinion about the impact of pronunciation proficiency on learners' communicative language ability on the other hand. We have also meant to learn whether teachers noticed any improvement in their learners' communicative language ability and what caused that improvement.

- Coordination: Two aspects of coordination were underlined. The first stressed intra-coordination between specialist teachers of Oral Expression together and those of Phonetics, each within their own area of specialisation. The second aspect focused on inter-coordination, bringing together teachers of Oral Expression and teachers of Phonetics.

- Material: The interview was also an opportunity to collect information about the material teachers use in Oral Expression and Phonetics. We wanted to know whether teachers wrote their own material or relied on external sources or both.

4.5.3.2 The sampling of informants

There is no need to say that the sample of informants has to be truly representative of the teaching population. We tried therefore to reach at least one fifth of the overall population. To that end, we identified the teachers who were teaching or had taught Oral Expression and those who were teaching or had taught Phonetics.

The sample for this phase of the research is believed to be representative in terms of number. It represents over 26% of the teaching population at the Department of English at the University of Mostaganem[18]. We tried to expand our sample to teachers of English at the tertiary level in Oran and in spite of all our efforts, we managed to get four informants only[19].

Consequently, the sample population comprises thirteen (13) teachers from Abdelhamid Ibn Badis of Mostaganem, three (03) teachers from 'ENS'[20] of Oran and one teacher from the Department of English in Oran. At least for the University of

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[18] According to the Head of the English Department, there are 48 permanent teachers for the Academic year 2014-2015.

[19] We tried to administer the interview to a larger number of teachers, but some of them declined the invitation while others promised to participate but unexpected events decided otherwise.

[20] ENSO: Ecole Normale Supérieure d'Oran was created in 2014 in accordance with Executive Decree No 14-230 issue on August 25th, 2014.

Mostaganem, a sample of this size gives a fairly representative picture of the teaching population, not only in terms of size, but also in terms of gender, seniority, subject matter, and credentials.

- gender: we have three (03) male and fourteen (14) female teachers as informants,

- seniority: we have five (05) junior[21] teachers and twelve (12) experienced teachers in terms of years of teaching regardless of the teaching level[22],

- subject matter: we have ten (10) teachers who have taught Oral Expression, four (04) teachers who have taught Phonetics, and three (03) teachers who have taught both Phonetics and Oral Expression,

- credentials: we have fourteen teachers who hold a Magister Degree and three teachers who hold a Doctoral Degree[23].

The table below gives a clearer description of the sample.

	Gender		Seniority		Degree	
	Male	Female	Junior	Experienced	Magister	PhD
Phonetics	N/A	04	01	03	03	01
Oral Expression	03	07	03	07	09	01
Phonetics & Oral Expression	N/A	03	01	02	02	01
Total	03	14	05	12	14	03

Table 4.8: Description of the sample for the interview

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[21] We arbitrary divided the teaching population into two classes. 'Junior' teachers have less than ten years' seniority. 'Experienced' teachers have more than ten years' seniority.

[22] We took into considerations the years of teaching at university and previous experience elsewhere.

[23] In the Algerian educational system, 'Doctorat Es Science' can refer to a PhD.

4.6 Conclusion

We have tried to shed light on the language policies implemented by Algeria since independence in 1962. We could not do that without a description of the sociolinguistic situation in Algeria. The description focused on the share allotted to the English language in different spheres of interaction and mainly in the educational system including the tertiary level.

We focused on the treatment of English as a foreign language in the department of English at Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University of Mostagenem. We therefore spoke about the curriculum suggested with its declared objectives. It is a curriculum built according to the principles of the LMD system in its organisation and the competency-based principles in its orientation. ELT instruction, in this sense, is meant to train learners to develop different competences using English. Learners are supposed to interact in different spheres related to English after they graduate.

We described the research design. We explained that our practical part of the research is based on experiment conducted with freshmen students at Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University of Mostaganem and interviews with university lecturers from Mostaganem and Oran.

After having described the situation and the research design, in the following chapter we will present the processed data and the results.

5.1 Introduction

Chapter five is designed to present the processed data quantitatively and qualitatively. First, results from the experiment will be presented according to the pre-treatment phase and the post-treatment phase. We will try to compare learners' achievements within each individual group and later compare results from the two groups before and after the instruction.

Second, results obtained by processing the answers from the interview will be presented and listed according to the objectives set in the interview. They will revolve around the view of informants concerning oral skills and their teaching.

5.2 The experiment

In this section, we shall present the processed data obtained by applying the measurement techniques (See Sections 4.5.1.4.3 and 4.5.1.4.4) on the two groups (Control and Experimental). They will be presented below under three main headings, pre-treatment phase, post-treatment phase, and pre-treatment and post-treatment results comparison.

For the sake of clarity and precision, we shall be using the terms 'mean' and 'average' with the following definitions. The term 'mean' describes the result arrived at by adding the scores obtained by the subjects in the same pronunciation feature and dividing the total by twenty-seven (the number of subjects in each group). The term 'average' represents the result found by adding the scores realised under a particular criterion describing pronunciation features and dividing the total by nine (the number of criteria). The same operation is repeated with 'mean', 'mode', 'range', and 'STDV'. The criterion of 'strain' is included neither in the mean nor in the average. This exclusion is motivated by the fact that we set a score of one to six (clear to ambiguous) in order to describe how clear and easy the subjects' performances were to the evaluators. We will use the term 'average strain' to describe processed data linked to this criterion.

5.2.1 Pre-treatment phase results

In the following, we shall devote room for the presentation of the results obtained with the experimental group and the control group in the pre-treatment phase. They will first be presented distinctively, each group on its own and then comparatively to highlight the areas of similarity and disparity between the two groups.

5.2.1.1 Experimental group

The results obtained using the ear perception technique in the pre-treatment phase of the experiment show that the experimental group subjects' performances demonstrated varying levels of competence. The average STDV is one point zero four (1.04), which signifies a moderate deviation of data points from the mean. Nevertheless, we noted that the difference between the highest scores (PRT_MET#4: 4.50, PRT_SET#2: 4.39, PRT_SET#7: 4.33, and PRT_EET#1: 4.17) and the lowest scores (PRT_SET#4: 1.22, PRT_EET#7: 1.22, PRT_SET#1: 1.39, and PRT_EET#4: 1.44) is considerable. This is confirmed with the range measurement average which equals 3.56 (three point five six).

A closer look at the results reveals that the learners' control of pronunciation features is slightly below average. In most features, the mean ranges between two point zero two (2.02) and two point seven four (2.74) except for 'sentence stress' and 'sense group' which scored one point nine eight (1.98) and one point nine three (1.93) respectively.

The subjects' performance linked to 'consonants' and 'syllables' was close to the mean with an STDV that equals zero point eight eight (0.88) and zero point eight nine (0.89) respectively. A mean of two point seven four (2.74) for the 'consonants' and two point three five (2.35) for the 'vowels' and a mode of two (2) for both signify a medium control on the part of the learners.

However, the state of affairs is different with the suprasegmental features including 'sentence stress', 'intonation', 'sense group', and 'connected speech'. According to the results, the mean (1.98, 2.24, 1.93, 2.22) of the aforementioned features indicates a poor control. Besides, the mode and range linked to the same features clearly indicate that there is an important gap between high and low scorers.

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The table below displays a summary of the pre-treatment experimental group results obtained with mean, mode, range, and standard deviation measurements.

	Consonants	Vowels	Syllables & grammatical endings	Word stress	Sentence stress	Rhythm	Intonation	Sense group	Connected Speech	Average
Mean	2.74	2.35	2.52	2.52	1.98	2.02	2.24	1.93	2.22	2.28
Mode	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.50	1.50	1.00	1.78
Range	3.00	3.00	3.50	4.00	4.00	3.50	4.00	3.00	4.00	3.56
STDV	0.88	1.01	0.89	1.01	1.16	1.06	1.05	0.98	1.30	1.04

Table 5.1: Pre-treatment experimental group results summary

5.2.1.2 Control group

The highest mean scored by the subjects in the control group concerns the criterion of 'consonants' with three point zero nine (3.09). 'Sense group' with two point two four (2.24) scored the lowest. The standard deviation in all features of pronunciation scored below one; it varies from zero point seven six (0.76) and zero point nine seven (0.97). Although the range is high to a certain extent, it does not imply that the group is highly heterogeneous. This high score is due to the presence of three mean scores around one (1); the majority of the remaining mean scores revolve around two point five (2.50).

Two subjects scored the highest mean, MCT2 with four point eight nine (4.89) and MCT7 with four point eleven (4.11). PRT_SCT#9 with one point five six (1.56) and PRT_SCT#2 with one point six one (1.61) received the lowest mean scores. We can also note that the overall average of the 'strain' is significant scoring two point two (2.20).

The suprasegmental features have obtained very modest scores. They are below average ranging between two point two four (2.24) with 'sense group' and two point seven two (2.72) with 'syllables and grammatical ending'. The table below displays a summary of the pre-treatment control group results obtained with mean, mode, range, and standard deviation measurements.

	Consonants	Vowels	Syllables & grammatical endings	Word stress	Sentence stress	Rhythm	Intonation	Sense group	Connected Speech	Average
Mean	3.09	2.70	2.72	2.61	2.46	2.37	2.61	2.24	2.50	2.59
Mode	3.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.11
Range	3.00	4.00	3.50	3.00	4.00	3.50	4.00	3.50	4.00	3.61
STDV	0.76	0.92	0.82	0.84	0.97	0.85	0.96	0.88	0.91	0.88

Table 5.2: Pre-treatment control group results summary

5.2.1.3 Comparing experimental group to control group

In the following, we shall weight the results of the experimental group against those of the control group. For that purpose, the four measurements presented above (mean, mode, range, and standard deviation) are used in addition to a two-sample t-test for the t-test unpaired data assuming unequal variances. We thus assume the averages are the same unless the t-test results indicate otherwise.

The p value of zero point two two (0.22) is greater than the stated p value of zero point zero five (0.05) on the one hand and the t-value (-1.25) is lower than the t-critical value (2.01). In this case, the experimental group and the control group can be described as similar in terms of the mean average. The results obtained with the t-test are presented below.

	Variable 1	*Variable 2*
Mean	2,28	2,59
Variance	0,99	0,69
Observations	27	27
Hypothesised mean difference	0	
df	52	
t Stat	-1,25	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0,11	
t Critical one-tail	1,67	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0,22	
t Critical two-tail	2,01	

Table 5.3: Pre-treatment control group vs. pre-treatment experimental group t-test

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The t-test and the four other measurements techniques seem to converge. The two groups scored closer results concerning the mean average, two point five nine for the control group (2.59) and two point two eight for the experimental group (2.28). Concerning the mode average, a difference of zero point three three (0.33) is noted since the control group scored two point one one (2.11) and the experimental group scored one point seven eight (1.78). As for the range, the control group received three point six one (3.61) which is very similar to the score of three point five six (3.56) of the experimental group. Likewise, the standard deviation for the control group and for the experimental group are quite similar with zero point eight eight (0.88) for the former and one point zero four (1.04) for the latter. The summary of the aforementioned results are presented in the figure below.
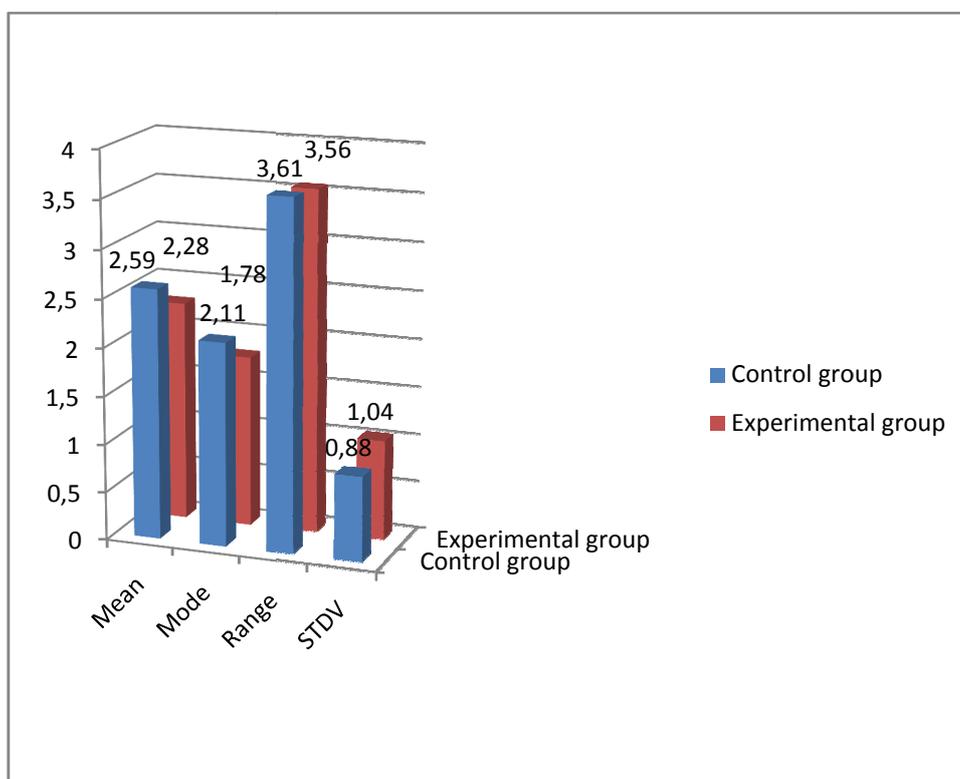
Graph 5.1: Pre-treatment control group vs. pre-treatment experimental group measurements

As for the suprasegments, the subjects in the control group demonstrated a better mastery than the subjects in the experimental group, although the scores in both groups are below average. This disparity is obvious with criteria like 'sentence stress' and 'sense

group' where the experimental group subjects have scored one point nine eight (1.98) with the former criterion and one point nine three (1.93) with the latter criterion.

5.2.2 Post-treatment phase results

Similarly structured as Section 5.2.1, this section is devoted to the presentation of the experimental group results and the control group results separately first. Then, a comparative approach is adopted to highlight the results between the two groups.

5.2.2.1 Experimental group

The mean scores under the nine criteria are above average. They range between three point five two (3.52) and four point one three (4.13). 'Consonants' and 'connected speech' received the highest scores with four point one three (4.13) for both. The lowest score is observed under the 'vowels' criterion with three point five two (3.52). An average mode of three point double four (3.44) confirms the observation that the overall results are interestingly above average.

Although the average 'STDV' of one point zero two (1.02) is not high, we noted a certain gap between the informants' high and low scores. This means the data do not show a high deviation from the mean. This low deviation is simply due to the presence of high scores from some informants such as POT_MET#4, POT_EET#6, POT_SET#2 with average scores of five point three nine (5.39), five point double three (5.33), and five point two eight (5.28) respectively. For the same reasons, we have an average 'range' of three point three nine (3.39).

The table below presents a summary of the post-treatment experimental group results obtained for mean, mode, range, and standard deviation measurements.

	Consonants	Vowels	Syllables & grammatical endings	Word stress	Sentence stress	Rhythm	Intonation	Sense group	Connected Speech	Average
Mean	4.13	3.52	3.96	3.98	3.76	3.80	3.98	3.83	4.13	3.90
Mode	4.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	5.00	3.00	3.44
Range	3.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	3.50	3.50	3.50	3.00	4.00	3.39
STDV	0.89	0.88	0.94	1.24	0.97	1.04	1.12	0.94	1.16	1.02

Table 5.4: Post-treatment experimental group results summary

5.2.2.2 Control group

The first striking observation is the fact that the majority of the means are below average. This can be clearly noted with the mean average of two point five nine (2.59). 'Consonants' is the only criterion that has scored a mean of three (3). Suprasegmental features received low scores, especially 'sentence stress' and 'sense group' criteria which scored two point three five (2.35) and two point two eight (2.28) respectively.

'STDV' is not very high with an average of one point zero four (1.04). We may conclude that the subjects are homogenous to a certain extent. This conclusion can be supported by a mode of two point zero (2.00) when the values that occurred most often were calculated. Nevertheless, we need to draw attention to scores obtained when calculating the range. They show that there is a considerable gap between the lowest and the highest scores. The average range is three point six seven (3.67). the highest range is four (4.00) scored under 'vowels', 'sentence stress', 'rhythm', 'intonation', and 'connected speech'.

A summary of the post-treatment control group results obtained with mean, mode, range, and standard deviation measurements are presented in the table below.

	Consonants	Vowels	Syllables & grammatical endings	Word stress	Sentence stress	Rhythm	Intonation	Sense group	Connected Speech	Average
Mean	3	2.43	2.89	2.87	2.35	2.48	2.59	2.28	2.43	2.59
Mode	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
Range	3.00	4.00	3.50	3.50	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	3.67
STDV	1.03	0.95	1.05	1.04	1.09	1.05	1.12	0.89	1.12	1.04

Table 5.5: Post-treatment control group results summary

5.2.2.3 Comparing experimental group to control group

The procedure adopted here is similar to the one used in Section 5.2.1.3. It is meant to compare the results obtained by both groups in the post-treatment phase using the t-test and the other measurements techniques.

For the purpose of the t-test protocol, we hypothesised that the two groups were similar and had similar means. According to the results, we can note that the p value of zero (0.00) is below the stated p value of five percent (5%) or zero point zero five (0.05). Besides, the t-value (4.83) is much greater than the t-critical value (2.01). These two specific results lead us to say that null hypothesis needs to be rejected and state that the two groups are different and have obtained disparate means. The results obtained with the t-test are presented below.

	Variable 1	*Variable 2*
Mean	3,89	2,59
Variance	0,97	0,98
Observations	27	27
Hypothesised mean difference	0	
df	52	
t Stat	4,83	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0,00	
t Critical one-tail	1,67	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0,00	
t Critical two-tail	2,01	

Table 5.6: Post-treatment control group vs. post-treatment experimental group t-test

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The results obtained with the t-test are supported by the other statistical measures. The experimental group mean (3.89) exceeds the control group mean (2.59) by one point three (1.30), which is considerable. Similarly, the mode indicates better results with repeated scores of three point four four (3.44) for the experimental group and two (2) for the control group. Concerning the range, the two groups received almost similar results, which shows that the difference between low score and high scores in both groups is similar. The results are presented in the graph below.
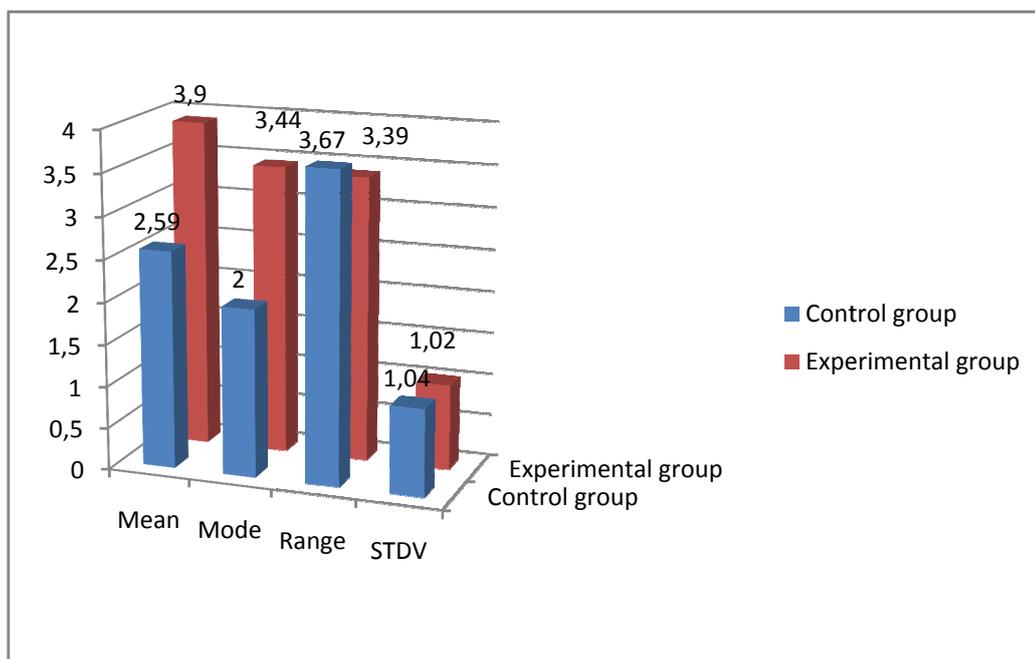
Graph 5.2: Post-treatment control group vs. post-treatment experimental group measurements

5.2.3 Comparing pre-treatment to post-treatment results

After having presented results obtained in the pre-treatment phase and then in the post-treatment phase, we will now compare the scores realised by the same group before and after the treatment. In other words, this part is devised to weight the results obtained by the control group in the pre-treatment phase against those obtained by the same group in the post-treatment phase. In a similar way, results obtained by the experimental group in the pre-treatment phase and those obtained in the post-treatment phase will be compared. We will start with the experimental group.

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5.2.3.3 Pre-treatment experimental group vs. post-treatment experimental group

Our aim in this part is to compare the results obtained with the experimental group first for the group and then for the most striking individual subjects within the group before and after the treatment. We will analyse the data statistically from three angles: the t-test, the three statistical measurements (mean, mode, range), and standard deviation.

The paired two sample means t-test indicates that the p-value (0.00) is lower than the stated alpha of five percent. This leads us to state that the two means are different. In other words, the experimental group after the treatment is different from the experimental group before the treatment as far their performance is concerned. The table below shows the results registered with the t-test.

	Variable 1	*Variable 2*
Mean	2,28	3,89
Variance	0,99	0,97
Observations	27,00	27,00
Hypothesised Mean Difference	0,00	
df	26,00	
t Stat	-13,11	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0,00	
t Critical one-tail	1,71	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0,00	
t Critical two-tail	2,06	

Table 5.7: Pre-treatment experimental group vs. post-treatment experimental group t-test

A comparison of the four statistical measurements has helped us identify where the difference between the pre-treatment and post-treatment performance lies. It is worth noting that the post-treatment mean (3.90) is greater than the pre-treatment mean (2.28). We can say that the experimental group performed better after the treatment. The mode supports this conclusion. The post-treatment mode (3.44) is clearly higher than the pre-treatment mode (1.78). This indicates that subjects in the experimental group attained above average scores after the treatment. The pre-treatment standard deviation (1.04) and the post-treatment standard deviation (1.02) reveal that the progression of the subjects from the pre-treatment phase to the post treatment phase was homogeneous. The following graph summarises the results presented above.
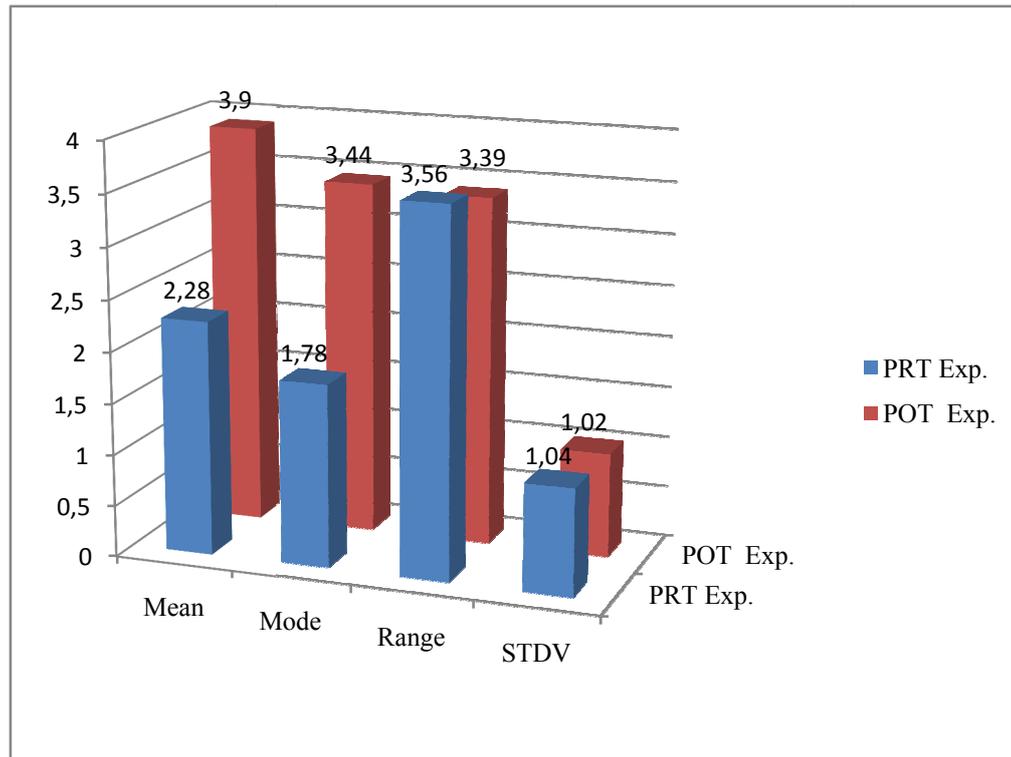
Graph 5.3: Pre-treatment experimental group vs. post-treatment experimental group

measurements

As noted above, the subjects in the experimental group demonstrated a significant improvement. Apart from one subject (PRT_EET#1 with 4.17 against POT_EET#1 with 4.22) who remained constant to a certain extent, the others showed considerable betterment. The most prominent cases are PRT_SET#5 (1.94) against POT_SET#5 (4.00), PRT_MET#6 (1.61) against POT_MET#6 (3.94), PRT_EET#9 (2.50) against POT_EET#9 (4.94), PRT_SET#9 (2.50) against POT_SET#9 (4.83), and PRT_MET#9 (1.72) against POT_MET#9 (4.00). The graph below gives clear a picture of the results obtained by the subjects.
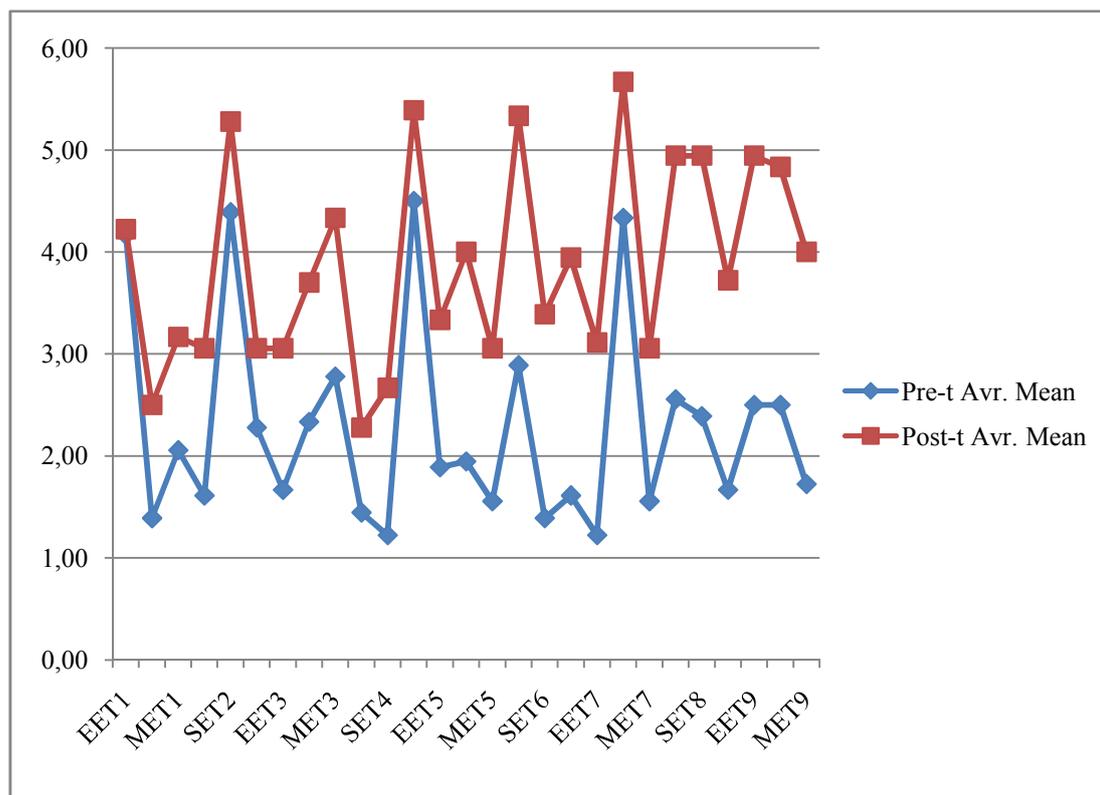
Graph 5.4: Comparing pre-treatment experimental subjects' and post- treatment experimental subjects' means

The improvement we recorded on the part of the post-experimental subjects led us to talk to some of them informally. We aimed at identifying the factors that contributed to this betterment. We spoke to SET#5, MET#6, EET#9, SET#9, and MET#9. The factors they have in common have to do with watching a lot of programme in English and singing songs in English. Indeed, exposure to real authentic English for long periods of time helped make the difference.

5.2.3.4 Pre-treatment control group vs. post-treatment control group

After comparing the pre-treatment experimental group to the post-treatment experimental group, we will follow the same procedure to compare the pre-treatment control group to the post-treatment control group.

The paired two sample means t-test we ran shows that the p-value score (0.00) is lower than the alpha level of five percent (5%). This implies that the means are similar,

which is confirmed statistically by the same mean (2.59) obtained before and after the treatment. The table below summarises the results obtained with the t-test.

	Variable 1	*Variable 2*
Mean	2,59	2,59
Variance	0,69	0,98
Observations	27,00	27,00
Hypothesised Mean Difference	0,00	
df	26,00	
t Stat	0,00	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0,50	
t Critical one-tail	1,71	
P(T<=t) two-tail	1,00	
t Critical two-tail	2,06	

Table 5.8: Pre-treatment control group vs. post-treatment control group t-test

The results obtained with the other statistical measures we administered seem to tally with the data obtained with the paired two sample t-test. The mean, mode, range, and standard deviation realised by the control group before and after the treatment are significantly close. The means are the same (2.59). As for the mode, the control group scored two point one one (2.11) in the pre-treatment phase and two (2.00) in the post treatment phase. Similarly, the range before and after the treatment is almost equal with three point six one (3.61) and three point six seven (3.67) successively. The standard deviation confirms homogeneity among the subjects of the group with zero point eight eight (0.88) in the pre-treatment phase and one point zero four (1.04) in the post-treatment phase. The graph below gives a summary of the numbers presented above.
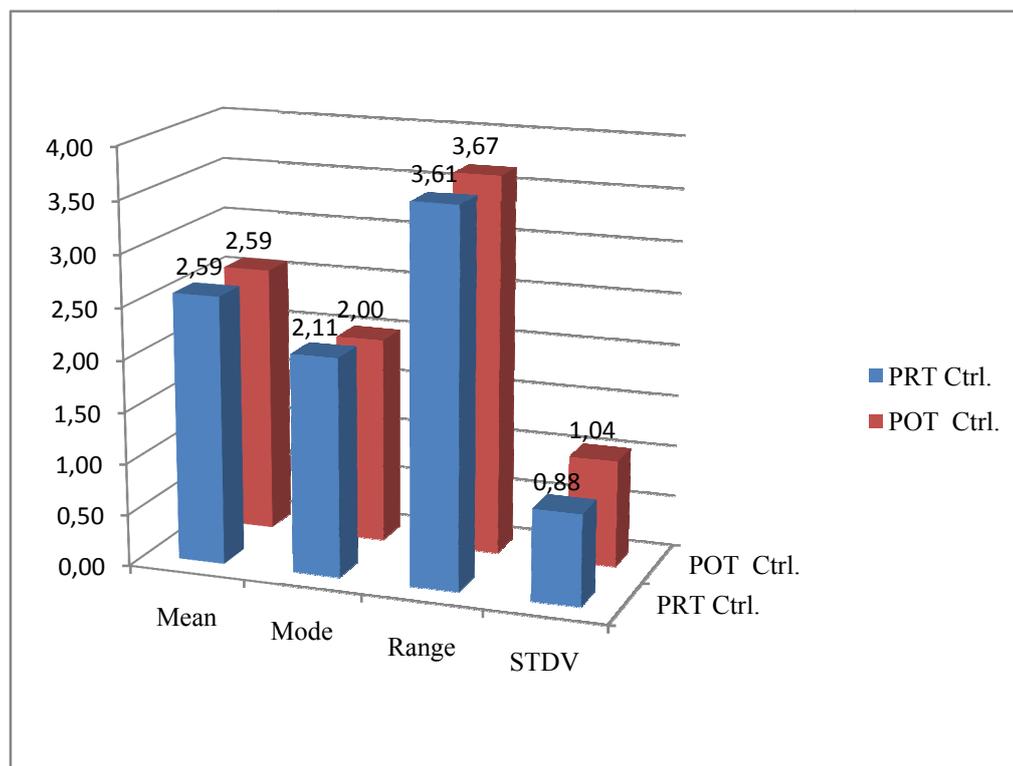
Graph 5.5: Pre-treatment control group vs. post-treatment control group measurements

Scrutiny of the results realised by the subjects individually shows that there are three cases. A set of subjects demonstrated a slight improvement. A second set of subjects scored almost similar means. A third set, however, obtained lower scores. The most noticeable instances of subjects in the first case are PRT_ECT#5 (1.78) against POT _ECT#5(2.11), PRT_SCT#8 (2.83) against POT _SCT#8 (3.39), PRT_ECT#9 (2.72) against POT _ECT#9 (3.50), and PRT_MCT#9 (3.78) against PRT_MCT#9 (4.50). As for the second case, obvious examples are PRT_MCT#1 (3.89) against POT_MCT#1 (3.78), PRT_MCT#2 (4.89) against POT _MCT#2 (4.78), and PRT_SCT#4 (1.94) against POT_SCT#4 (1.89). The obvious examples of subjects that scored lower are PRT_ECT#2 (3.33) against POT_ECT#2 (2.83), PRT_ECT#3 (2.11) against POT_ECT#3 (1.56), PRT_SCT#5 (2.28) against POT_SCT#5 (1.50), and PRT_SCT#6 (2.22) against POT_SCT#6 (1.67). All in all, ten subjects showed improvement, ten others registered a decrease, and the other seven remained constant to a certain extent. The results obtained are presented in the following graph.
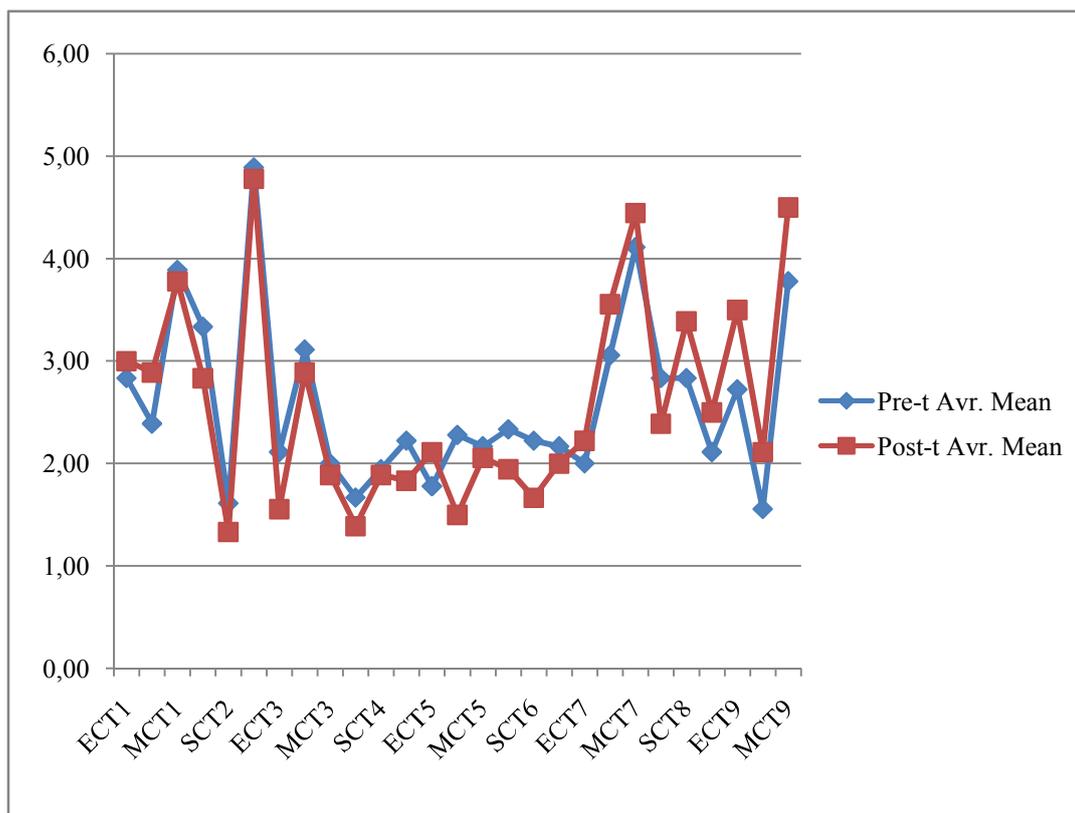
Graph 5.6: Comparing pre-treatment control subjects' and post- treatment control subjects' means

After having dealt with the analysis of the experiment data, we will proceed with the analysis of data obtained through the interview.

5.3 Interview

As explained earlier (Section 4.5.2), we administered a semi-structured interview to seventeen university teachers. The processing of the data obtained will be presented below under eight headings: Syllabus, objectives, speaking, listening, pronunciation and its treatment, communicative language ability, coordination, and material.

5.3.1 The syllabus

In spite of the importance of a syllabus, the majority of the informants (Teachers of Oral Expression) confess the absence of a written document that indicates the content and aims set for Oral Expression to Lic1 students. They deplore such a situation and show

different reactions. Some of the informants state they designed their own syllabus which they implemented in their respective classes. It is not a syllabus agreed on and validated for the whole cohort. Informant #2 (Appendix 13b) states that there was agreement among colleagues acknowledges the fact that the syllabus had not been respected due to lack of coordination. A summary of the informants' responses to my questions concerning the syllabus for the Lic1 Oral Expression is listed below.

- A colleague suggested a syllabus but I could not see it.

- At the beginning, no syllabus. Later there was agreement with colleagues.

- I was trying to find something interesting all the time.

- Each teacher is teaching their way.

- As long as learners are talking, it is alright.

- I needed help from colleagues, and I did not have any.

- I had to decide myself what to do with the students.

- I tried to do my best to meet learners' needs.

- I designed my own syllabus.

- It is a module where you have to leave the students free to talk.

- The first time I was asked to teach OE, I did not ask for a syllabus. I knew it did not exist.

- We have to manage our own syllabus and teach. There are no guidelines.

- I designed my own syllabus based on the diagnostic assessment.

- Each year, the syllabus changes depending on the students.

We can note that the main target for teachers is to have their learners talk. There is no written syllabus, which may indicate that there is lack of a thoughtful and structured approach to achieving such objectives. Most teachers decide what to do in isolation.

In the case of Phonetics, however, the informants explain that they have followed a syllabus that has been designed by phoneticians. Two syllabi, one from the University of Mostaganem and another from the University of Oran, are listed under Appendix 10 and Appendix 11 respectively.

The next point deals with the objectives set for the Oral Expression and Phonetics courses.

5.3.2 Objectives

The teachers of OE under study have given us information about the objectives set for their students. Although these objectives are different and varied, there is convergence to some extent. The objective that has showed the highest score is 'pronunciation' with six (06) teachers. Five (05) teachers set 'developing self-confidence' as an objective. 'Enhancing accuracy' and 'enriching vocabulary have been highlighted by four (04) teachers. 'Targeting fluency' has been mentioned by two (02) teachers. The other objectives are randomly listed below:

- Transfer of competences (Reinvest what has been learnt in other subjects)

- Integrating skills

- Promote public speaking

- Encourage interaction among students

- Communicative competence

- Oral skills

- Listening

The figure below gives a summary of the objectives set for Lic1 OE course and the number of times they have been mentioned in the interview section dealing with course objectives.
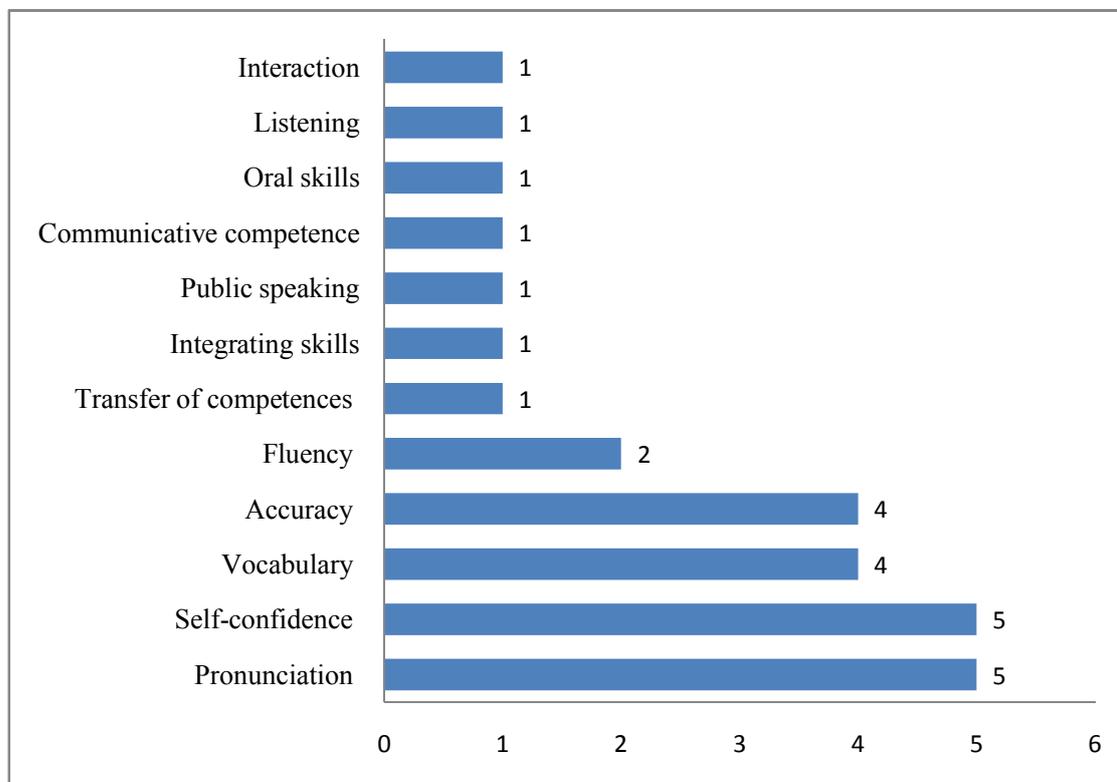
Graph 5.7: Oral Expression course objectives

As for the subject of Phonetics, One shared objective among the informants (five out of seven) has to do with the improvement of learners' pronunciation. Five (5) teachers state that they target the recognition of sounds (consonants and vowels) and their characteristics. Three (3) informants declare that they aim at developing their learners' skills in producing sounds correctly. Two objectives have received one answer each: defining Phonetics and its branches and transcribing R.P. phonemes. These objectives are presented below in a graphic form.
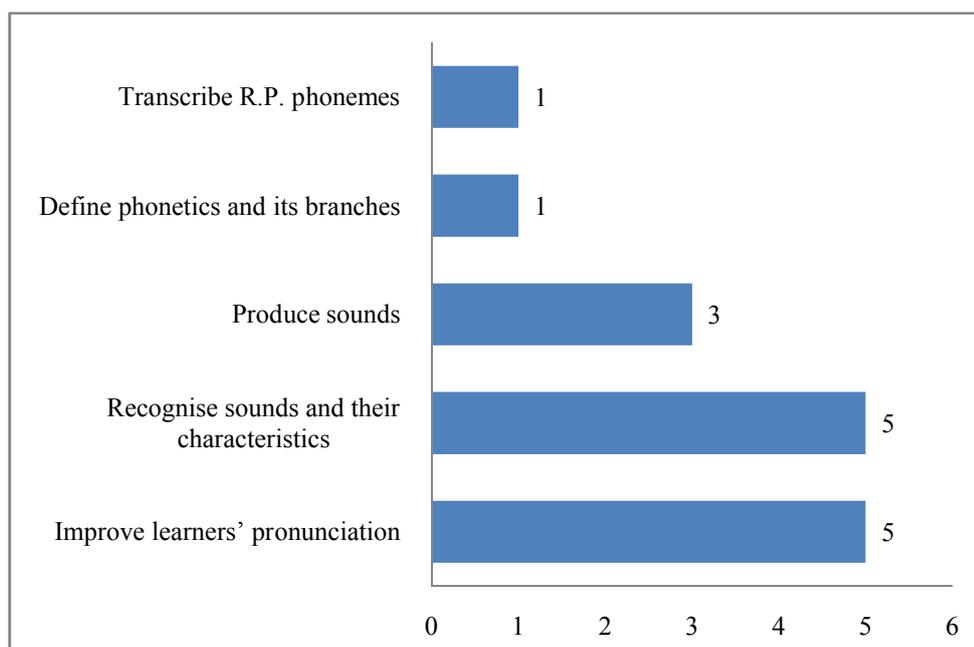
Graph 5.8: Phonetics course objectives

After the objectives, we will deal with the subsection about speaking and the types of activities implemented to achieve the aforementioned objectives.

5.3.3 Speaking

The informants' answers allowed us to make an inventory of the teaching practices put into operation in their OE classes. 'Free topics', 'role plays', and 'songs' were mentioned five (05) times each and top the list. 'Debates' was identified four (04) times. Each of 'dialogues', 'discussion', and 'plays' appeared three (3) times. 'Games' and 'presentations' were mentioned twice (02) each. The other teaching practices, mentioned once only by the informants, are listed in a random order as follows:

- Pattern drills

- Interviews

- Story completion

- Jigsaw techniques

- Story telling

The following graph gives a visual presentation of the teaching practices dealt with in Lic1 OE classes.
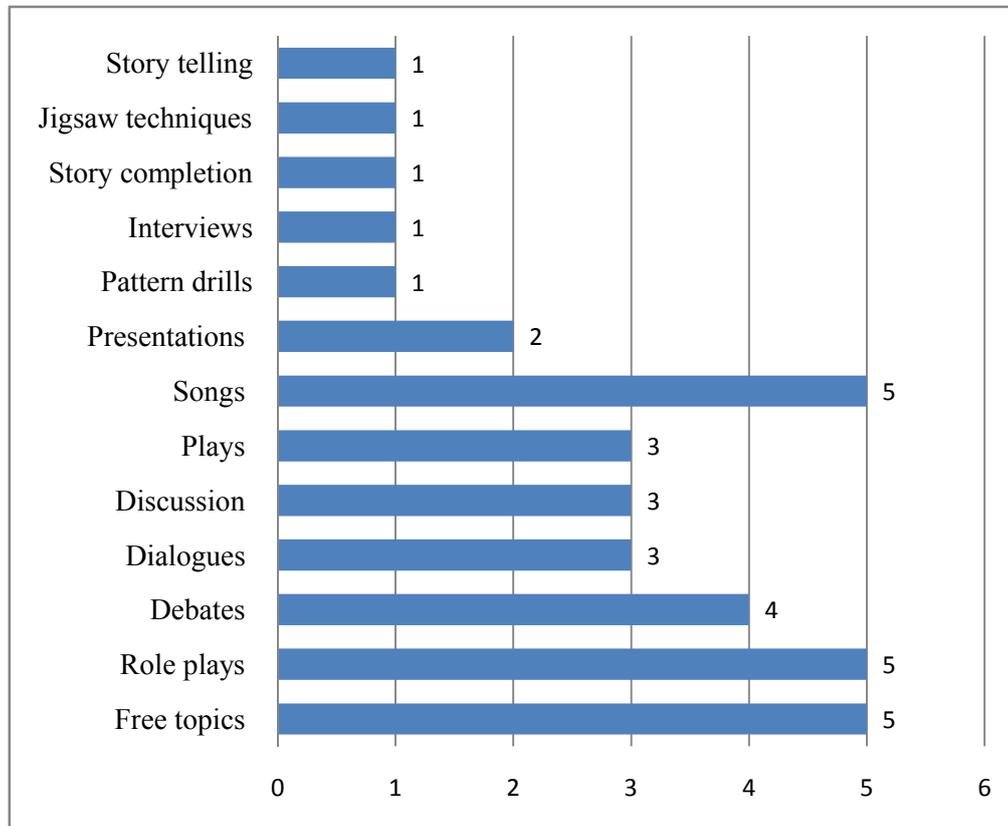
Graph 5.9: Types of activities implemented in OE classes

According to the answers we received from the informants, the best way to help their learners improve on their speaking skills is to actually have them speak. The more learners speak, the more competent they will become.

Most of our informants seem to favour the implementation of fluency-based practice. They encourage their learners to feel comfortable, speak freely and develop self-confidence, which will have a positive impact on their speaking proficiency. Some informants (4 out of 13) believe accuracy is very important and devise activities accordingly.

This part covered speaking, and the following will present listening.

5.3.4 Listening

The listening skills do not represent a priority for the population under study. An overwhelming majority of the interviewed teachers (ten out of thirteen) state they do not focus on the listening skills. No time is devoted to the teaching of listening in the classroom. The graph below shows the number of teachers dealing with listening skills instruction.
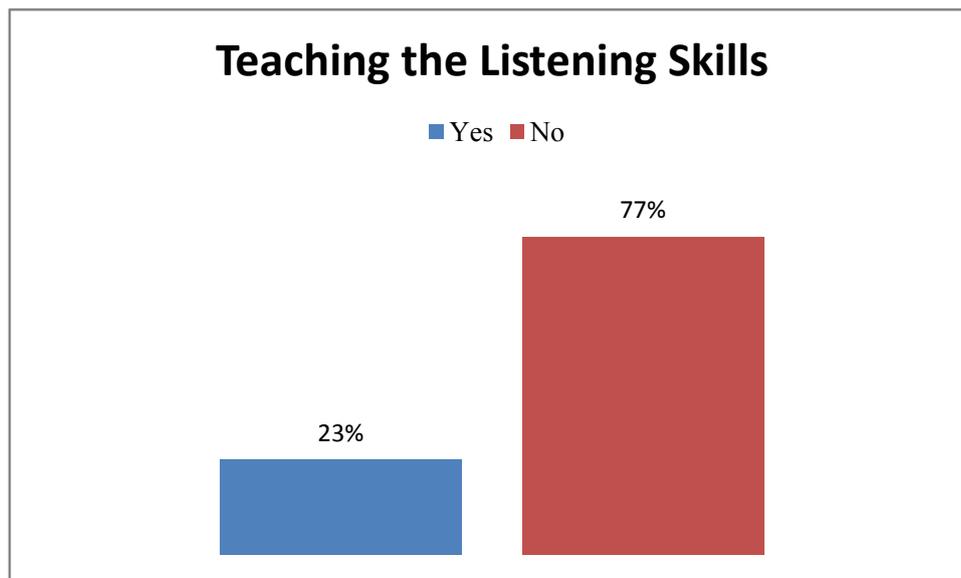
Graph 5.10: The instruction of the listening skills

Informants give different reasons to explain the reasons behind the absence of listening skills instruction. Reason number one refers to the scarcity of audio equipment. Teachers complain that they do not have access to adequate equipment to train their students on listening at the university.

One informant states they do not feel the need to focus on teaching the listening skills. This teacher explains the motives for such a position by the fact that students are exposed to English outside the classroom context. Another informant explains that they do not pay attention to listening because their main aim is to have learners speak and speak only.

After having presented results linked to listening, we will deal with pronunciation and its instruction.

5.3.5 Pronunciation and its treatment

In this section, we will present the results obtained under two headings. The first relates to the data we have received from the teachers of Oral Expression, and the second one deals with the information registered with the teachers of Phonetics. We will start with Oral Expression.

5.3.5.1 Oral Expression

According to the informants we interviewed, there is no formal teaching of the features of pronunciation. Almost all the informants who teach OE (12 of 13) declare they do not plan activities a priori to have learners practise pronunciation. These informants state that their main concern is to intervene to correct pronunciation mistakes if and when they occur. The features of pronunciation they target when correcting their learners' pronunciation mistakes are listed as follows:

- Sounds (consonants and vowels) with ten informants

- Syllables and word stress with seven informants

- Intonation with three informants

- Rhythm with three informants

The pie chart below gives a clear picture of the mistakes targeted and amount of importance attached to them.
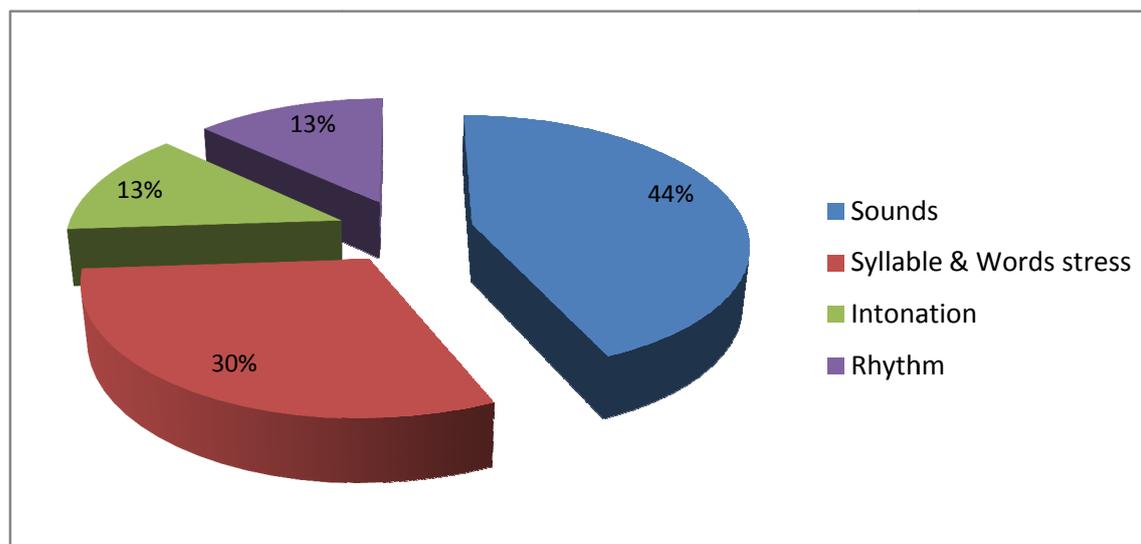
Figure 5.1: Features of pronunciation corrected

One of the twelve informants concerned says that no room is devoted to pronunciation practice. Moreover, that informant claims that pronunciation mistakes are tolerated since Lic1 students are fresh and teachers are not native speakers.

The one informant who asserts they teach pronunciation formally in the form of planned practice explains that the main aim is to raise learners' awareness. That interviewed teacher says that they give special attention to stress and intonation.

5.3.5.2 Phonetics

Concerning the module of Phonetics, the seven teachers (100% of the informants who have taught Phonetics) agree on the inclusion of some necessary points in their lessons. They first focus on the definition of Phonetics. Then, they move to the identification of organs of speech (Articulatory Phonetics). After that, they devote considerable time to study consonants, vowels, and their characteristics.

Relying on the two syllabi we have, in addition to the segmental features, some of the suprasegments are included. Syllables and word stress are included in the two syllabi plus the features of sentence stress and intonation in one syllabus (University of Oran). However, all but two informants have mentioned the features of syllables and word stress as elements of pronunciation taught in their Phonetics classes.

In the following lines, we will deal with the informants' answers on communicative language ability and its components.

5.3.6 Communicative language ability

For the majority of the informants, communicative language ability can be understood as the learners' competence to express their ideas fluently and accurately. Their main aim is to have learners enrich their vocabulary stock and work on their syntactic errors. In addition, some teachers who rightly consider, as psycholinguists claim, that self-confidence is a legitimate target, do their utmost to raise motivation and decrease anxiety in their learners.

It is noteworthy that all our informants agree on the importance of pronunciation in the development of the oral-aural process. They are aware of its communicative value and the role suprasegments plays in effective communication. Two Oral Expression informants claim that they want their learners to 'sound correct' when they speak. The overwhelming majority of Phonetics informants herald the curative role of Phonetics in helping improve learners' pronunciation and the way they speak English. Only one Phonetics informant advocates, as we do, that due to their importance, suprasegments should be introduced from the very beginning.

On their part, the Oral Expression informants' assumptions about pronunciation do not seem to be consistent with their actual practices in the classroom context. Practically all the informants acknowledge that the role pronunciation plays in communication is unquestionable. Yet, as seen in Section 5.3.5.1, little room is devoted to the treatment of pronunciation during their contact hours. Some teachers explain that they consider the course to have fulfilled its duty successfully once the learners have become intelligible. Again, here, the notion of intelligibility is not clarified, and the required pronunciation competence is not well defined.

Most informants declare that learners do improve, to some extent, in comparison with their level at the beginning of the academic year. The informants view this improvement from different angles. Four informants link this improvement to learners' increased self-confidence. Three informants explain that students' communicative

language ability improved at the same time as their pronunciation of words progressed. Two informants link their learners' betterment to the latter's vocabulary stock expansion. Two other informants noted that their learners had gained a lot in both fluency and accuracy. One teacher highlights the improvement of some learners in the suprasegments. This informant explains this betterment was due to the fact that these students watched videos on YouTube and acted in several plays.

5.3.7 Coordination

We present the processed data concerning coordination in relation first to the Oral Expression course, second the Phonetics course, and third to the two courses combined.

According to the thirteen teachers of Oral Expression we interviewed, two teachers only state they have attended coordination sessions. For the overwhelming majority, there has never been a formal session of coordination scheduled nor held. In other words, the informants have never been invited to a coordination meeting nor have they initiated one. They have taught their classes each on their own with very little information about what was happening in their colleagues' Oral expression classes.

Four teachers, however, declare they have exchanged some information informally with other colleagues. One informant explains they have discussed pedagogic aspects through the Internet, and two others state that they have tackled some issues in the hall on their way to their classroom.

As far as the subject of Phonetics is concerned, the aspect of 'coordination' has received mixed results. Four informants out of seven say they have never taken part in a formal coordination session. Two explain that they have organised several coordination meetings, including via e-mailing. Two insist on having coordination meetings in order to prepare for the exams.

As regards coordination between the Phonetics and Oral expression teachers, a unanimous answer has been given by the informants. A total absence of coordination in this area sadly denotes that teachers in one subject are only incidentally aware of what is going on in the other. Ironically enough, they all agree that both subjects deal with oral-

aural aspects of the language and therefore share a lot in terms of objectives and methodology and content.

The graph below illustrates the extent to which coordination does – or does not – take place in Oral Expression and Phonetics separately, and in the two subjects taken together.
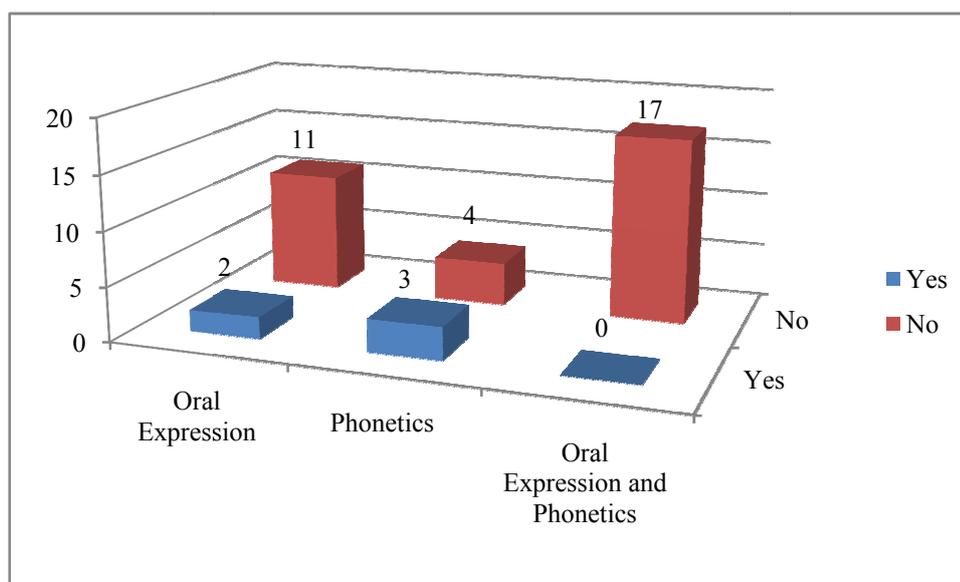
Graph 5.11: Coordination

In the following lines, we deal with the hard and soft material teachers of Oral Expression and Phonetics use with their classes.

5.3.8 Material

In this section, we will summarise the informants' answers regarding the equipment used in the classroom. Then, we shall focus on material writing and list some of the sources teachers rely on for their teaching.

Amongst the population of seventeen teachers, only six mention that they used ICTs and recorded material in their classrooms. They explain that they connected their personal lap-tops and amplifiers to the projector provided by the Department. Other teachers, while claiming their familiarity with this technology, justify the absence of its use in their teaching by the unavailability of audio equipment in their respective departments.

Nevertheless, all of them agree on the huge impact of audio material and ICTs on the teaching/learning of oral-aural skills.

Except for one teacher who states they have written their own material, the remaining informants declare they have relied on a variety of sources to write material for their classes. They depended mainly on elements taken from the Internet and textbooks.

Six out of thirteen teachers of Oral Expression claim that they have used textbooks to adopt or adapt material for their lessons. As for Phonetics, four out of seven teachers say that they have had recourse to textbooks and books of Phonetics and Phonology. The table below presents an inventory of the textbooks and books used by Oral Expression and Phonetics teachers. In Oral Expression, the four textbooks used are listed in alphabetical order. For the Phonetics module, textbooks and books are presented from the most used to the least.

Oral Expression	Phonetics
• *Headway* by J. Soars and L. Soars • *Interchange* by J. C. Richards • *Keep talking* by F. Klippel • *Market Leader* by D. Cotton	• *English Pronunciation in Use* by M. Hancock • *An Introduction to the Pronunciation of English* by A. C. Gimson • *English Phonetics and Phonology* by P. Roach • *English Intonation* by J. C. Wells

Table 5.9: Textbooks and books used in Oral Expression and Phonetics courses

5.4 Conclusion

We presented the processed data quantitatively and qualitatively starting with the results of the pre-treatment phase and then the post-treatment phase. We compared the learners' achievements within the same group and then compared the results from the two groups before and after the treatment. After that, results obtained by processing the answers from the interviews were presented and listed according to the objectives set in the interview. They revolve around the views of our seventeen informants concerning oral skills and their teaching.

The experiment helped demonstrate the higher effectiveness of the top-down approach to teaching pronunciation features. In fact, the experimental group showed considerable improvement on pronunciation features after the treatment. The control group, on the other hand, not only did they show signs of stagnation, but some subjects' scores even decreased.

The informants in the interview provided us with valuable information. They shed light on the practices applied in the subjects of Pronunciation and Oral Expression at the tertiary level. The main observation is related to the solitary behaviour of Oral Expression teachers. They have chosen to manage their course in isolation devoid of any form of collaboration or agreement on what to teach and how to teach it. Moreover, pronunciation is not given the share it deserves. Some teachers have simply opted for its exclusion. Some other teachers have given some emphasis to pronunciation through error correction or remedial work mainly. It is undeniable that the segments take the lead over the suprasegments. The informants do not seem to be aware of the complexity of the speaking and listening skills and they are merely left to be worked on by the learners on their own or to soak in with time.

After the presentation of the results obtained in the experiment and the interview, we intend, in Chapter Six, to summarise the findings and discuss them so that some suggestions and recommendations can be made.

Chapter Six: Findings, Discussion and Strategies for Change

6.1 Introduction

Discussion about the listening and speaking processes has led us to rediscover how complex and challenging it is to become an effective oral communicator. Besides, teachers alone cannot be made accountable for their learners' results. We need to favour a constructivist approach to learning where teachers and learners are viewed as collaborators. Learners ought to become responsible for their learning while the teachers' role, therefore, could be more that of practitioners who implement strategies and create an adequate environment for learning to take place inside and outside the classroom context.

In this chapter, we shall summarise the findings we arrived at through an empirical approach and discuss them in relation to our research questions and hypotheses put forward in the General Introduction. A considerable part in Chapter Six will be devoted to proposals to pave the way for improvement to take place. These suggestions are meant to remedy some of the shortcomings that we have identified throughout this research. The strategies for change that we call attention to revolve around areas covering course design, teacher pre- and post-service training, technology, and teaching practices and strategies for oral skills.

Consequently, we first deal with course design and development, where determining aims and objectives is fundamental. We shall then insist on the necessity of defining the role of the institution and consequently deciding what kind of training to implement for what kind of graduates. Besides, some room in this chapter will be devoted to an important parameter in the equation: the teacher. We shall lay stress on the benefits of encouraging reflective and critical thinking on the part of teachers in order to become active elements responsible for and in charge of their own professional development. Another aspect, awareness raising, will not be neglected. We shall insist on the benefits of raising learners' awareness about features of pronunciation, especially suprasegments. A section will be devoted to tackle the role of technology as an efficient strategic tool for educational development in general and for oral-aural skills in particular. We shall also discuss the

various possibilities offered by technology and how they could be made use of inside and outside the classroom context. The last section will aim to cover some teaching practices we deem appropriate and efficient for the development of oral communication skills. These practices will draw from the use of songs, drama, and storytelling.

6.2 Summary of findings and discussion

Experiment

The experiment involving two groups, experimental and control, helped obtain fairly conclusive results. The two groups before the treatment obtained –not surprisingly– quite close results, demonstrating comparable mastery of pronunciation features. As far as their pronunciation competence is concerned, the two groups proved to be similar and homogenous to a great extent.

The results obtained after the treatment showed clear disparity between the control group and the experimental group.

The control group did not demonstrate any improvement concerning the features of pronunciation. Their overall mean remained almost stable. Disappointingly enough, some subjects scored even lower in segments and suprasegments alike.

Matters turned out to be completely different with the experimental group. Subjects demonstrated substantial improvement as far as pronunciation is concerned. They showed a better passive and active control over not only the suprasegmental features of pronunciation but also the segmental ones whose formal teaching was incidental and remedial in our top-down approach. We may reasonably conclude that raising the learners' awareness about the segmental features was sufficient to help them improve on their production of segments.

Some of the experimental group subjects ameliorated their results considerably. In an informal discussion, these subjects (SET#2, MET#4, SET#5, MET#6, SET#7, EET#9, SET#9, MET#9) admitted that one important factor that made a difference in the quality of their pronunciation was their exposure to English for extended periods of time. As they

started feeling more comfortable with the language, they watched more and more films and other programmes in their original English version.

Syllabus

A syllabus is an important academic document for any subject. It communicates the objectives and content for the course. It also helps define expectations and responsibilities. We deplore, however the absence of a written syllabus for the subject of Oral Expression for Lic1 students. Even where a few teachers stated they had designed a syllabus, we could not lay our hands on a copy of it despite our repeated requests.

Both novice and experienced teachers rely on their instinct and intuition and past experience as learners to drive their students through two academic semesters. This kind of practice may be to short term planning from one day to the next. This state may also explain the reason why Oral Expression lecturers tend to have excessive recourse to improvised free topics in their teaching. One might wonder what 'free topics' means. Our best conclusion drawn from our formal and informal discussions with our informants is that teachers do suggest or allow learners to suggest a topic of their choice. In other words, instructors join their Oral Expression classes in the discussion of topics proposed either by themselves or by their learners.

A carefully graded formal syllabus, intelligently designed to be implemented by one and all would certainly help both teachers and learners gain time, set objectives and evaluate where they stand in their teaching and where their students stand in their learning.

Speaking

As far as the speaking skills are concerned, the teachers' goal is to have their learners speak as much as possible. The majority of the informants are more fluency-oriented and therefore learners are encouraged to speak freely and overcome that *xenoglossophobia* fuelled by the fear of making mistakes which leaves some learners numb and unable to utter a single word. These teachers privilege an approach which aims to create a positive rapport between the teacher and learners and between the learners themselves and thus create a relaxed atmosphere conducive to free expression.

Nonetheless, it seems that teachers of Oral expression do not have a clear understanding of what speaking skills really are, nor of the complex process that characterises speaking. That is why they lack an appropriate strategy that takes into consideration the different parameters of oral communication. Despite the instructors' will to develop learners' speaking proficiency, they fall short of producing competent speakers in English.

Pronunciation

It is sad to note that planned and formal instruction of pronunciation is neglected if not totally absent in Oral Expression classes. We deplore this treatment of pronunciation features although a considerable number of teachers admit their important role in oral-aural communication. It is left to the learner to acquire it incidentally through sheer exposure, soaking it up like a sponge. Or, as some teachers state, pronunciation is treated through the correction of errors, exclusively for remedial purposes.

Nevertheless, the striking point is that some teachers believe, wrongly in our view, that the segmental errors are an insuperable obstacle to intelligibility and they should thus devote all their time for their correction. This leaves little or no time to help their learners to improve on the suprasegments which are more essential to meaning and all its nuances. Aiming to improve our learners' pronunciation of English does not correlate with learners' improvement on segments. If we target a certain model of pronunciation, we need to focus more on the suprasegments.

Some teachers make some room for the teaching of suprasegments. That augurs well for the treatment of suprasegmental features in the future. These endeavours need to be valued and pushed further so that the treatment of pronunciation goes beyond the practice of sounds, syllables and word stress.

As regards the module of Phonetics, it is essential to discuss its objectives and methodology. The main aim that seems to be unanimously targeted by teachers of Phonetics is the improvement of their learners' pronunciation. We have serious doubts as to whether the way Phonetics is approached and taught can help achieve such an aim. The role of Phonetics in the English course must be more clearly defined.

Chapter Six: Findings, Discussion and Strategies for Change

Teachers should decide whether Phonetics is meant to train learners to speak English better or to develop their competence as individuals to study the phonetic aspects of language in general and English in particular. What we are trying to highlight here is linked to the fact that competent learners in phonetic or phonemic description and analysis does not suggest that they are competent at pronouncing English with its segmental and suprasegmental features.

The modules of Phonetics and Oral Expression, as far as pronunciation features are concerned, share the same treatment. Teachers in both subjects have opted for a bottom-up approach whereby segments take the lion's share. This process is wrongly assumed to enhance the students pronunciation skills and by extension their speaking proficiency. Some other teachers have followed this procedure because that is how they themselves were taught, and it seemed a logical progression to them. They have never questioned its efficiency nor its effectiveness.

However, when discussing the top-down process with some of the informants, we could perceive a positive attitude. They showed a kind of readiness to experiment this approach in their pronunciation instruction. The informants admit that rarely do students have the opportunity to cover the suprasegmental features since this bottom-up process is inevitably repeated every year starting with the same segmental features.

This approach to teaching pronunciation may be geared by the teachers' self-confessed poorer mastery of the suprasegments. It is safer to focus on the segments being less challenging than the suprasegments. Teachers do not feel comfortable and knowledgeable enough to explicitly teach the suprasegmental features of pronunciation. In this vein, four teachers confess that, not being specialists, they do not master the suprasegmental features of pronunciation; and, they, therefore, cannot teach them.

Moreover, teachers may find difficulties to analyse their learners' pronunciation so that errors can be diagnosed and remedies suggested. It is clear that instructors target communicative competence by focusing on learners' mastery of semantic and morphosyntactic knowledge and thus marginalise prosody awareness training.

Listening

Listening is not taught. Most, if not all, teachers consider listening as a skill that does not require teaching. It is left to develop 'naturally' through the teaching of speaking. Listening is considered like walking which develops naturally, and therefore mere practice will make the learners perfect.

When listening is present as a skill in its own right, it is quasi exclusively in the form of testing. Learners are not trained to develop their competences in listening. They are not taught how to integrate different skills to better the act of listening. They are rather involved in practices seeking to determine how much of the content they have understood.

In other cases, listening is used to introduce some language points. This practice can be effective in language learning. We need to consider other uses of listening so that we can help learners develop not only their listening comprehension but their listening skills as well. Otherwise, we will continue delving into pedagogic practices which hardly separate listening from hearing.

Teachers' preparation to teach listening needs to be questioned. The exclusion of practices that favour the instruction of listening may be due to teachers' unawareness of the complex process of listening. This reluctance may also be caused by the intangible nature of listening, which can be disheartening to a great extent.

Collaboration and Coordination

Collaboration and coordination seem to be two of the weakest links in teachers' practices. This explains the diagnosed deficiency in setting common objectives for the learners in the department of English. Most teachers take it for granted that the objective is to make learners speak. They do not seek collaboratively answers as to what kind of speaker to target nor to how to attain the expected skills.

The collaboration and coordination we are advocating go far beyond that. It is a truism to say that both vertical (across the three levels) and horizontal (within one level) progressions need to be considered in the course of the 'Licence'. Rarely are teachers aware of the content and objectives of modules other than those they are in charge of. We

are more in a situation where teachers act individually and in an isolated manner. Even when some form of coordination exists as is the case for Phonetics, we are yet to be convinced that it is geared by pedagogic motives. It is more aimed for the teachers of the same module to have a common exam paper and thus make sure the different students are tested over the same content.

All modules in the same level (Lic1) together with modules in the three levels (Lic1, Lic2, and Lic3) need to converge towards common aims. Objectives in a particular module should be set as part of a greater whole. This progression cannot be expected to be successful if collaboration and coordination are missing.

Most of the hypotheses suggested for this research have been validated. Undeniably, the bottom-up approach to pronunciation teaching appears to be the dominant way to do things. Pronunciation treatment is not given the importance it rightly deserves. The experiment results clearly indicate that the top-down approach has proven to be more effective in developing most learners' proficiency in oral-aural communication. The listening skills are not targeted by teachers. Learners are left on their own to enhance their listening competence.

As hypothesised also, the subjects dealing with the oral aspects of the language do not seem to be directed towards the same aims. The bond between listening, speaking, and pronunciation is not fostered, which may fall short of optimising the impact of pronunciation-oriented listening activities in the development of oral proficiency.

In the light of the findings and discussion presented above, we deem it timely to suggest some recommendations that may prove helpful to members of the community of EFL teachers and learners. They are presented in the sections that follow.

6.3 Course design and course development

An important point to start with is the distinction between course design and course development. Some teachers involved in course creation skip the course design phase to focus solely on course development. The time and effort spent on course design may help optimise teaching and learning.

The course design phase helps envision the course and decide what learners need. This can be combined with the institution's view of what is advised for learners to develop. Consequently, the course can be well delineated and geared towards offering optimised learning and teaching experiences where both teachers and learners are actively engaged.

At the institutional level, departments of English may opt for a model comprising the five traditional phases: analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation. The analysis phase is meant to investigate and discuss learners' needs in relation with the department missions. This can provide insights for a clear orientation to the course design process. Design, the second phase, aims at establishing a framework for the course whereby the course structure, the learning outcomes, and the evaluation strategies are clearly defined. The third phase, development, is directed towards developing instructional content and deciding what material to include to support the teaching practices. The penultimate phase is implementation. It represents the actual execution of the elements (content, skills, competences, etc.) planned in a sequence of lessons. The last phase deals with evaluation. It is an opportunity for the practitioners to gather feedback concerning what worked and what worked less or not at all. Such information can help review and correct elements to improve the course. The figure below shows the model comprising the five phases for course development.
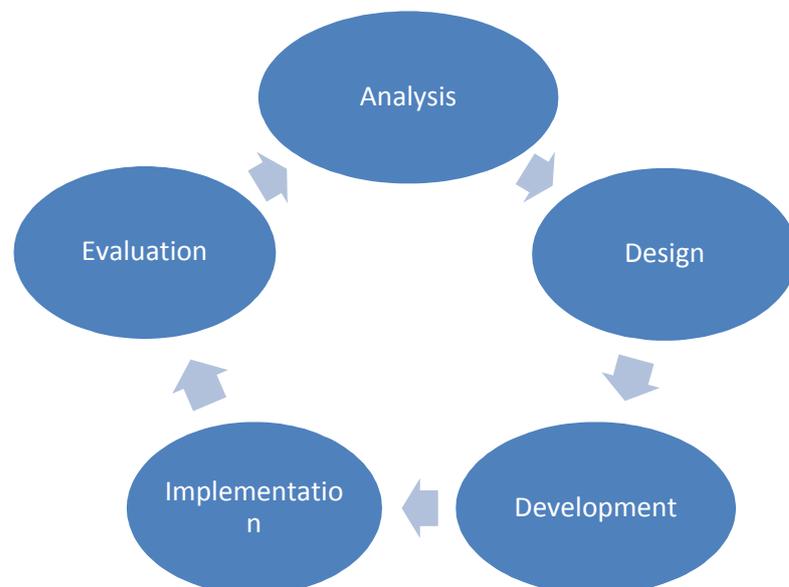
Figure 6.1: Course development Model

Chapter Six: Findings, Discussion and Strategies for Change

One important aspect to bear in mind is coherence and cohesion between the aims and objectives set for the course and those set for the degree programme. That is why in the following section, we will discuss the notions of aims and objectives and which aims and objectives to set for Lic1 students' oral skills congruent with the 'Licence' programme.

6.3.1 Determining aims and objectives

One way to design a course is to list a content to be delivered to learners. In this sense, teachers or course designers decide on what elements to include when and how to include them. This kind of teaching is guided by a content-based approach to syllabus design.

Teachers, researchers, and syllabus designers need to get together, discuss and come to an agreement on a type of syllabus to consider in the departments of English. It is urgent to decide whether we should have syllabi geared by a content-based approach, a competency-based approach or an outcome-based approach.

This depends greatly on the role we think university in general and the departments of English in particular should have. A definition of these roles needs to be part of a strategic plan so that actions and strategies are consistently aligned. Once the missions of the university and the departments of English are clearly set and communicated to the acting members at different levels, we can delineate the parameters to work on.

The key point is to establish what we expect learners in the Department of English to be able to do at the end of the course. The issue is all about deciding whether we are to train would be theorists whose main goal is to go through the three university cycles and become researchers, or if they need to be trained in the English language to be used for vocational purposes such as TEFL. It is important to note that in the Department of English at the University of Mostaganem, the Masters programmes (eight in all) are academically oriented.

Each of the aims aforementioned needs to be translated into operational objectives that are consistent with the end product we aim to obtain. In other words, we are to set clear aims about the kind of graduates to train and the competences and skills to be

mastered. After that, we can work on the aims and objectives to set for Lic1, Lic2, and Lic3 that are apposite for the programme. To that end, we need to take into consideration both horizontal and vertical coordination and gradation. That is to say, we should underline the importance of skills transfer horizontally between the subjects in the same level or year and vertically between subjects from one level or year to the next. The figure below summarises this notion of setting aims and objectives at different levels of the instructional process.
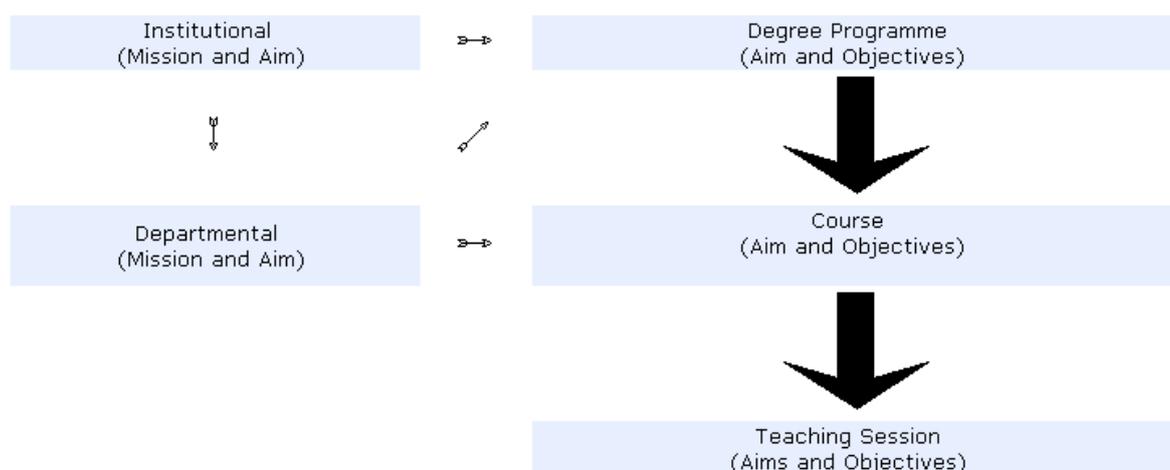
Figure 6.2: Setting aims at different levels of an instructional process

In the light of the discussion above, it is necessary to assign consistent aims and objectives to the subjects of Oral Expression and Phonetics. It is of paramount importance to define the kind of speakers we want to have and the competences to arm our students with, and subsequently assign a clear and concrete role to these modules.

6.4 Teacher education development

The discussion we developed in Section 6.3 and the subsequent suggestions for improvement may lose their effectiveness if we do not instil in our teachers reflective practice to guide them to improve on their teaching practices. We need to bear in mind that it is also of major importance to underline the benefit of encouraging teachers to become active critical thinkers responsible for their own personal and professional growth. Action

research is required in teaching methods, approaches, curricula and syllabi development, to name but a few domains.

6.4.1 Reflective practice

A substantial body of literature highlights the necessity of linking curriculum and syllabus changes to teacher education and pedagogy (Bates, 2008, Coultas and Lewin, 2002, Pridmore, 2007, Pryor et al., 2012). This should inevitably lead to the emergence of a reflective process based on the examination of thoughts and assumptions that influence our teaching. Such a notion has been known under different terms like exploratory teaching for Allright and Bailey (1994) and teacher development for Head and Taylor (1997) who explain that

> *Teacher development draws on the teacher's own inner resource for change. It is centred on personal awareness of the possibilities for change, and of what influences the change process. It builds on the past, because recognizing how past experiences have not been developmental helps identify opportunities for change in the present and the future. It also draws on the present, in encouraging a fuller awareness of the kind of teacher you are known of other people's responses to you. It is a self-reflective process because it is through questioning old habit that alternative ways of being and doing are able to emerge* (p. 2).

Richards and Lockhart (1996) define reflective teaching as an approach that "*goes hand-in-hand with critical self-examination and reflection as a basis for decision making, planning, and action*" (p. ix).

It is important to note that literature outlines various conceptions of reflective practice that differ from one another in terms of degrees and types of emphasis (Zeichner and Liston, 2011). Several models deal with reflective teaching based on the understanding of the process and its applications and how they can be applied to reflect on teaching practices. Some of these are models developed by Dewey (1933), Schon (1983; 1987), Boud et al. (1985), Tripp (1993), and Brookfield (1995).

Dewey's theories on education and training are based on a five-step reflection approach, namely (1) a diagnosed complexity, (2) its location and difficulty, (3) suggestion of possible solution, (4) development by reasoning of the suggestion, and (5) further experiment leading to its acceptance or rejection.

The other models have drawn considerably on Dewey's theories. One shared assumption by these models is their acknowledgement of the dynamism of the world we live in. A lot of things around us change fast and continuously. In this sense, as individuals in general and teachers in particular, we need to establish a continual review of what we know or have learnt. Each of the models aims at bringing teachers to reflect on their practice from a particular angle. Dewey was a pioneer of reflection as a systematic process. Schon developed this by explaining that experience needs to be 'slowed down' in a process of reflection on action. Boud et al. emphasized the need to take the 'emotional' element of learning into consideration. Tripp provides a focus for reflecting on practice by his emphasis on the teacher identifying 'critical incidents' and reflecting on them. Brookfield provided us with the perspectives from which to reflect on practice, not only the teacher's own, but also that of the learners and colleagues. According to him teachers' practice needs to be informed by the relevant literature on teaching and learning.

6.4.2 Reflective practitioners

None can deny the fact that experience is insufficient as a basis for development. The teaching-learning process is so complex and complicated that the pre-service training or the occasional in-service training cannot help overcome all the challenges of the profession. In this sense, Richards and Lockhart (1996, pp. 3-4) articulate five assumptions about teacher development:

- An informed teacher has an extensive knowledge base about teaching.

- Much can be learned about teaching through self-inquiry.

- Much of what happens in teaching is unknown to the teacher.

- Experience is insufficient as a basis for development.

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- Critical reflection can trigger a deeper understanding of teaching.

Teacher Professional Development provides opportunities for teachers to explore new roles, develop new instructional techniques, and refine their practice. In this line of thought Booth (2011) suggests a four-step model: Understand, Structure, Reflect, and Engage. The figure below is visual representation of this model.
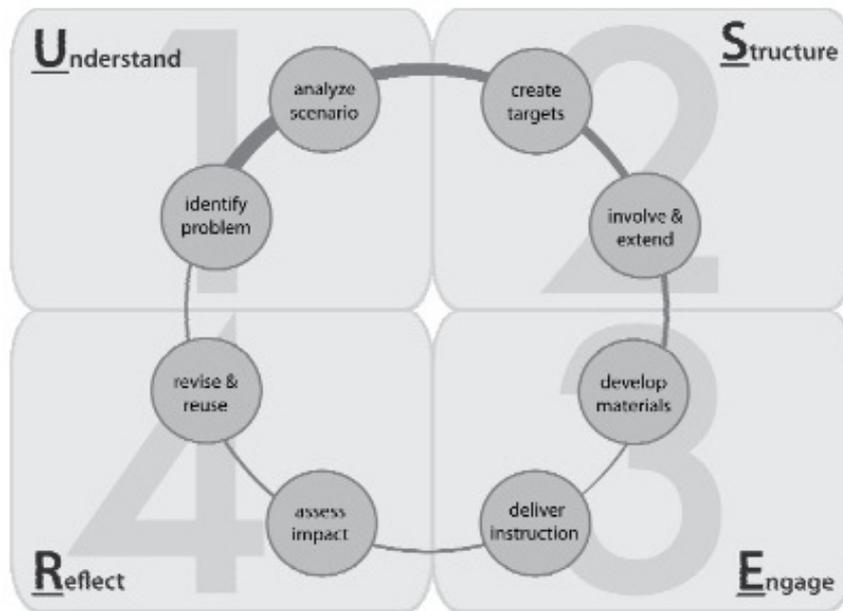
Figure 6.3: The USER method (Booth, 2011, p. xviii)

The first step in the USER method is Understand. The practitioner is supposed to investigate the learning scenario. To do so, the teacher needs to identify the problem that instruction can help solve. This is followed up by the analysis of the scenario, or the identification of the qualities of each element of instruction: learner, content, context, and instructor. This identification can help get insight into the individuals and the environment in order to create a positive experience.

Structure, the second step, defines what is expected from the participants to achieve on the one hand and delineates the strategies to be used to facilitate learning on the other hand. Concretely speaking, the teacher needs to set objectives that can help structure content and evaluate the impact of instruction. The teacher, then, has to identify the techniques and activities and extend along the learning process to support the learners.

In the third step, Engage, the teacher needs to design their own instructional material and implement it. After the material has been developed, the teacher is expected to deliver instruction by implementing what has been planned and designed and to capture and keep the learners' attention.

Reflect, the final step, is meant to help make a decision as to whether the objectives have been achieved and what should be done to improve the instructional process. For such a purpose, one action has to do with the assessment of the instruction impact. The last action is meant to decide how to revise and re-use content, material, and strategies later on.

Another method is suggested by Rushton and Suter (2012, p. 22) where three distinct but not mutually exclusive levels of reflection: technical, organizational, and critical are implemented.

1 technical: the reflection undertaken on a day to day basis by the teacher on their own practice in the classroom, workshop, salon, etc.;

2 organizational: the reflection on the management and deployment of learning resources, activities and learner support;

3 critical: the reflection on the wider social, political and economic contexts within which the teachers work.

Teachers of oral skills, therefore, need to apply reflective teaching by collecting data about their teaching practices and evaluating how effective they are. This technique helps teachers reflect on their teaching individually and/or in collaboration with other colleagues. This process in not only meant to identify what worked or not in the classroom, but it can be used to lead teachers to become self-aware. Such teachers may become conscious of those underlying principles and beliefs that delineate the way they teach the language.

Such a critical view can be extremely constructive and can help teachers improve on many areas of expertise. This must of necessity be emphasised since, in most cases, teachers tend to focus on several facets at the same time: their learners, textbooks, and other variables around to try and solve problems. Nonetheless, they forget to include themselves as a variable to consider in understanding the issue and solving it. They may

reconsider their views and beliefs about what features of pronunciation to focus on and how to teach them.

Teachers can have recourse to some tools which may cause changes in cognition, beliefs and practice. A suitable tool must be selected from those suggested below to help them collect information in order to explore their own practices. The techniques selected help teachers draw a clear picture of the situation so that they can reflect on their teaching and walk their way to growth and development.

A variety of techniques are suggested to practitioners to think over their own teaching. Richards and Lockart (1996, p. 6) advocate the use of journals, self-monitoring methods which include lesson reports and audio or video recordings, surveys and questionnaires, observations, and action research. Richards and Farell (2005) add teaching portfolios, analyzing critical incidents, and case analysis.

There are several most frequently mentioned techniques for such exploration: The methods presented could be also divided form the point of view of different observers concerned: methods where only the teacher himself/herself is the person involved, i.e. he/she collects and analyses the data, e.g. in journal writing or self-monitoring methods; or other people (other teachers, supervisors, pupils) are involved in helping with gathering the information about the teacher's work and its further exploration, e.g. observations.

6.5 Promoting awareness-raising

A number of studies (Couper, 2003; Derwing and Rossiter, 2002) have concluded that learners are often not aware of their pronunciation deficiencies. That is why a lot of scholars (Burgess and Spencer 2000; Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin 1996; Jones 1997; Porter, 1999) stress the benefits of raising learners' awareness.

It is noteworthy that learners cannot perceive nor understand what they do not hear. Learners, if they are not aware of the specificities of the English suprasegments, might not identify nor decipher them when exposed to real English. We cannot expect our learners to reproduce features they do not perceive. We need, therefore, raise their awareness about the different features of English pronunciation, especially those features essential to

effective communication. Such objectives imply explicit formal instruction of such features, be it deductive or inductive.

Practice is a key notion in language learning. Similarly English pronunciation needs to be dealt with in various ways, including controlled, guided and communicative practice. In the same vein, Pennington and Richards (1986) explain that "*the goal of any explicit training in pronunciation should be to bring learners gradually from controlled, cognitively based performance to automatic, skill-based performance*" (p. 219).

Gilbert (2005) suggests some types of activities for pronunciation training. They include:

- listening discrimination,

- pair work,

- dictation,

- kinesthetic tasks,

- music of English, and

- quality repetition.

6.5.1 Raising learners' awareness of the prosodic features

Regretfully, we have observed that teachers neglect the prosodic features in their oral-aural classes and may even graduate totally unaware of such notions in either listening or speaking. Suwartono (2014) explains that the neglect of prosody awareness training may be linked to the complexity of the issue and the misconception about what content to design and how to implement it.

Prosodic features are of great importance to intelligibility and comprehensibility. O'Brien (2004) encourages teachers to include prosodic training in their instruction. If trained on the suprasegments, learners, become aware of their existence of such features. They can also compare English pronunciation features to ones similar in their mother tongues. Besides, students can rely on some commonly shared aspects to build on and

improve their production of English pronunciation. That is why instructors need to train their learners on the prosodic features, including word stress, intonation, rhythm and juncture, beginning at the perceptual level and then proceeding to production.

6.5.2 Listening for thought groups

Although Arabic is a stress-timed language, Algerian learners of English, probably unaware of this characteristic of their mother-tongue, fall short of transferring it when interacting in English. This failure might be due to the learners' reliance on their knowledge of the French language. Learners might assimilate English to French and unconsciously apply pronunciation features of French when they speak or listen to English.

It is crucial to draw the learners' attention to one of the features of English pronunciation where they need to consider tone units rather than words and train their students accordingly at the perceptual phase and then at the production level. In this light, Brazil (1994, p. 3) posits that "[a]*n appreciation that speaking involves one in adding tone unit to tone unit as one proceeds, not, as one tends to think, word to word, is an important part of the awareness on which its successful use depends*".

Teachers need to train EFL students to identify boundaries between groups. In other words, students need to get exposed to real-life English and do activities that have a special focus on thought groups (or sense groups). According to Harley (2000), listening comprehension develops more when learners' attention is directed to sense groups instead of grammatical units on their own.

Practitioners may use listening practice to springboard some pronunciation training in general and thought groups in particular. Teachers may start by listening exercises to work on their students' comprehension of the passage and discuss the content. After that, learners can be trained on dividing the stream of speech into groups or units. Learners in this way can train their perception skills on what is being said and then how it is being said.

6.5.3 Listening for reduced speech

Most of the time learners become unable to recognise speech because native speakers of English often include reductions in their speech. Students are not trained to decipher speech that contains reduced forms perceived as 'swallowed' and fail to process its meaning. We believe English students need to be taught reduced speech because the mastery of this pronunciation feature can spare learners a lot linguistic frustration.

Reduced speech can be represented by a set of forms that take place frequently in the speech of English native speakers. Celce-Murcia et al. (1996, p. 230) explain that reduced speech forms "*involve unstressed vowels, omitted sounds, and other alternations of the full form, such as assimilation, contraction, and blending*". For instance, in English, mastering the production of a *schwa* /ə/ vowel does not only help with the mastery of the complicated vowel system, but it will also considerably facilitate the process of vowel reduction and the overall rhythmic performance.

Students have to be exposed to and taught reduced speech. This is necessary since connected speech is most prevalent in the English language. Learners may not become competent using reduce speech in their oral production but they can improve their capacity in recognising these forms. That is why teachers need to train learners to be able to perceive and identify forms of reduced speech in English. Unless learners' awareness about forms of reduced speech is raised, they are likely to miss, mishear, or misunderstand even familiar phrases.

Training learners to recognise and understand reduced speech forms may have a great impact on the development of their communication skills. Not only can learners become more competent at understanding reduced speech, but they can also enhance their overall listening comprehension. This may also result in increased confidence at the conversational level.

After having dealt with the importance of raising learners' awareness about the prosodic features, we will, in the following section, focus on the role technology can play in the instruction of oral-aural skills.

6.6 Technology-based pedagogy

There is a booming industry for technology-based education. A lot of developers including teachers have been trying to develop software to be put at the service of language teaching/learning in general and foreign/language teaching/learning in particular. This technology can serve as a mediating tool between teachers and learners. It can be used in the classroom under the teacher's control or extended to other contexts outside the classroom.

A large number of practitioners however are reluctant or slow to change their traditional way of teaching and adopt technology-based techniques in their classrooms. It is not our aim to delve into the reasons behind such behaviour. It is rather an attempt to shed light on the impact digital technology when combined with the teachers' expertise can have on learners' oral-aural proficiency.

Technology can help learners become more autonomous. They can become responsible for their learning by engaging in self-directed actions. Learners can also decide to regulate the pace of the instruction to meet their own assimilation rate. In terms of learning styles and psychological aspects, this kind of learning can be very practical. The activities included can meet different learning styles and preferences. As for shy and introverted learners, being involved in technology-based learning can create a safe relaxed atmosphere.

Feedback is another aspect which can be optimised thanks to technology. Learners can get valuable feedback from their teachers who can thus render their teaching more effective. Feedback by programmes and machines can offer added value thanks to the possibilities of tracking errors. Once their individual errors identified, learners can be directed to do tasks that focus on their specific areas of failure.

Technology-based pedagogy offers learners the possibility to use communicative high-quality content presented in a flexible interactive manner. In this respect Madhavi (2010) described three learning modes: the guide mode, the free-to-roam mode, and the dynamic mode. This framework is adopted by different language learning methods such as *Tell Me More*.

The guided mode is structured into paths to direct the learners' progression. Learners can work on a range of skills and language patterns, learning pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. The free-to-roam mode offers learners the possibility to move freely among the topics and activities on offer. This mode is designed for learners who have some basic knowledge about the language. The dynamic mode adapts content and activities to the learners' needs and abilities. The activities suggested are mostly based on the learners' results and objectives.

6.6.1 Blended learning

Friesen (2012) explains that the earliest references to this way of approaching teaching and learning date back to 1990s, and, since then, various definitions have been given according to the combinations of pedagogy and technologies. For Graham (2006), blended learning *"is the combination of instruction from two historically separate models of teaching and learning: traditional face-to-face learning systems and distributed learning systems"* (p. 6). In the same line of thoughts, Hanson and Clem (2006, p. 137) give the following definition:

> *It is challenging to find a widely accepted definition of blended learning, and even more difficult to find a core set of literature on blended learning methodologies. In general, training approaches can be located on a continuum that runs from traditional, face-to-face class meetings to totally online courses that have no direct interpersonal contact. [...] Blended learning [...] is generally acknowledged as falling somewhere between these two extremes, incorporating elements of each.*

In this sense, blended learning can be viewed as an approach that encourages learning through a combination of face-to-face interactions (classroom learning), on-line activities and mobile learning. In other words, this type of learning draws on a continued use of face-to-face teaching as a basic building block of learning enhanced by the integration of other teaching and learning technologies inside and outside the classroom context. This pedagogy aims at bridging the gap between classroom instruction devoid of

technology and instruction based exclusively on on-line learning. The following figure illustrates this aspect of blended learning.

online learning	blended learning	face-to-face learning
100% e-learning	⟵──────────⟶	minimal use of technology
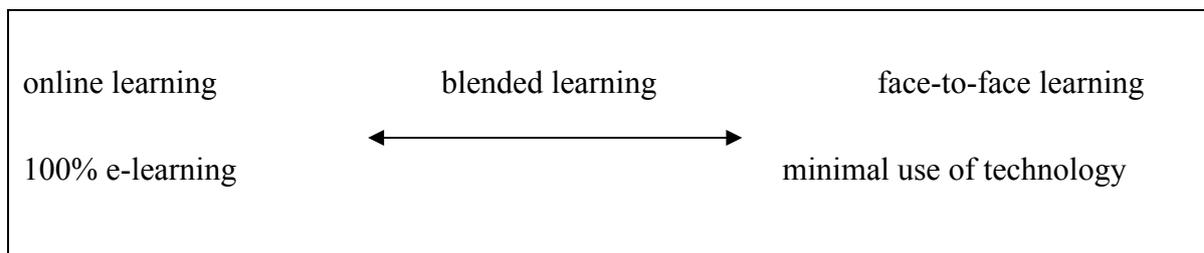
Figure 6.4: Description of blended learning (Adapted from Allan, 2007, p. 5)

Considerable research and case studies (Bower *et al.*, 2014; Emory, 2014; Garrison & Kanuka, 2004; Graham et al., 2014; Hoic-Bozic et al. 2009; El-Mowafi et al., 2013) have documented the benefits of the implementation of a blended learning approach to learning and teaching. The strengths of such an approach are summarised by Marsh (2012, p. 4-5).

- providing a more individualized learning experience

- providing more personalized learning support

- providing and encourages independent and collaborative learning

- increasing student engagement in learning

- accommodating a variety of learning styles

- providing a place to practice the target language beyond the classroom

- providing a less stressful practice environment for the target language

- providing flexible study, anytime or anywhere, to meet learners' needs

- helping students develop valuable and necessary twenty-first century learning skills

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Blended learning can be the answer to some of the difficulties teachers face in the classroom. We can have a pedagogy that combines traditional teacher-to-learner lessons and technology-based instruction. This can be achieved by having recourse to the following techniques:

(a) *technologies in the classroom that are commonly used in face-to-face learning situations, such as PowerPoint, interactive whiteboards and audience response systems*;

(b) *virtual communication tools that enable users to engage in discussions and activities over the Internet, including audio files, discussion boards, e-lists, discussion groups, chat or conferencing, email, news groups, polling, questionnaires, web forms and videoconferencing*;

(c) *social-networking software such as instant messaging and phone calls, podcasts, social-networking sites, video clips, virtual worlds, weblogs and wikis*;

(d) *e-learning systems such as conferencing systems, group collaboration software and group sites*;

(e) *mobile learning using mobile phones, laptops and tablet PCs*.

(Allan, 2007, pp. 15-45)

Training in listening and speaking skills can be greatly optimised thanks to the implementation of a blended learning method. Teachers can help learners work on oral communication skills in an environment where opportunities for real and authentic language are certain to be present. Learners may be involved in oral communication situations that can go beyond the classroom context through the use of web based techniques.

Moreover, considerable practice time on oral skills can be gained. One amongst many salient features of blending learning is the possibility to integrate asynchronous

learning. Different learners can be working on different areas of communication skills within and outside the classroom context. Constraints of time and place can be overcome, which may lead to more learner-centeredness emphasising peer-to-peer interactions. Learners can be actively engaged in different setting and situations.

6.6.2 M-learning

Crompton (2013) defines m-learning as "*learning across multiple contexts, through social and content interactions, using personal electronic devices*" (p. 4). This type of learning implies having access to digitalised content provided through portable electronic devices. In other words, this method can be viewed as the delivery of some educational material on smartphones, tablets or Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs).

These new technologies are redefining how learners receive knowledge. The application of technology to enhance language learning through MALL, Mobile Assistant Language Learning, offers a wide range of pedagogic possibilities. Learners are offered the opportunity to access a variety of multimedia resources to improve their language mastery anywhere, anytime, and through different devices. Moreover, these mobile devices are ubiquitous and integrated in our daily practices. Learners are proficient users of these devices and do not need training to operate them.

Each learner improves on their communicative competence at a different pace. Mobile devices can, therefore, offer the possibility to provide learners with tailored material and a personalised learning process. Several scholars emphasise the role of m-learning in enhancing learners' listening skills (Edirisingha, Rizzi, Nie, & Rothwell, 2007; Furuya, Kimura, and Ohta, 2004) and pronunciation proficiency (Ducate & Lomicka, 2009).

Smartphone applications can serve to bridge the gap between traditional and informal learning contexts. Learners may apply in-class practice and knowledge to real life situations. Listening skills and pronunciation features can be dealt with more intensively. Learners can download applications for listening practice, which allows more exposure to English.

6.6.3 Speech recognition software

Automatic speech recognition (ASR) technology can be used to design assisted pronunciation teaching programmes. Such technology allows learners to listen to words and utterances on their computers; and then, they can repeat them trying to be as close possible to the pronunciation model used. After recording and analysing the learner's spoken performance, the programme compares the two pronunciations in a waveform representation. Feedback in terms of accuracy is displayed on the screen to show the extent to which the learner's pronunciation matches the native speakers'.

Methods such as *Talk to Me* (Auralog, 1995), the *Tell Me More* series (Auralog, 2000), *Triple-Play Plus* (Mackey & Choi, 1998), *New Dynamic English* (DynEd, 1997), *English Discoveries* (Edusoft, 1998), and *See it, Hear It, SAY IT!* (CPI, 1997), can be listed amongst early speech recognition programmes. They adopted template-based recognition systems which perform pattern matching using dynamic programming or other time normalization techniques (Dalby & Kewley-Port, 1999). Although, that generation of methods has received criticism concerning the accuracy of their analyses, they are still considered as useful and helpful in the field of speech recognition software and have helped develop a more efficient generation of software.

Recent speech recognition programmes use advanced technology which has led to the correction of many aspects of analysis inaccuracy. These programmes can play an important role in assessing learners' pronunciation based on the judgement of speech in its natural flow in terms of rhythm, use of pauses, and use of pitch, which gives the speaker insights into the intricacies of fluent spoken performance.

Speech recognition software is not meant to be the absolute solution for learners to improve on their pronunciation. It should rather be seen as a technique that can help when integrated in a more elaborate set of pedagogic actions. Teachers can monitor the use of such techniques and provide necessary guidance.

6.6.4 Podcasting

Podcasting is the act of designing digital media in the form of audio and video files to be downloaded from the Internet. Podcasts are most of the time presented in the form of episodes. They have received an increasing interest among users of computers and portable

devices. We can have access to podcasts distributed by professional organisations as well as amateur audio and video makers who love to share their content with others.

Podcasting can be effective in the field of language learning. Audio content can be a novel means for learning a language and more particularly developing some language skills. The episodic aspect of podcasting may represent a valuable resource to develop extensive listening in EFL. It can help learners compensate for the absence of English native speakers within easy reach.

As explained in the section dealing with m-learning, learners can download podcasts and play them on their devices. Most learners own Mp3 players and can have what to listen to, where and when, with the added advantage of control over pace and degree of difficulty. This type of practice may easily be integrated in the students' daily practices.

Several scholars (Chan et al., 2005; Chinnery, 2006; Lee et al. 2007) report the benefits of using podcasts to language learners. Thorne and Payne (2005) highlight the role of podcasts in providing learners with authentic material and samples of real speech. In a similar vein, Stanley (2006) explains that podcasting can be used as both a source for authentic listening materials and a supplement to textbook materials.

Some podcasting aspects can make of it one of the favourite techniques amongst language learners. As mentioned earlier, podcasts can provide learners with varied authentic oral input. It can also be a source of a wide thematic variety. Duration of most podcasts is appropriate to keep learners involved. They have an average duration, which can prevent from boredom. Podcasters provide followers with regular updating of episodes and their scripts. One more important aspect that can make podcasts popular amongst learners is linked to affordability; most podcasts are free.

Sze (2007, pp. 118-119) presents an inventory of content types found in podcasts:

- Comprehensive: Podcasts that cover a wide range of content types, such as traditional listening comprehension activities, interviews, and vocabulary.

- Whole lessons: These are whole lessons based on a podcast. The text of the news story is provided, together with the audio file, and a lesson plan with accompanying worksheet materials. In effect, these are readymade lessons based on podcasts which teachers can use in the classroom directly.

- Vocabulary, idioms, etc.: In this kind of podcast, the host chooses some vocabulary items and explains their usage. The example presents a few idioms in each episode.

- Conversations with scripts: These podcasts contain conversations between native speakers. To help less proficient learners, each episode comes with a script for learners to refer to while listening to the conversation.

- Jokes: These are podcasts containing jokes.

- Songs: These podcasts contain songs for ESL learners. The songs are either traditional children's songs or authentic popular songs for teenagers. They often come with the lyrics.

- Phonetics, pronunciation: These podcasts are lessons which focus on specific phonemes and pronunciation problems in English.

- Stories: These are usually story read-aloud. They may or may not come with listening comprehension questions.

- Listening comprehension: These podcasts provide conventional listening comprehension practice.

An example of a podcasting source can be the 6 minute English BBC World Wide Service website[24] from which learners can download episodes. The latter are updated weekly and provide learners with useful English language for everyday situations. Other examples of free sites for podcasts, to name but a few, can include:

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[24] http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02pc9tn/episodes/downloads

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Podcast service	Description
English Class 101[25]	Audio and video lessons Vocabulary learning tools English through U.S. culture
British Council / Learn English[26]	Conversational English for everyday use English through British culture Interactive exercises to the language and content heard
Voice of America Learning English[27]	Weekly audio podcasts Conversational radio programmes News and information A series of multi-genre programmes in English
Business English Pod[28]	Language and conversations of the business world Audio series with scripts Listening and comprehension practice
Culips ESL Podcast[29]	Conversational English for everyday use Different episodes categories: Chatterbox– Catch word – Simplified speech – Real talk
ESL Pod[30]	Audio lessons for intermediate and advanced English learners Daily English / everyday conversations English through U.S. culture Audio lessons with written guides
Luke's English Podcast[31]	Audio episodes and videos with transcripts Conversational English for everyday use English through British culture
CNN Student News[32]	Videos with scripts Daily news programme produced by CNN journalists and educators

Table 6.1: Examples of free podcast sites and their description

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[25] https://www.englishclass101.com/

[26] http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/elementary-podcasts

[27] http://learningenglish.voanews.com/programs/radio

[28] https://www.businessenglishpod.com/

[29] https://esl.culips.com/

[30] https://www.eslpod.com/index.html

[31] http://teacherluke.co.uk/

[32] http:// www.cnn.com/studentnews

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Podcasts used for ELT purposes may help enhance students' listening skills. Such a technique can be adopted to design extensive as well as intensive listening. Hence, students can find it practical for them to be exposed to English both inside and outside the classroom. Providing learners with extra listening practice can serve as a bridge between formal English that dominates classroom interaction and informal English used in most real-life communication contexts.

Speaking is another skill that can be enhanced by means of podcasting. Sze (2007, pp. 123-124) explains how it is possible to convert any speaking activity into a podcast and suggests a list for such activities.

- Reading aloud

- Students give their thoughts on topic assigned by teachers

- Students listen to classmates' thoughts and respond

- Oral diary; oral weekly report

- Group presentations on a completed project

- Oral book report

- Picture description

- Story telling

- Chained storytelling

- Agony Aunt: giving advice

- Creating riddles

- Role play

- Debates

- Dramatic monologues.

6.6.5 Videotape-based instruction and learning

Videos can be a useful technique for use in the language classroom. Learners, generally, show a positive attitude to videotaped material. Not only do learners listen to language, but they can also see images that support that language. Videotapes, therefore, can add an extra dimension to the learning process since students do not just hear language, they see the speakers too. Harmer (2007, p. 282) points out

> *One of the main advantages of video is that students do not just hear language, they see it too. This greatly aids comprehension, since for example, general meaning and moods are often conveyed through expression, gesture and other visual clues. Thus we can observe how intonation can match facial expression. All such paralinguistic features give valuable meaning clues and help viewers to see beyond what they are listening to, and thus interpret the text more deeply.*

We can say that language learning is optimized since learners receive information through more than one channel. Their eyes and ears combine to process information and hopefully acquire language. The use of videos for pedagogic purposes can be an effective technique to rely on since it meets different learning styles. An important number of learners might feel involved and motivated.

It is noteworthy that video-taped material can help learners improve on verbal communication and non-verbal communication alike. The language produced thanks to this kind of material can be more explicit thanks to varying visual elements. This can represent helpful paralinguistic features to learners for both their receptive and productive skills.

6.6.6 Language laboratories

Language laboratories can be described as audio-visual installations based on digitalized content and computerized equipment. Modern language laboratories comprise workstations equipped with a headphone and a microphone each. These workstations are

connected to the teacher's console in a network managed by a programme. Language laboratories can be used for teaching/learning purposes through the teacher's console interacting with the learners' workstations and language learning software. A lot of actions can be taken thanks to this technology:

- sharing the teacher's screen with learners' interactively

- sharing a learner's screen with other learners'

- sharing real-time synchronised audio-video material

- simultaneous monitoring of learners' screens and audio-video sources

- transfer of files from the teacher's console to the learners' workstations and vice-versa

- flexible grouping of learners

- flexible management of the class

- recording learners' productions

An interesting number of Algerian universities and institutions are equipped with language laboratories: Abou Bekr Belkaid University of Tlemcen, Ferhat Abbas University of Setif, INTTIC of Oran, Oulef Fares Universtiy of Chlef, to name but a few. Similarly Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University of Mostaganem purchased and installed a modern language laboratory in 2010. Some teachers, the researcher included, received valuable training in how to operate that laboratory. Unfortunately, students have never benefited from the advantages and experience of learning in a language laboratory, for undisclosed reasons.

These laboratories can prove to be greatly effective in teaching/learning language skills. Such laboratories may be used as a platform for teaching, learning, training on, and producing language skills in interactive and communicative ways. Teachers can involve learners in various interactive tasks where real-time comments and correction can be given.

Teachers can use this type of equipment to monitor and interact with students in different manners. Multiple tasks can be assigned to different groups. Instructors can opt for one-to-one interaction, group interaction, or class interaction. Similar content can be sent to all workstations to have students work on the same points. The teachers can target different objectives and language points to be transferred to different learners on their respective workstations. We can, therefore have a session where different learners are working on different language points depending on areas of interest. Besides, feedback can be given to individuals or to groups.

Learners may find these laboratories adequate places to improve on their linguistic competence. They can act and respond in a variety of ways at their own pace. Today's students are familiar with digitalized content, and they may show positive attitudes towards learning with computers in a language laboratory which can create a learning environment with more enthusiasm and excitement for learners.

This way of teaching and learning a language can offer a lot of possibilities. All learners are provided with equal opportunity to listen to the teacher or any content no matter where they are seated. This is guaranteed by the quality of the equipment for sound transmission. The learners' listening skills may be trained more efficiently.

Besides, shy learners can feel less frustrated and endangered when speaking since there is a kind of reassuring and comforting privacy. Fear of making mistakes and losing face in front of one's peers is lowered. A shy learner can be encouraged to speak since they are interacting with their teacher without the pressure of classmates watching them.

6.6.6.1 Language laboratories to improve listening

Language laboratories can help learners improve on their listening and communication skills. This kind of technology can be used to train students on some enabling skills such as perception of sounds, stress, intonation patterns, and styles of listening comprehension.

Perception of sounds is an important skill in the process of interpretation and comprehension of a language. It is, therefore, pivotal to be familiar with the sounds,

rhythms, tunes, and stress patterns of that language. This can be achieved thanks to some home-made and professionally produced software available for language laboratories.

Students in a language laboratory can work on interpretation of meaning. They can do activities focusing on listening comprehension leading to deriving meaning from spoken language. The equipment and the sound quality provide ideal conditions for intensive listening. Such technology allows the teachers to meet different levels of competence. As mentioned earlier, learners can, actually, be doing different tasks aimed at coping with specific individual weaknesses diagnosed at the same time.

Besides, various types of activities in the form of graded listening tasks to improve listening skills can be implemented. This can include both top-down and bottom-up carefully constructed activities in order to train students in different processes used in listening.

6.6.6.2 Language laboratories to improve speaking

In addition to listening, language laboratories can offer interesting advantages to work on learners' speaking competence. One aspect that may be used by learners and teachers is linked to the possibility to record learners' speech and compare the way they sound with the correct pronunciation on a source tape through the use of the double track function. We can achieve that by involving learners in repetition, completion or substitution exercises to target word pronunciation and sentence pronunciation.

Moreover learners may talk to each other using this equipment in private. In the same way, the teacher may choose to interact with one particular learner in a one-on-one manner, which is difficult to achieve in ordinary EFL classroom situations with the same privacy. This can ease the burden of some psychological issues and help the learner progress in a safe relaxed atmosphere.

Other aspects can be explored further thanks to language laboratories. Students may have their spoken performance recorded and saved so that they can assess it later. Learners, with the guidance of the teachers, can be made aware of the way they sound and the

speaking competence they demonstrate. This will help students work on specific areas of improvement deliberately selected.

Moreover, students from different workstations can be grouped into pairs or threesomes or larger groups very easily and discreetly. They can, therefore, take part in role plays and group discussions. Teachers can still do their job as monitors and feedback providers as required. The principles of feedback can, if so desired, be extended to include the class in order to assess the recorded discussion or role play.

After those brief recommendations concerning the use of technology to enhance oral communication, we will suggest some strategies and teaching practices.

6.7 Teaching practices and strategies for oral-aural skills

Effective teachers try and experiment and assess different strategies with their learners. One given strategy may prove to be successful in one context and unsuccessful in another. It is the teachers' role to adapt and adopt the appropriate strategies given certain favourable circumstances. This section will suggest some practices for teachers to rely on. We will cover notions such as active listening, songs, drama, and storytelling.

6.7.1 Developing active listening

As discussed in Chapter Two, listening can no longer be considered as passive. It is an active process that involves several competences. To be an active listener requires listening carefully to the speaker using different reception channels. Not only is the learner supposed to comprehend the message, but they need also to be able to provide feedback on what they have heard. Active listening must therefore be viewed as an essential component of the communication chain that may improve or ruin personal relationships, reduce or increase misunderstanding and conflicts, strengthen or weaken cooperation, and foster or discourage understanding. Students can also be trained to take part in communication acts being neutral, non-judgemental, and engaged throughout.

The review of the literature about Listening as a process (Chapter Two) states that it involves five stages: receiving, understanding, evaluating, remembering, and responding. In order to be able to respond, active listeners need to go through three degrees of active

listening: repeating, paraphrasing, and reflecting (Team FME, 2013). The point, here, is to train learners to remain objective and unbiased so that they can observe all the linguistic and paralinguistic signs displayed. Only thus will they determine the true meaning behind the words. The figure below summarises the three degrees for active listening.
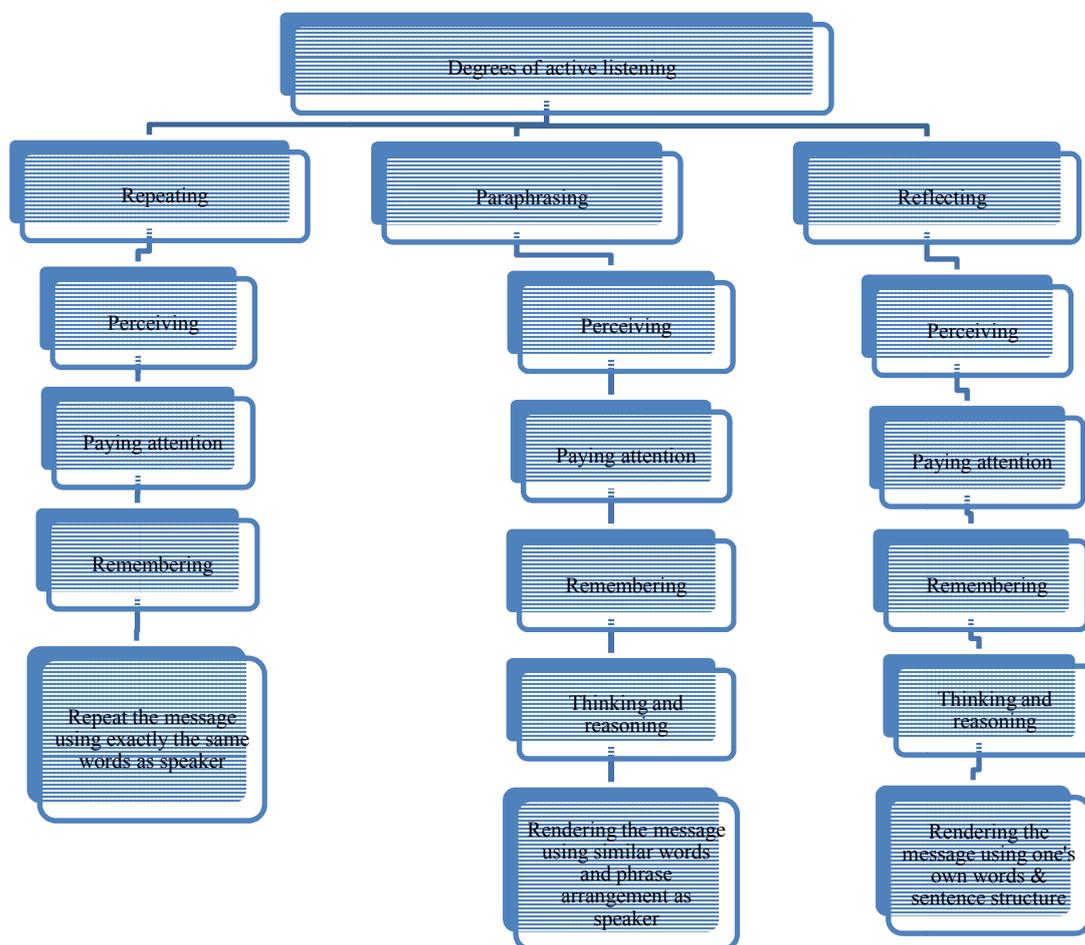
Figure 6.5: Degrees of active listening (Team FME, 2013, p. 5)

Teachers need to encourage their learners to use active listening principles, which may help improve learners' listening skills and communicative competence. Learners will then learn to avoid situations of two monologues where everyone tells about themselves and instead create conditions for successful interaction. In fact, conscious listening creates understanding. It is valuable to teach listening in our EFL classes at university so that not only will our learners improve on their listening skills for academic purposes but also to

have individuals consciously listening in their daily lives. Instructors may help their learners become active listeners by teaching some tips such as:

- Remaining focused and establishing eye-contact
- Asking open ended questions
- Summarising
- Reflecting
- Clarifying
- Giving words of encouragement
- Reacting

In the next section, we will suggest some types of top-down activities.

6.7.2 Top-down activities

As discussed in Chapter Three, the result to be targeted with pronunciation instruction is to have learners who can understand spoken English from native and non-native speakers and can also produce intelligible speech. Our suggestion to opt for top-down approach does not imply, far from it, that accuracy at the phonemic level needs to be abandoned.

Teachers need to consider the whole spectrum of pronunciation competence and implement activities that help learners pronounce accurate phrases rather than words in isolation, not to mention sounds. We believe that such activities can help prepare learners to cope with the difficulties of pronunciation when confronted with authentic flow of speech. Moreover, top-down activities may effectively develop the learners' capacity to process phonetic signals.

Top-down activities can be more appropriate in improving the communicative competence of learners since they take into consideration the discursive aspect of the language and the characteristics of natural communication. The focus is more about exposing learners to true-to-life language and situations rather than to isolated chunks, be they sounds or syllables or even full words whose meaning can be fairly easily guessed from context anyway.

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Evans (1993) divided top-down pronunciation activities into two categories: skill-specific and integrative. Skill-specific activities deal with discrete points, that is one skill area at a time. They include emphasis shift, to indicate contrast for example, and other rhythmic activities. Integrative activities combine several skills at once. They include news broadcasts, talk shows, documentaries, and skit-based activities. A non-exhaustive inventory of related activities is listed below.

Pronunciation features	Activity	Description
Stress and Rhythm	Changing the meaning	Read words and phrases using contrastive stress and discuss the meanings (e.g., *green house* and *greenhouse)*
	Exaggeration	Encourage learners to exaggerate their production of stress and rhythm.
	Identification of content and function words	Learners underline content words in sentences.
	Limericks	Use rhyming verses to teach stress and rhythm
	Marking syllables	Read a list of words or sentences and have learners count syllables and mark which syllables are stressed
	Tapping	Tap to indicate rhythm or stress
Intonation	Changing the meaning	Read sentences using different stress and intonation to change the meaning
	Questionnaires and Surveys	Prepare questions for learners to use in pairs and instruct them to ask the questions politely, and ask follow-up questions to keep the conversation going
	Directions and instructions	Learners work in pairs or groups and ask for and give directions and instructions
	Identifying statements, questions, and lists	- Read a list of sentences that have a declarative word order with yes/no question intonation or as statements. Learners complete sentences on a worksheet with a question mark or period. - Read lists, sometimes stopping before the end, using rising intonation. Learners indicate whether the list is

		complete or whether there are more items to come
		- Read aloud a list of tag questions using rising or falling intonation. Learners indicate whether you are asking a question or stating a fact.
Connected speech	Dialogues and role plays	Learners create their own dialogues or use dialogues provided by the instructor to practise reduced expressions and linking
	Dictation	Learners dictate a list of sentences or a dialogue to a partner.
	Gap filling	Prepare worksheets containing sentences with blanks for function words or contractions. Learners listen to a dictation of the sentences and fill in the blanks.
	Word counting	Dictate sentences containing reductions and have learners count the number of words

Table 6.2: Activities for pronunciation instruction (Adopted from Brillinger, 2001, pp. 40-42)

The next section will be devoted to the integration of songs to enhance learners' oral-aural skills.

6.7.3 Integration of songs

Music and songs can represent a valuable source of material for language development. Several scholars (Abbott et al., 2007; Domoney & Harris 1993; Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011) stress the positive impact of songs when used as a technique in foreign language pedagogy. Not only do they help learners improve on vocabulary, grammar and culture; but they can also participate in enhancing listening, speaking and pronunciation skills both inside and outside the classroom context.

6.7.3.1 Lowering the affective filter

The incorporation of songs in the language classroom can prove to be very effective in improving learners' language skills in an enjoyable and relaxed atmosphere. As discussed in Chapters One, Two and Three, learners have to bear a lot of anxiety and difficulties when dealing with oral communication. This can partly be overcome in case the

affective filter (Krashen, p. 1982) is lowered. This is linked to the hypotheses developed by Krashen (ibid.) where it is explained that input is prevented from passing through to learners if the affective filter is high. Conversely, if the affective filter is low, the input can reach the acquisition device and acquisition can take place.

Songs can serve as a technique whereby fear, anxiety, and boredom can be minimised and consequently the affective filter is lowered. In this sense, building confidence and a sense of achievement, learners will deal with input and content with a more positive attitude and language learning can therefore be optimised.

6.7.3.2 Teaching listening and pronunciation through songs

Songs can represent valuable material to work on learners' listening skills. Ross (2006) mentions the important role of songs in providing authentic listening material. Students can learn not only the target language but also some cultural aspects conveyed by such songs which can be used within and outside the classroom context thanks to technology. Learning is associated to recreation and fun, and students feel involved in this pleasurable process, thus increasing their motivation and their desire to keep learning. Songs can also be an effective pedagogical technique to expose learners to the rhythm of spoken English and to a variety of accents of the language, and thus improve their listening potential.

The implementation of songs in EFL classrooms can reinforce learners' mastery of some pronunciation features. According to Griffee (1992), using songs to teach English pronunciation has several advantages. It raises the learners' awareness about different accents. The impact of teaching through songs on pronunciation acquisition is patent since music and songs in English display a rhythm with recurring beats that are similar to the isochronous stress patterns of spoken English. In other words, the use of English songs can provide authentic, memorable and rhythmic examples of language which can help learners practise the rhythm and stress patterns of spoken English. In a similar vein, Orlova (2003) suggests the use of songs as a pedagogical tool to practise rhythm, stress, and intonation patterns of the English language.

Teaching through songs has yet another asset: Songs offer interesting possibilities to train learners in contractions, elisions, and other aspects of connected speech. Exposure to these features through songs can lead learners to become more competent at understanding the language they hear. Moreover, students can incorporate these features of pronunciation into their own speech, which may help them improve their own speaking skills.

6.7.3.3 Selecting songs

It is clear that there are no standard songs for teaching pronunciation (Kelly, 2000). Any song can be a source for practising different elements of pronunciation. An enormous variety of music and songs can be found on the Internet. Any teacher worth their salt can access that content and adapt it to their teaching procedures. It is all about selecting the right songs to meet the actual objectives and features of pronunciation targeted. Teachers, therefore, need to be aware and alert and take these aspects into consideration when selecting songs.

It is necessary to opt for songs that are appealing to the student population concerned. Selection of songs based on the teachers' own preferences can be counterproductive and may lead to disinterest on the part of the learners. Teachers need to be informed and keep abreast with the kind of music or songs their learners prefer. In a song, the targeted pronunciation features are practised automatically. But this objective can be missed if the songs are not sung repeatedly. According to Philips (1993), music and rhythm are much easier to remember as language than words which are just spoken.

Two other aspects to consider are the learners' level and age. Songs need to be selected carefully to meet learners' linguistic competence. Short slow songs can be used with beginners in order to maximise understanding. Intermediate and advanced learners can be exposed to songs with a certain degree of difficulty, which can represent a challenge. That is why teachers need to evaluate, test and experiment the songs before they decide whether they are appropriate in terms of level of difficulty, content, rhythm, pace, and learnability.

6.7.3.4 Song-based activities

As discussed earlier, songs can be used as a source of authentic material in order to expose learners to English. Creative teachers can find scores of ways to exploit lyrics of songs in the language classroom. They can turn any song into a non-academic recreational learning task.

Some activities are suggested below. They may be used to help learners improve their listening skills, pronunciation competence, and speaking skills. Some of them are adapted from Hancock (1998). The activities are listed under three categories: predict, listen for gist, and listen for detail.

To cope with the first category, activities that can be designed to get learners to anticipate and predict elements about the song may take different forms. Teachers may use picture-based techniques. Students rely on their description of the pictures to predict what the song is about. Teachers may also have recourse to key word discussion where learners are given some words from the lyrics of the songs and are asked to guess what the song is about. Another task can consist of the use of snippets by having learners listen to a short extract from the song and try to deduce what the song is about from the mood of the song.

For the second point, teachers may design song-based activities that are meant to have learners listen for the main or general idea conveyed by the song. They may discuss and choose a picture that best represents the song from more alternatives. Teachers may also design tasks that are meant to have learners recognise the type of discourse in the song by implementing discourse-function recognition tasks in which learners listen to the song and identify the function targeted: promising, complaining, narrating, etc.

Learners may be involved in tasks that are meant to work on other details about the song. Teachers may have learners fill in gaps, spot mistakes, or re-order verses. Learners may also ask and answer questions about the lyrics or about the different situations or characters in the song.

These tasks may pave the way to speaking activities. Learners may have to retell the song as a story, tell a story which began before the story in the song and led to it, tell a

story which will continue after the song, substitute the existing lyrics by their own. Learners may be involved in a discussion or a debate based on the content of the song.

After this extensive coverage of the use of songs as a technique for the enhancement of oral-aural skills, in the following section we will deal the integration of drama.

6.7.4 Integration of drama

Using drama techniques to train individuals can have manifold benefits. It can lead to the improvement of different skills, especially in programmes targeting personal growth and development. In this sense, Ashton-Hay (2005) explains that drama techniques have been employed by several institutions other than language institutions. The Prussian Army, the British Army, the US Army, and NASA are examples of some institutions she gives to illustrate the importance associated with the use of drama. This inevitably led to the introduction of drama techniques in language teaching after the development and the implementation of the communicative approach during the 1970s.

It can be very informative to shed light on the concept of drama and see how it can serve the field of oral-aural language and how its techniques can be implemented to optimize the teaching/learning process. Wessels (1987, p. 8) explains that

> *drama in education uses the same tools employed by actors in the*
> *theatre. In particular, it uses improvisation and mime. But while in*
> *the theatre everything is contrived for the benefit of the audience,*
> *in classroom drama everything is contrived for the benefit of the*
> *learners.*

Drama techniques employed in language teaching and learning can draw greatly from techniques and strategies used by actors and comedians when performing on stage in a theatre or before a camera for movie making. We need to bear in mind that techniques employed in the teaching field should not be limited to those used for acting purposes but also include some other aspects that consider the benefit of learners. These techniques need to be adapted to meet the learners' needs and help them improve on their language skills.

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In the same line of thoughts, Ulas (2008, p. 877) stresses the importance drama techniques have gained in language teaching and learning and comments,

> *although drama has existed as a potential language teaching tool*
> *for hundreds of years it has only been in the last thirty years or so*
> *that its applicability as a language learning technique to improve*
> *oral skills has come to the forefront.*

Drama in the form of plays or skits can prove to be very beneficial to the development of learners' speaking proficiency in general and pronunciation in particular. The implementation of such a technique can help teachers provide their learners with pronunciation focus and situations in which hundreds of segmental and suprasegmental features are practised with contextualized communicative utterances. That is to say, applying techniques based on drama principles can help EFL learners assimilate a whole range of pronunciation and prosodic features in a fully contextualized and interactional manner.

Including drama in our teaching practices can help learners accrue their awareness of the use of the English language in different contexts and situations. This can help them build self-confidence, creativity, spontaneity, and improvisation, maximising opportunities for the natural use of English befitting a particular situation. In other words, the use of drama can change the artificial world of the classroom into more realistic language situations.

According to Whiteson (1996), drama represents a good platform for delving into theoretical and practical aspects of the English language. Drama techniques can greatly enhance the whole experience of foreign language learning. It can help learners in different areas and skills like listening, speaking, and reading.

Larsen-Freeman (1990) explains that the use of such an approach is meant to lead learners to become fluent communicators in the target language. In this sense, we assume that the use of skits is largely influenced by the principles of the communicative approach. The language targeted and produced in the classroom is used within a social context that takes into consideration the appropriate setting, participants, and topic.

The use of drama in our English classes can also enhance group and pair work opportunities. Learners can, therefore, evolve in a context with increased chance for optimal learner-learner interaction giving the students more speaking time in contextualised language practice. This way, they can benefit from more opportunities to develop skills of interaction and cooperation.

The role of drama in engaging different learning styles should not be belittled. Learners may build social awareness and mutual understanding. Dram represents an effective practice to learn about human nature and communication in a safe atmosphere. This can be possible when students get the opportunity to communicate a whole range of emotions in a tension-free setting minimising the burden of expressing themselves in a foreign language publicly.

Teachers may implement drama in their teaching through the use of techniques like

- Mime
- Role-play
- Simulation
- Drama games
- Improvisation (Ad-libbing)
- Guided improvisation
- Prepared or improvised drama
- Exploiting a playscript
- Creating one's own script for a play or a video or film with its bloopers.

6.7.5 Integration of storytelling

From time immemorial, storytelling has been considered as an original form of entertainment and education. In most African countries for instance, an old and experienced person is respected for their knowledge and is actively involved in transmitting it to the younger generations. To quote that great Malian intellectual, Amadou Hampâté Bâ, who warned us before UNESCO, or so he is credited, that when an old man dies in Africa, a library is burnt to the ground because he could no longer transmit his knowledge.

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Storytelling is basically the use of stories for certain purposes. It is often described as the act of sharing stories in a special way including literary techniques, non verbal language, and improvisation. This technique is meant to engage an audience so that a storyteller can convey a message, information, or knowledge.

Storytelling can be used for educational purposes in EFL contexts in an effective way since it combines instruction and entertainment. It helps create an adequate atmosphere where learners are developing their listening and other skills whilst they are being entertained. When a teacher tells stories in class, the teacher is communicating with learners, entertaining them, and transmitting information and knowledge to them in a pleasurable way.

Storytelling as a technique in EFL classes can be approached in varied ways. Learners can be receivers by listening to and watching the teachers telling them a story. They may listen to a recorded story or watch a video clip. They can retell a story or tell one of their own. One other approach is to enhance story participation where teachers, as storytellers, leave some room for learners to intervene by anticipating or guessing elements from the story.

Using storytelling, learners can practise their listening and occasionally speaking skills in a fun and interactive manner. Cameron (2001) explains that storytelling can be an enjoyable tool for practising both listening skills and oral expression. Involving learners in storytelling activities may help improve their oral communication skills. Such skills can be enhanced since storytelling is an interactive and cooperative process.

Teachers can also have recourse to picture-based or video-based storytelling techniques. A large spectrum of possibilities can be offered to teachers thanks to technology. In this sense, instructors can combine digital material with stories to develop digital storytelling techniques. These techniques can prove to be more effective since they combine stories and visual material in order meet different learning styles and preferences and, last but not least, foster the learners' speaking skills, participation, and motivation.

6.8 Conclusion

It is not an easy task to decide what elements to target when it comes to suggestions and recommendations. We tried, based on the research we have done and the findings arrived at, to identify some weaknesses and areas to improve on. Oral-aural skills treatment at the tertiary level needs improvement. Practices dealing with pronunciation, listening skills, and speaking skills instruction need to be reconsidered following scientific and pedagogic principles.

We have suggested that this reconsideration should revolve around the course, the teacher, and teaching practices. It is essential to clarify the objectives and aims set for the course at a smaller scale or module level, and at a larger one or curriculum level.

Raising learners' awareness about the suprasegental features of English is of paramount importance. It represents the steppingstone to enhancing the listening skills and the speaking skills. To do so, practitioners need to vary their techniques which could gain from being technology-based. Teachers worth their salt should work towards designing material using new technologies and implement them in their classes. Other practices could be based on the integration of songs, drama, and storytelling.

General Conclusion

There is an ever-growing demand for effective communicative competences. Attaining good listening and speaking skills together with intelligible pronunciation is one of the principal concerns of foreign language learners. The need for a teaching methodology of oral-aural skills apposite for the ambitious objectives laid down in most curricula, is as pressing as ever. This has inevitably led to considerable interest and investment from researchers and practitioners trying to find solutions to improve that aspect of language use.

The nature of English oral communication, with its ephemeral character, increases the feeling of frustration on the part of students who need to cope with challenges imposed by the very nature of spoken language. Speech is fast and short-lived and it undergoes phonological changes making word boundaries indistinct. When interacting orally, learners do not have time to decipher the message as they would in reading or writing since speech has to be processed in real time.

The present research falls within this rationale. We have tried to draw attention to the complexity of oral-aural skills and their inextricable relationship. Three areas of language proficiency, namely speaking, listening and pronunciation have been investigated fairly thoroughly. This thesis has taken a view of pronunciation as an inseparable element of oral communication with a central role in a communicative approach to EFL.

This general conclusion presents a summary of the six chapters which make up the research, followed by a reminder of the major findings in both our experimentation with the students and the teacher interviews, then before the final words, a series of suggestions we believe to be of major interest for upcoming research.

Chapter One allowed us to reflect upon relevant literature dealing with key notions related to the speaking skills. We made it our duty to explore the nature of speaking in oral interaction. In order to cover a thorough characterisation, we felt it necessary to describe the components and features of spoken language and the functions of speaking. An inventory of the competences required for effective speaking was presented with an important section devoted to the teaching of the speaking skills. We endeavoured to give

an account of how speaking is treated in some methods and approaches. In addition, some space was devoted to classroom speaking practice and the teaching of a few communication strategies for successful speaking.

Listening is the core element in Chapter Two. We examined issues related to listening: its nature, process, competence, types, importance, and teaching by providing a thorough overview of state-of-the-art literature. We provided an account of the role of listening as an element which can enhance language learning on the one hand and communication on the other. We also described a pedagogical model of listening skills that reflects the complexity of these skills and their actual formal instruction, arguing against the view that listening should be left to develop naturally.

Chapter Three covered issues related to pronunciation and its teaching. We attempted to define pronunciation and its constituent elements. We discussed the importance of pronunciation, its status and its formal instruction. Ample space was devoted to the key role of pronunciation in improving the learners' speaking and listening proficiency.

In Chapter Four, we gave a broad description of the linguistic situation in Algeria with the language policies implemented since the independence of the country in 1962. We also provided a picture of EFL in the Algerian educational system in general and the tertiary level in particular. In addition to that, we substantiated our research: the suggested hypotheses later confirmed by our findings, the course devised for the experimentation, the explanation and justification of the methodology adopted for the research, the interviews of our informants, or the validation of the statistical measurements used.

Chapter Five aimed to present the processed data quantitatively and qualitatively. Our first source of data was obtained from the experimentation with our two groups of first year EFL students. Before the actual teaching, the experimental group's and the control group's levels were analysed first each one on its own, and then the two groups' compared with each other. Eight months later, once the teaching of a specially designed course for the experimental group had been completed, the three operations were repeated. In other words, the experimental group's and the control group's achievements were measured first within each group, and the results arrived at with one group compared with those of the

other. The second source of data came from analysing the interviews of colleagues. Their feedback was processed and the results presented and listed according to the objectives set for the interviews. They revolved around the views of our informants concerning oral skills and the teaching thereof in Phonetics modules first, and if at all, in the Oral Expression modules.

The sixth chapter's objective has been to discuss the major findings and suggest some pedagogical actions to hopefully help improve on some areas. It provides a wealth of suggestions to try and help learners and teachers improve respectively on their learning and teaching of oral communication proficiency.

The present thesis is, to a great extent, a classroom-oriented research conducted with EFL Freshmen in the Department of English at Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University of Mostaganem. We have tried to be systematic and consistent throughout. We have also done our utmost to be just, rigorous and objective, aiming at achieving reliable and valid findings.

We have noted in our findings that although listening skills are rightly considered important components of oral-aural communication, they are not given their fair share in the learners' training. Teachers underestimate listening skills instruction believing that such skills can be naturally acquired without any direct pedagogic treatment and are left to soak in through sheer exposure. When listening is given some focus, it is not done to train learners to listen more effectively. It is used to introduce some language points or to test comprehension.

The instruction of speaking in Oral Expression modules is not based on a well-defined and structured course. Its instruction is characterised by a regrettable absence of collaboration and coordination on the part of the practitioners. Teaching the pronunciation of suprasegmental and prosodic features and shedding light on the added nuances of meaning they convey tends to be neglected in subjects dealing with speaking and pronunciation. A considerable number of teachers confess their poor mastery or total ignorance of the theoretical basis of EFL prosodic features of pronunciation.

In some rare cases where pronunciation is not neglected, teachers' treatment tends to be in response to a particular issue that arise in the classroom. It is, unfortunately, viewed as an incidental aspect, and it is by no means strategically planned in advance. In other words, considerable pronunciation teaching tends to be done to remedy errors made by students in the classroom rather than to teach them listening techniques and strategies.

The suggestions and recommendations made are based primarily on the data collected from our analyses of students' productions and interviews of colleagues. The second source is derived from the special course we designed to teach the experimental group, while the control group was taught the traditional conversation classes including debates and public speaking. Correction of pronunciation mistakes concerned almost exclusively segmental features and isolated items.

We have tried to empirically demonstrate how effective a top-down approach can be to teaching pronunciation. There is massive evidence that such an approach has a positive effect on students' overall pronunciation proficiency. Providing students with explicit instruction of the suprasegmental features of pronunciation at an early stage proves to be effective and genuinely impacts their oral communication skills for the better.

Practitioners should start to incorporate top-down perspectives in their approach to teaching pronunciation giving highest priority to decoding and internalising the signals of rhythm and intonation and other prosodic features. This does not mean that segments can be totally ignored. They can however be referred to for remedial purposes in case intelligibility is impaired.

It is comforting to note that, all in all, our results show quite good congruence with some scholars' assumptions. Exposing learners to authentic spoken language through various techniques and media helps raise their awareness of pronunciation features (suprasegments and segments) and encourages them to draw perceptive insights into the communicative value of English pronunciation. This will not only enhance their understanding of spoken discourse characteristics, but it will also help them use these characteristics and the newly acquired underlying skills in their actual performances.

Active critical listening has also been shown to be an effective way in which learners can build up their understanding of English phonological features. Teachers will need to take this concept into account and explore more ways of applying this in practice. Further studies are needed to inquire into the effectiveness of implementing the top-down approach to teaching pronunciation over a longer period of time. A greater understanding of perception is needed so that appropriate activities can be designed and implemented. We need also to devote some research to target the impact of adopting an approach that shifts from ever dominant articulatory phonetics as the conceptual basis for teaching pronunciation to a more comprehensive framework that involves the sound system into practices focusing on communicative interactions and functional language use.

In our view, sustainable pre-service teacher training and post-service education development are an absolute must if we aim to prepare such insightful professionals. Such teachers should be ready to question and update their practices, experiment different methods and strategies, keep abreast of the state of the art findings in language teaching and learning, cross-fertilize their field-tested techniques through observation, discussion, collaboration and coordination, and last but not least, action-research.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Shakespeare's House (The skit)

Scene: The living-room of a house in Stratford-upon-Avon, the town where Shakespeare was born

Characters: Sidney and Ethel (tourists),

                a man

Sidney and Ethel come into the room.

Sidney: Well, Ethel, here we are in Shakespeare's front room. This must be where he wrote all his famous tragedies.

Ethel: I'm not surprised, with furniture like this.

Sidney: What do you mean?

Ethel: Well, look at that armchair. He can't have been comfortable, sitting there.

Sidney: Don't be silly! He probably sat at this table when he was writing tragedies.

Ethel: Oh. yes…Look!

(She shows Sidney a typewriter.)

Ethel: This must be Shakespeare's type- writer.

Sidney: Shakespeare's typewriter?

Ethel: Yes. He must have written all his plays on this.

Sidney: Ethel! That can't be Shakespeare's typewriter.

Ethel: Why not?

Sidney: Because Shakespeare didn't use a typewriter.

Ethel: Didn't he?

Sidney: No, of course he didn't. He was a very busy man. He didn't have time to sit in front of a typewriter all day. He probably used a tape-recorder.

Ethel: A tape-recorder?

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Sidney: Yes. I can see him now. He must have sat on this chair, holding his microphone in his hand saying: 'To be, or not to be.'

Ethel: What does that mean?

Sidney: Ah well, that is the question.

Ethel: Sidney, look!

Sidney: What?

Ethel: Over here. This must be Shakespeare's television.

Sidney: Shakespeare's television?

Ethel: Yes. It must be. It looks quite old.

Sidney: Shakespeare didn't have a television.

Ethel: Why not?

Sidney: Why not? Because he went to the theatre every night. He didn't have time to sit at home, watching television.

Ethel: Oh.

(They hear someone snoring.)

Ethel: Sidney, what's that? I can hear something. Oh, look!

Sidney: Where?

Ethel: Over there. There's a man over there, behind the newspaper, I think he's asleep.

Sidney: Oh, yes. He must be one of Shakespeare's family. He's probably Shakespeare's grandson.

Ethel: Ooh!

Sidney: I'll just go and say 'Hello'.

(He goes over to the man and shouts.)

Sidney: Hello!

Man: What? Eh? What's going on?

Sidney: Good morning.

Man: Good mor- Who are you?

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Ethel: We're tourists.

Man: Tourists?

Sidney: Yes.

Ethel: It must be very interesting, living here.

Man: Interesting? Living here? What are you talking about?

Sidney: Well, it must be interesting, living in a famous house like this.

Man: Famous house?

Ethel: Yes, there must be hundreds of people who want to visit Shakespeare's house.

Man: Shakespeare's house? Look, there must be some mistake.

Sidney: This is Shakespeare's house, isn't it?

Man: This is Number 34, Railway Avenue…and I live here!

Ethel: Yes. You must be Shakespeare's grandson.

Man: Shakespeare's grandson?

Ethel: Yes.

Sidney: Ethel! Look at this!

Ethel: What is it?

Sidney: Look at it!

(He is holding an ashtray.)

Ethel: Ooh, Shakespeare's ashtray!

Sidney: Yes, William Shakespeare's ashtray! Mr Shakespeare, I would like to buy this ashtray as a souvenir of our visit to your grandfather's house.

Man: For the last time, my name is not – Sidney: I'll give you ten pounds for it.

Man: Now listen…Ten pounds?

Sidney: All right then – twenty pounds.

Man: Twenty pounds for that ashtray?

Ethel: Well, it was William Shakespeare's ashtray, wasn't it?

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Man: William Shakespeare's…Oh, yes, of course. William Shakespeare's ashtray.

(Sidney gives the man twenty pounds.)

Sidney: Here you are. You're sure twenty pounds is enough…

Man: Well…

Sidney: All right then. Twenty-five pounds.

(He gives the man another five pounds.)

Man: Thank you. And here's the ashtray.

(The man gives Sidney the ashtray.)

Sidney: Thank you very much.

Ethel: I hope we haven't disturbed you too much.

Man: Oh, not at all. I always enjoy meeting people who know such a lot about Shakespeare. Goodbye.

Ethel: Goodbye.

(Ethel and Sidney leave.)

Appendices

Appendix 2: Evaluation criteria for pronunciation (Shakespeare's House)

Criteria	Objectives
Segments	
Consonants	Does the speaker have repeated problems with any consonants or clusters?
Vowels	Do vowel sounds negatively affect intelligibility?
Suprasegments	
Syllables and Grammatical endings	Extra syllable Weak/strong forms
Word stress	Does stress fall on the appropriate syllable?
Sentence stress	Does the speaker use emphatic stress to indicate key words, contrasts (not only/all), etc.?
Rhythm	Does the speaker speak in a natural rhythm? Or does language sound abrupt or choppy? Is every word given the same stress?
Intonation	Does tone rise and fall in the appropriate places? Or, does it sound monotone? Does the student use the appropriate intonation pattern to express the targeted function (attitude/feeling)?
Thought/sense groups	Does the student divide utterances in sense groups appropriately?
Connected speech Assimilation - linking (juncture) - elision	Does the student produce the stream of speech in a continuous way (Not choppy)?
Strain caused on the listener	Does the listener feel any discomfort? Does the listener have any difficulties understanding the performance?

Recurrent Errors:

Appendices

Appendix 3: Pronunciation evaluation sheet for CT

	CT		
	ECT	**SCT**	**MCT**
Criteria	Low 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 High		
Segments			
Consonants			
Vowels			
Suprasegments			
Syllables and Grammatical endings			
Word Stress			
Sentence stress			
Rhythm			
Intonation			
Thought/sense groups			
Connected speech			
Strain caused on the listener			

Recurrent errors:

Appendices

Appendix 4: Pronunciation evaluation sheet for ET

	ET		
	EET	**SET**	**MET**
Criteria	Low 1 ---- 2 ---- 3 ---- 4 ---- 5 ---- 6 High		
Segments			
Consonants			
Vowels			
Suprasegments			
Syllables and Grammatical endings			
Word Stress			
Sentence stress			
Rhythm			
Intonation			
Thought/sense groups			
Connected speech			
Voice quality			
Strain caused on the listener			

Recurrent errors:

Appendices

<div align="center">

Appendix 5: Canon IXUS 155 description

</div>

The ultra-compact Canon IXUS 155 incorporates a 20 MP CCD sensor and DIGIC 4+ Image Processor providing clear, crisp and vivid images. The impressive 10x (24-240mm) zoom lens covers a wide range of shooting situations.

The Optical Image Stabilizer with Intelligent IS technology automatically chooses from 8 different modes to help optimize image stabilization based on various shooting conditions, delivering clear and detailed images and videos.

The IXUS 155 features Smart Auto mode, which detects the scene and automatically selects the right settings from 32 variables to ensure the best results.

Other highlights include 2.7-inch LCD screen, 1280x720 HD movie recording, Scene Modes and Creative Filters, Help Button and ECO Mode helps reduce power consumption for longer battery life.

Canon IXUS 155 Key Features:

- 20.0 Megapixel CCD

- 10x (24-240mm) wide-angle optical zoom lens

- DIGIC 4+ Image Processor

- Lens-shift type optical image stabilizer

- Intelligent IS

- 2.7" 230k-dot LCD

- ISO up to 1600

- 720p HD video

- Face Detection

- Smart Auto (32 scenes)

- Creative Modes

- Help Button

- ECO mode

Appendices

Appendix 6: Pre-treatment processed data for the control group

Subjects	Consonants	Vowels	Syllables and grammatical endings	Word stress	Sentence stress	Rhythm	Intonation	Sense group	Connected Speech	Strain	Mean
ECT1	3,5	3,5	3	3	2,5	2	3	2,5	2,5	2,5	2,83
SCT1	3	3	2,5	2,5	2	1,5	3	2	2	3	2,39
MCT1	4,5	4,5	3,5	4	3,5	3,5	4	3,5	4	1,5	3,89
ECT2	4	4	3,5	3,5	2,5	2,5	3,5	3	3,5	2,5	3,33
SCT2	2	1,5	2,5	2	1,5	1	1	1,5	1,5	3	1,61
MCT2	5	5	5	5	5	4,5	5	4,5	5	1	4,89
ECT3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2,5	2,11
SCT3	3,5	3,5	3,5	3	3	3	3	2,5	3	2	3,11
MCT3	2,5	2	2,5	2	1,5	2	2	1,5	2	3,5	2,00
ECT4	2,5	2	1,5	2	1	1,5	1,5	1	2	2,5	1,67
SCT4	2,5	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2,5	1,94
MCT4	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	1,5	2,5	2	2,22
ECT5	2	2	2	2	2	1,5	1,5	1,5	1,5	2,5	1,78
SCT5	3	3	2	2	2	2,5	2	2	2	2,5	2,28
MCT5	3	2,5	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2,5	2,17
ECT6	3	2,5	2,5	2	2,5	2	2	2	2,5	2,5	2,33
SCT6	3	2	2,5	2,5	2	2	2,5	1,5	2	2,5	2,22
MCT6	3	2,5	2,5	2	1,5	2	2	2	2	2,5	2,17
ECT7	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2,00
SCT7	3	3	3	3	3	3	3,5	3	3	2	3,06
MCT7	4	4	4	4	5	4	4	4	4	1	4,11

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Subjects	Consonants	Vowels	Syllables and grammatical endings	Word stress	Sentence stress	Rhythm	Intonation	Sense group	Connected Speech	Strain	Mean
ECT8	3,5	2,5	3	2,5	2,5	2,5	3,5	3	2,5	2	2,83
SCT8	3,5	2,5	3,5	3	2,5	2,5	3	2,5	2,5	2	2,83
MCT8	2,5	2	2	2	2	2	2,5	2	2	2	2,11
ECT9	3	2,5	3	2,5	3	3	2,5	2,5	2,5	2	2,72
SCT9	2	1	2	2	2	1,5	1,5	1	1	2	1,56
MCT9	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	1	3,78

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Appendix 7: Pre-treatment processed data for the experimental group

Subjects	Consonants	Vowels	Syllables and grammatical endings	Word stress	Sentence stress	Rhythm	Intonation	Sense group	Connected Speech	Strain	Mean
EET1	4,5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	1	4,17
SET1	2	1	2	1,5	1,5	1	1,5	1	1	3	1,39
MET1	2,5	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2,06
EET2	2	2	2	1,5	1	1,5	1,5	1,5	1,5	2,5	1,61
SET2	4,5	4	4	4	5	4	5	4	5	1	4,39
MET2	3	3	2	2	2	2	2,5	2	2	2	2,28
EET3	2	2	1,5	2	1,5	1,5	1,5	1,5	1,5	2	1,67
SET3	3	2,5	2,5	2,5	2	2	2,5	2	2	2	2,33
MET3	3	3	3	3	2	3	2,5	2,5	3	2	2,78
EET4	2	1	2	2	1	1	1,5	1	1,5	3	1,44
SET4	1,5	1	1,5	1,5	1	1	1,5	1	1	3	1,22
MET4	4,5	4	4	5	5	4,5	4,5	4	5	1	4,50
EET5	2	2	1,5	2	1,5	2	2	2	2	2	1,89
SET5	2,5	2,5	2	2	2	2	1,5	1,5	1,5	2	1,94
MET5	2	1,5	2	2	1	1,5	1	1,5	1,5	2	1,56
EET6	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2,5	2,5	2	2,89
SET6	2	1	2	2	1	1	1,5	1	1	2,5	1,39
MET6	2	1	2	2	1	1	2	1,5	2	2,5	1,61
EET7	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	1,22
SET7	4,5	4	5	5	3,5	4	4	4	5	1	4,33

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Subjects	Consonants	Vowels	Syllables and grammatical endings	Word stress	Sentence stress	Rhythm	Intonation	Sense group	Connected Speech	Strain	Mean
MET7	2,5	2	2	2	1	1	1,5	1	1	2	1,56
EET8	3	3	3	3	2	2	2,5	2	2,5	1,5	2,56
SET8	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	1,5	2	1,5	2,39
MET8	2	2	2	2	1,5	1	1,5	1,5	1,5	2,5	1,67
EET9	3	3	3	3	2	2	2,5	1,5	2,5	1	2,50
SET9	3	3	3	3	2	2	2,5	1,5	2,5	1	2,50
MET9	3	2	2	2	1	1,5	1,5	1,5	1	3	1,72

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Appendix 8: Post-treatment processed data for the control group

Subjects	Consonants	Vowels	Syllables and grammatical endings	Word stress	Sentence stress	Rhythm	Intonation	Sense group	Connected Speech	Strain	Mean
ECT1	4	3	3,5	3	2,5	3	3	2	3	1,5	3,00
SCT1	3,5	3	3,5	3	2,5	3	2,5	2	3	1,5	2,89
MCT1	4	3	3,5	4	4	4	4	3,5	4	1	3,78
ECT2	4	3	3,5	3	3	2	3	2	2	2	2,83
SCT2	2	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	3	1,33
MCT2	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	4	5	1	4,78
ECT3	2	2	1,5	2	1	1,5	1,5	1	1,5	2	1,56
SCT3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	2,89
MCT3	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	1,89
ECT4	2	1	2	2	1	1	1,5	1	1	3	1,39
SCT4	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	1,89
MCT4	2	1,5	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	1,83
ECT5	2,5	2	2,5	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2,11
SCT5	2	2	2	2	1	1	1,5	1	1	3	1,50
MCT5	2,5	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2,06
ECT6	2,5	2	2	2	2	2	1,5	2	1,5	2	1,94
SCT6	2,5	1,5	2	1,5	1,5	1,5	1,5	1,5	1,5	2	1,67
MCT6	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2,00
ECT7	3	2	2,5	2,5	2	2	2	2	2	2	2,22
SCT7	4	3,5	4	4	3	3,5	4	3	3	1	3,56
MCT7	5	4	5	5	5	4	4	4	4	1	4,44

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Subjects	Consonants	Vowels	Syllables and grammatical endings	Word stress	Sentence stress	Rhythm	Intonation	Sense group	Connected Speech	Strain	Mean
ECT8	3	2,5	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	2,39
SCT8	4	3	4	4	3	3	3,5	3	3	1	3,39
MCT8	2,5	2	3	3	2,5	2,5	2	2,5	2,5	1	2,50
ECT9	3	3	3,5	3,5	3,5	4	4	3	4	1	3,50
SCT9	2	1,5	2	3	2	2	2,5	2	2	2	2,11
MCT9	5	4	5	5	4	4	5	4	4,5	1	4,50

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Appendix 9: Post-treatment processed data for the experimental group

Subjects	Consonants	Vowels	Syllables and grammatical endings	Word stress	Sentence stress	Rhythm	Intonation	Sense group	Connected Speech	Strain	Mean
EET1	4,5	3,5	4,5	4	4	4,5	4	4	5	1	4,22
SET1	3	2	3	2	2,5	2,5	2,5	2	3	1,5	2,50
MET1	3,5	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	1	3,17
EET2	4	3	3	3	3	3	2,5	3	3	1,5	3,06
SET2	5	5	5,5	6	5	5	6	5	5	1	5,28
MET2	3	3	3	3	2,5	3	3	3,5	3,5	1	3,06
EET3	3	3	3	3,5	3	3	3	3	3	1	3,06
SET3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	1	3,70
MET3	4,5	4	4	5	4	4	4,5	4	5	1	4,33
EET4	3	2	3	2	2	2	2,5	2	2	2	2,28
SET4	3	2	3	2	3	2	3	3	3	1,5	2,67
MET4	6	5	5	6	5	5	5,5	5	6	1	5,39
EET5	4	3	3,5	3,5	3,5	2,5	3	3	4	1	3,33
SET5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	1	4,00
MET5	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3,5	3	1	3,06
EET6	5	5	5	6	5	5	6	5	6	1	5,33
SET6	3,5	3	3,5	3,5	3	3,5	3,5	3,5	3,5	1	3,39
MET6	4	3,5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	1	3,94
EET7	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	3,11
SET7	6	5	6	6	5,5	5,5	6	5	6	1	5,67
MET7	3,5	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	1	3,06

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Subjects	Consonants	Vowels	Syllables and grammatical endings	Word stress	Sentence stress	Rhythm	Intonation	Sense group	Connected Speech	Strain	Mean
EET8	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5,5	1	4,94
SET8	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5,5	1	4,94
MET8	4	3	4	4	3	4	3,5	4	4	1	3,72
EET9	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5,5	1	4,94
SET9	5	4	5	5	4,5	5	5	5	5	1	4,83
MET9	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	1	4,00

Appendices

University of Mostaganem
Department of English
Phonetics
First Year

Syllabus

• **Phonetics**

1. Definition of phonetics

2. Branches of phonetics

3. Phonetics and phonology

• **Letters and sounds**

1. English spelling vs. English transcription

2. Silent letters

3. Homophones, homographs and homonyms

• **Speech processes (mechanisms)**

1. Initiation process

2. Phonation process

3. Oro-nasal process

4. Articulation process (organs of speech)

• **Classification of human speech sounds**

1. Consonant features

2. Vowel features

• **Supra-segmental features**

1. Syllable

2. Stress

• **Transcription (practice)**

1. Sounds in isolation (segmental transcription)

2. Sounds in connected speech (supra-segmental transcription)

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Appendix 11: Phonetics syllabus – University of Oran

University of Oran

English Department

Lic1 Students

Phonetics Syllabus

Unit 1: Introduction to Phonetics	- Phonetics vs. phonology - Branches of phonetics (articulatory, acoustic, auditory) - Phonemes vs. allophones - Letters vs. sounds - Consonants vs. vowels (phonetic, phonological definition)
Unit 2: Speech Mechanism	- Organs of speech (passive, active) - Egressive airstream mechanism
Unit 3: RP English Vowels	- Vowel Diagram - Describing Vowels - RP monophthongs, diphthongs, triphthongs - Allophonic aspects of vowels
Exam SI	
Unit 1: RP Consonants	- Describing consonants (voice, manner and place of articulation) - RP consonants - Allophonic processes (aspiration, devoicing, dark /l/, etc./)
Unit 2: Syllable structure	- Defining syllables - English syllables - Phonemic segmental analysis (vowels and consonants) - Consonant cluster
Unit 3: Suprasegmentals/prosody	- Word stress (weak vs. strong form) - Sentence stress - Intonation (fall, rise, fall-rise)
Exam SII	

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How old are you?

What credentials / Degree do you have?

How long have you been teaching English for?

What subject matters have you taught?

Phonetics	Oral Expression
Do you follow a syllabus?	Do you follow a syllabus?
	Is pronunciation instruction included in OE?
What are the objectives set for teaching Phonetics?	What are the objectives set for teaching OE?
What features of pronunciation are included	What features of pronunciation are included
What features do you start with?	What features do you start with?
Do you cover Suprasegments?	Do you cover Suprasegments?
Why have you adopted this approach?	Why have you adopted this approach?
Which aspects are developed? Segmental? Suprasegmental?	Which aspects are developed? Segmental? Suprasegmental
Is there any improvement in learners' pronunciation?	Is there any improvement in learners' communicative ability (Beginning and end of the course)? What about pronunciation?
	Which competences have you targeted (Communicative ability)?
	Speaking strategies?
	Types of speaking activities
	If not
	Why do you not teach pronunciation?

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	What share do you give to pronunciation?
Do you have coordination sessions? How often?	Do you have coordination sessions? How often?
Do you have coordination sessions with teachers of OE?	Do you have coordination sessions with teachers of Phonetics?
What type of activities do you implement?	What type of activities do you implement?
	Do you work on improving learners' listening skills?
	If yes, how?
	Which listening competences?
Do you use any textbooks/Course books? Which? On what basis have you selected them	Do you use any textbooks/Course books? Which? On what basis have you selected them

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Appendix 13: Transcribed interviews

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Appendix 13a: Transcription of interview #1

R: Good morning.

T: Good morning.

R: Thank you for accepting to answer some questions.

T: You're welcome.

R: First, I'd like to know how long you have been teaching English for.

T: At the University of Mostaganem? Or ...

R: English in general.

T: In general ...Er... 16 years ago.

R: Ok. And how long have you taught Oral Expression to first year students for?

T: In university ... four years.

R: Four years.

T: Hem, hem

R: Ok Do you have a syllabus for the Oral Expression course?

T: Er ... well ... actually ... Er... it is not a syllabus, but we last year, we had our colleague who suggest a syllabus and we were able to work with

R: Ok. What is the content? What basis is it built on or designed?

T: Er … it is just a syllabus who concerns …

R: Is it a content based … is it ...

T: Actually not content based ...

R: Competency based?

T: Yes. Rather competency. What is noticeable, it is the fact within the syllabus, we found that what we were doing was in the content of the syllabus.

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R: What competencies did you try to develop or improve on?

T: In the students?

R: Yes.

T: Oral expression skills: vocabulary, accuracy, rhythm, intonation, grammar. As far as accuracy is concerned is grammar. The most important thing is that we have to do every single thing that goes with … the student that has to be able to speak not fluently but to be able to speak and not having this kind of fear when being about to speak.

R: And how can you link these objectives to the final aims? When I say aims, I mean third year students having a *Licence*. How can you link these objectives to the final aims?

T: I did not get the point?

R: What kind of product can we have at the end? What kind of student or graduate at the end? How can these objectives help reach those aims?

T: Of course they help reach these aims. Because as far as the student is concerned with Oral Expression session, I mean … I have noticed something that first year students and third year students there is a difference. But this difference is not characterized really on the capacity of producing, not only this. But on the capacity of knowing … being accurate this is what is necessible. But fluency is something that I have noticed this year with first year students … there is something that was noticeable is the amount of groups. We had about forty-five students per group. Something that we didn't have before. And we had to manage time and evaluation assessment for these students. So it was a kind of very difficult. But what was also noticeable is that these students, I mean not the majority but there were some excellent students. When I say excellent, they were excellent as far as all what I said concerned you know accuracy … pronunciation, rhythm … yeah these.

R: How can you explain that level on the part of those students you say they are excellent?

T: Excellent in comparison with the previous years.

R: Yes. What do you think helped them become that proficient?

T: I don't know. May be … currently, time being when we are about … the student is always speaks English and they use it in social media for instance. They use it currently, I mean daily life speaking with their friends, classmates, they use English for that. I think the comparison I can make between these I mean the years is that students now are being able to communicate in Oral Expression even when they are out of classroom. And that what is noticeable rather that the ones that we had the chance to have before. Ok. I had the chance

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to work with second year LMD, and they were good. But the ones I had this year were better.

R: What about the skill of pronunciation? Pronunciation as a sub-skill? Do you give it any room in your teaching in the Oral Expression course?

T: Actually, this year, we had to do a kind of micro-teaching with third year students.

R: I am focusing on first year students in Oral Expression.

T: No, we didn't use to do this kind of things with first year students. You are speaking about how can I evaluate the student on his pronunciation skill?

R: No. You working with your students in Oral Expression course, do you give any focus to pronunciation?

T: Yes, I do.

R: Can you tell me how you proceed and what you do?

T: Sometimes I correct. Sometimes I let his or her classmates correct him or her.

R: Do you ever have a kind of formal instruction of pronunciation?

T: No, No. Not formal because sometimes we have this incapacity of doing this because of time. Because at first time we were offered two sessions per week and then we got only one session and how can you do this for first year students? With the amount … I mean … they were numerous. How can you assess them on every single important point since we had only one session per week? I think it was very difficult for us to do this. We had to do our best.

R: Did you try to include suprasegments like intonation, rhythm … ?

T: Yes.

R: How did you that with your students?

T: Intonation … I used to write some sentences on the board or examples. Or I asked them to do this. And I asked them how can you for instance questions, 'wh' question and 'yes' / 'no' question. How do they do the difference between the two? Raising intonation and falling down intonation. I used to this kind of things.

R: Have you noticed any improvement.

T: Yes, I did.

R: Do you have coordination sessions with teachers of oral expression?

T: Yes. I sometimes do coordination sessions with my colleague who was supposed to be with us today. Unfortunately she isn't. Yes. We tried to do our best for this.

R: Have you ever tried to have coordination sessions with teachers of phonetics?

T: No.

R: Why not?

T: As we said before, I think that being offered two or three sessions per week and then not having them was really difficult for us to do all this kind of things. So, I think it is concerning time.

R: What about listening? How did you work on it with your students?

T: Actually, listening we didn't have the chance to do listening with them so many times. May be once or twice.

R: How did you that?

T: With, I think we used tablets like this and with headphones.

R: What kind of content? What kind of ...

T: I started just to play the audio, and they were listening listening listening for about may be fifteen minutes more. And then I tried to ask them some questions according to the recording they heard.

R: Last question. Do you use any textbooks for your oral class?

T: Yes, sometimes I do.

R: Can you give me some titles.

T: Yes. Actually, I was the chance to teach Oral Expression not to students, to workers. I mean business English, general English, etc. We had the opportunity of having the CD players with some compact disks. And we worked with Interchange.

R: What about first year?

T: Yes. I had non scripts, and I had first elementary and pre-intermediate and intermediate and upper-intermediate and then we had the chance to work with business English.

R: So, that is Interchange.

T: Yes. No, not only interchange. We had interchange, In Company, Market Leader … So many books.

R: Thank you very much for your time and patience. That was very informative.

T: Thank you.

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R: Good afternoon.

T: Good afternoon.

R: Thank you for accepting to answer some questions?

T: You're welcome.

R: First I'd like you to …

T: Just excuse my pronunciation because I have been …

R: It is Ok.

T: My weakness.

R: Take it easy. Can you tell me more about your teaching experience? How long and where?

T: Four years at the university.

R: Great. How long have you taught Oral Expression to Lic1 for?

T: One year. Only one year. This year in fact.

R: How do you see this experience?

T: It was really new for me, you know. I was not used to teach Oral Expression. I was much more used to teach Grammar not Oral Expression.

R: Did you have any syllabus to do that?

T: At the very beginning of the year, in fact, we didn't have any syllabus. I didn't have a syllabus. But when we met, all teachers of Oral Expression … we met and we have decided to select one syllabus to work with during the year.

R: Can you tell me about the syllabubs? The content …

T: The content … for example we had … we started with how to introduce yourself for example then we moved to something else like role plays then how to elaborate talk shows then to create some situations to put students in the situations in which they have to produce something orally. Frankly speaking, I don't think that … we really … respected the syllabus during the whole year.

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R: Why not?

T: I think it is because of the lack of coordination.

R: This leads me to ask you the question coordination. How often do you have coordination sessions?

T: Actually, we didn't really meet. I mean, we did that only when we used to meet when going to teach or what have you done last week? What are you going to do this session? We didn't really organize a real coordination session.

R: What objectives did you have for your learners?

T: My first … the most important objective for me was to help them feel at ease when they express themselves orally. This is what I used to tell them, if you do mistakes, the first thing is to fight this kind of fear when you speak in front of people, in front of an audience. This was the first objective. Then the second objective was to help them and to show them how to use what they learnt for example in Grammar, in Phonetics, in other modules how to make this in practice when speaking.

R: Do you think they improved on their communicative language ability?

T: Some of them yes. In fact, we had classes of let say 30-35 students. Some of them really wanted to improve. They were here. They were active, active listeners, active speakers. And even if they used or made mistakes, they improved. Some of them no. It depended in fact on their 'voluntee'.

R: Since we're speaking about the communicative language ability, how do you see the impact of pronunciation on the communicative language ability?

T: I think that it has an important impact. And I am saying that because all the students ... when I used to be a student ... I mean ... I'm not putting the blame on teachers something like that not at all. But we didn't have ... I was not aware of the importance of pronunciation when I was a student you know. Not only pronunciation, the communicative approach as a whole ... Not approach. Sorry. The communicative skill as a whole. I used to focus much more on written skills as a student. But now I have noticed something that students nowadays are much more better when they are speaking than when they are writing.

R: How do you explain that?

T: I explain this by the fact that they have been exposed ... the exposure to English programmes. Something we didn't have ... Taking my case into consideration, we didn't have this let's say opportunity.

R: What importance do you give to pronunciation in your course then? How do you treat it?

T: Sometimes I interfere when there are mistakes. Concerning the stress, I try to explain to my students that sometimes the stress can change the nature of the word for example when it's put on the first or the second syllable sometimes in one word which can be both a verb and noun and it depends on the stress. I try to explain or to tell them since we are not native speakers, we can perhaps understand ourselves But if we meet native speakers and we don't use these moves appropriately or correctly, this can lead to a kind of misunderstanding I think.

R: Is this instruction something planned? Or it is remedy to mistakes or something you noticed.

T: It's just a remedy, in fact. It was not planned.

R: What features of pronunciation do you focus on?

T: Stress for example, intonation and the rhythm. These are three features. From time to time, I have to insist on them.

R: How do you deal with them? Do you have activities or just explanation...

T: For example when they are speaking, when they speak in a linear way, I try to tell them that English is different from French Arabic. And they have sometimes to go up, to go down...

R: You're trying to raise their awareness.

T: This is it, to raise their awareness about that.

R: What about listening? How do you treat it within your course?

T: This year was my first experience in teaching Oral Expression. But I'm sure listening is very very important when we teach Oral Expression to our students. Unfortunately, I didn't have the occasion to do listening sessions because of the lack of the appropriate material and because of the number of students. I mean even if I bring a PC and ask them to listen, it was not possible to use listening comprehension sessions during this year though I consider it is very important

R: Did you rely on any textbooks or coursebooks?

T: No. I have no textbook to rely on. I select from different books, sometimes the topics, sometimes I ask my students about the topic that raise their curiosity, they want to discuss, When we have discussions. But I don't rely on any textbook.

R: That was very kind of you. Thank you very much.

T: You're welcome.

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Appendix 13c: Transcription of interview #3

R: Good morning Sir.

T: Good morning.

R: Thank you for accepting to answer some questions. The first question is linked to your experience as a teacher of English. I would like to know how long you have teaching English for?

T: I have been teaching English for twenty years. I started at the level of Secondary School for fifteen years then I am teaching now at the Department of English at the University of Mostaganem for five years.

R: Great. What about teaching Oral Expression to Lic1 students? How long have you taught it for?

T: I taught Oral Expression for two years, I think 2011 and 2012 for two years ok.

R: Did you have a syllabus?

T: To tell you the truth, to be very plain with you I did not have a syllabus, ok, because we decide which topic to provide to my students.

R: So what were the objectives set for that course?

T: Well, I think that the objectives, I think, I set for my students of all the lessons, ok, number one is to focus on the ideas, ok, it means to motivate students to speak English first, simply because we know that the students at the Department of English come from different backgrounds, ok, and they would feel shy to express themselves. So, the first objective, I think is to motivate them to talk in the class because it was the first obstacle for me. This is what I think all right. And the second point is that I try to choose very interesting topics ok, so that to make them talk. I think that most of the students like or prefer to talk about social problems, mainly the students who live on the campus ok, or who come from far away.

R: What about the place of Oral Expression within the Licence? How can it help?

T: I get your point ok. I think that Oral Expression is one of the most important skills, ok, we say, language skills, right, we have Oral Expression, Written Expression, we have Listening Comprehension and we have Writing euhh, Reading. Ok. But nowadays, we do not have Reading and we do not have Listening Comprehension, we have only Oral Expression and Written Expression. Oral Expression is very important, ok, for different reasons. The first one is that I believe, ok, the students who study grammar, for example,

the use of tenses in the Grammar course, they may, ok, they may use the present simple tense for example, in their Conversation or Oral Expression through what we call pattern drills. Here we say, here we can notice, ok, we may notice the proficiency of the student in using tenses whether he really masters tenses through Yes/ No questions and also Wh questions.

R: Ok.

T: This is number one, ok. This is number one. Number two, ok, the students deal in Phonetics with pronunciation that is the pronunciation of the 's', the 'ed' and so on. Here we can discover also whether the students really, ok, really understand their courses in Phonetics, ok. Number three, ok, in Oral Expression, we feel the influence of certain modules, the influence of certain teachers on the students. Sometimes, we notice that students are talking about certain teachers, about certain modules, and here we deduce the impact of the module, the importance of the module and also the influence of the teacher on the students, ok. Number four, I think, or five, ok, the student or Oral Expression is an opportunity, ok, to talk about the challenges of life, ok, and also to come close to the teacher and to express themselves. And here it is to the teacher to listen. It has also a psychological effect, ok, when the teacher euhh when the students like the module, it means that they like the teacher in the first place.

R: So, I come back to pronunciation because you are speaking about integration of different skills. Do you give any formal instructions of pronunciation to your learners within your Oral Expression course?

T: Well, I do not give a definite formula for my students, ok. They are free, ok, to express themselves. But here I notice, ok, I notice the way they pronounce certain consonants for example and certain vowels, ok. And I think that there are problems in the way Phonetics is taught at the Department of English because in our days, the hay days ok, at the English Department of the Oran University, we used to have headphones, ok, we used to listen to native speakers, ok, and may be we had the opportunity to have a great teacher like Professor Berrabah, ok, he was a specialist expert in teaching Phonetics. This is what I think. And here in the Department of English at the University of Mostaganem, since we do not have this opportunity, all right, I think that they may rely on themselves and they rely on their teacher to produce English, ok. May be thanks to technology, thanks to the Facebook and so on and so forth that they don't face problems as we used to have these challenges.

R: The point is how do remedy?

T: Ah. It means how do you tackle the mistakes of the students?

R: Yes.

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T: I think it is very bad to correct the students directly, ok. We have to do it indirectly, ok. Because if we do it directly, it means that we are going to have what we call communication break, ok. It means the students will not be interested in because they will feel shy. They will feel afraid of answering, of debating with the teacher. It's better, I think, just to repeat the sentence differently, ok; and to give the chance. It means to expose the sentence and do not impose on the students.

R: So you do not give any direct pronunciation instruction.

T: No, I do not give, ok.

R: What features of pronunciation, if ever, do you focus on in your Oral Expression course?

T: Well. I suggest, ok. I suggest the way we were taught in the past, ok. It means teaching students consonants, vowels, the pronunciation of these, the position of these vowels and consonants, ok. And then expose students to different videos of native speakers. And I suggest also to teach only English English or British English, ok. Because nowadays, we have different pronunciations at the level of the department, which means some teachers try to use American English. They are free, ok. And I suggest to teach British English, ok because we have a dictionary and …. I think it is more appropriate for teaching literature and civillisation, ok. For American English, I suggest for ESP, may be for English for Specific Purposes or business and technology and so on.

R: Do you give any room for suprasegmentals like intonation, rhythm, stress?

T: I am not that good in intonation and stress, ok. Because if we give too much importance to this, I think the students may feel that there is an obstacle, ok to do the same, ok, to use the same English like the teacher. So I suggest, ok, to go smoothly with the students

R: And have you noticed any improvement on learners' communicative ability?

T: Well … I like Oral Expression, ok, but I do not like teaching Oral Expression.

R: Can you tell me more?

T: Yeah. Because I simply feel that I am very subjective, ok, when giving an evaluation. Assessment is not a problem for me, ok, to assess, but giving a mark, ok, I think it is … I think I could not be fair, ok. I could not be fair simply because … the points that is pronunciation, that is stress, intonation, and ideas and so on and so forth, we cannot be fair, ok or very objective, ok. So that's why when they ask me to teach Oral Expression, I suggest not to; I suggest to teach Civilization, ok, teach Methodology, teach Written Expression. I feel better in the Written Expression because there are points that are concrete for me that I can check them.

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R: Have you ever had coordination sessions with colleagues?

T: We had never or we have never had a coordination session with Oral Expression. Simply because the mark of the TD is provided by the teacher and also the mark of the examination is provided by the teacher UNLIKE the other modules, ok. This is an obstacle. Number 2, there is no definite syllabus for teaching Oral Expression. This is what I think, right. Err… teaching Oral Expression, I think, err… should set aims before coming to the class, ok, and before starting the academic year. This is what I believe, right. And we do not have it, we do not do it, ok. We do not do it because I think teachers should be informed beforehand in advance of the module that they would teach ok, but, we do not have it, ok.

R: What about the listening skills? How do you…?

T: Well…the listening skills, I suggest, ok, to teach listening comprehension at the Department of English. Listening comprehension, I think I was taught by Inspector Ameri, ok, in 1992, ok, at the Department of English, University of Oran, ok. It is true that I hated, I hated listening comprehension at that time. But, then, I discovered that it was very very worthy; it was valuable to me. And t was important in my career, ok. Still, I feel the impact of listening comprehension that I had with Mr Ameri, ok. Because the kind of listening comprehension it was dictation first, ok, dictation. We were taught dictation, ok. Then from dictation, we were taught dictocompo, all right, a new strategy in teaching student how to write – listen and write and read, ok. It means there is a kind of integration of many modules in dictation, all right. I suggest to have dictation in at the Department of English.

R: What about your practices with Oral Expression with the classes you taught? Did you try to improve on their listening skills?

T: Well…I found problems, ok, because may be the students did not hear well, ok. There is misspelling of certain words or may be the word is new or was new to them, ok. So, here it is the impact of what you say listening comprehension, ok. Not all the students understand the words uttered by the teacher, ok. There is misunderstanding; there is misspelling; there are some people who do not hear very well, ok. There are some students who do not understand very quickly. So I feel the impact of listening comprehension.

R: What kind of activities do you implement within your class?

T: Well…I implemented pattern drills, ok, just to see whether the students really understand the use of the tenses, ok. Through games, I assign for example students and they give them do you speak English? Yes, I do. What does he say? He says that he speaks English. Does he speaks…Does he speak English? Yes, he does. And it is a game, ok. Then I discover the one who fails to answer the question or to repeat, he has to sit down. So it is game; it is also practicing tenses. This is number 1. And usual…let's most of the

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time, we practice free topics, ok. It is the old fashion way of teaching oral expression, ok. It means you choose a topic and you tell us about it. But I think that I had my opinion on giving a free topic. It means teaching the student…teaching the students when you tackle a topic for example, there are steps, ok. Because it helps the students to show them the way they have to debate something that is following the topic, what is it about, ok, definition, ok, or the words. For example talking about the subject of radicalism in Britain for example can start with what is radicalism, the word, different opinions, then the origins, for example. It means it has to do with methodology when you talk. And also you develop in the students something as that is using arguments when talking.

R: Exposure. Do you expose your learners to your English? Or do you use other material like recordings or whatever…?

T: Well to tell you the truth, I did not use recordings. I did not use tapes or whatever. Simply because…the equipments…the equipments…We do not have equipments at the level of our department. It means the teacher has to rely on himself to bring his own equipments to the classroom, ok. And you know the teachers very far from university and are carless, ok, they cannot provide these equipments to their students. Though it is a good idea…a good idea to bring these equipments to the students so as to get from native speakers songs, for example, poems, ok, and also speeches to see the different people the way they speak. It helps them also in other modules, for example, in Sociolinguistics, they know the different kind of classes and so on and so forth.

R: Last question is linked to the textbooks or course books you have used.

T: Well, I think that teaching Oral Expression, ok, is also based on textbook that is a material…textbook, ok…but I did not use it. I did not use it may be because I was overworked with the administration at that time, ok. So I think it is a very good excuse, all right. We are clever at finding excuses.

R: Indeed. Thank you very much for your time and patience. That is very kind of you.

T: It is my pleasure.

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Appendix 13d: Transcription of interview #4

R: Good afternoon. Thank you for accepting to answer some questions. Can you tell me how long you have been teaching English for? Yes....how long.....have you been benn teaching English for?

T:...You mean.....between... Secondary school and.....

R: Yeah yeah your career as a teacher of English?

T: Twenty two years.

R: Allah yberek. And how long have you been teaching English at the level of University?

T:..... This is my third year.

R: Ok. Can you tell me again how long you have been teaching Oral Expression for to Lic1 students?

T: .....One year.

R: Ok. What kind of syllabus do you follow in your course?

T:....Really...I did not have a syllabus because it was my first year at University but I was looking for something interesting all the time.

R: Ok. So, what kind of objectives do you set for such a course? What objectives did you have for your learners?

T: Yeah, ok, so my major objectives were to help them to speak English correctly and of course by checking their pronunciation.

R: And how do you think this course, Oral Expression to Lic1 students, can help them become graduate students after three years? What kind of product will we have?

T:..... I did not understand what you mean.

R: Well this is a course a part of a larger programme. What is its importance? How can it help these learners in the future?

T: Of course...yes.....it has a great importance.....at the level of learning....even in the graduate level we need to speak...ok ....to express themselves, to present their exposé, their projects and of course to present their final project at the Master levels.

R: Ok. And do you give any room to pronunciation in your course?

T: Yeah, yeah.

R: Can you tell me more about it?

T: Ehhh, so, we were trying, ok, to correct each other and most of the time, ok, we have to check with the dictionary. Ok. So, it depends to the activities that we had....ok..... students…. they were, we had role plays, dialogues, interviews and at the end, at the end of the year, they tried to present some kind of exposé by making a play euh something like this, ok, so, at the end, we tried that no it is not true, it is not correct to pronounce such word in this way etc.. so when they are not, we disagree about the pronunciation, we check in the dictionary.

R: Ok. Do you give any importance to suprasegmentals like intonation, rhythm, juncture?

T: Not, no, no, no, no, no.

R: Why not?

T: Euhh, really, may be at that time I was not well versed in Phonetics and Phonology, ok, which is quite different now.

R: Ok, ok. Can you tell me about coordinations sessions, do you have any with your colleagues? For Oral Expression?

T: Yeah. At that time, yes, I remember that I had this, to teach this module, at the same time with euhhh euhhhh Benyoucef, Miss Benyoucef and Miss Hammadi. So, these two teachers we consult each other, we discuss, we give new idea, ok, something like this.

R: Do you try to improve your learners' listening skills? And how?

T: Yeah. Ok, so, this activity was done by listening to tapes, ok. It was a song, two songs. Ok, and, it is done, ... at this level, ok, I think that we have developed this ability, I mean listening .....skills

R: Have you noticed any improvement on your learners' communicative ability?

T: Yeah, yeah, yeah especially those who have problem of, they were timid and, at the end they were able to speak, to express themselves, etc...and they accept that all of us can make mistakes and .....to be corrected.

R: What type, what activities have you included in your course? With your learners?

T: Ok, we have euhh I cannot remember ....we have use what we call idiomatic expressions, and I ask them to make dialogues and to use them, We have also play what we

call story ending, to imagine an end to a story, ok, either a happy end or the opposite....so, it was something like this, these activities that we have dealt with.

R: Ok. I come back to the coordination sessions. Have you tried to have coordination sessions with the teachers of Phonetics?

T: Euhh to teach the module of Phonetics?

R: No, no, no. Oral Expression. Teachers of Oral Expression coordinate with teachers of Phonetics.

T: Never, never.

R: The materials you use. What, what materials are included in your teaching practices?

T: Simple…The board…about song ... bring, and euhhh and the computer, PC, ok, they watch something and we discuss about it, yes, data show, if you want, yeah, yeah.

R: Do you use textbooks? Do you have textbooks?

T: No, no.

R: No textbooks. Ok. Thank you very much for your time and patience.

T: You are welcome.

R: That is very kind of you.

T: You are welcome.

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Appendix 13e: Transcription of interview #5

R: Good morning. Thank you for accepting to answer some questions.

T: You are welcome.

R: First, I would like to know how long you have been teaching English for ?

T: I have been teaching English everywhere. First, at High School; then I started at the University in 2001, I think. Yes. It was a good experience for me because I had learnt many things....many...euhhh....I mean....many methods that help me engage in a way that I think is very very fruitful, very flourishing and I did not regret this. It is the best job for a woman and even for men.

R: Ok. What about teaching Oral Expression to first year students, how long have you....

T: It was very very difficult for me because even me I did not have any euhh many experience in this field so I did my best to satisfy myself first then the students. The regard to me .of the students, they were average, in the sense that they had the tendency to mix between the Arabic and the English language euhhh even the pronunciation was not so English, it was Arabic English, you know what I mean, I...I...I try to intervene from time to time to tell them that no, we do not say or speak this way, you better say it that way, do not pronounce this way, not that way, everytime, this method, I think, it was somehow disturbing them in the sense that they tend to forget what they had to say, their ideas or, I mean vanished, so I wait...I waited till the end of the lecture and tell them no, you had made such, such such and such mistakes so you better avoid them next time and you speak in another way which is more comprehensive and more appropriate to the English language.

R: All right. And how long have you taught Oral Expression to first year students?

T: Two or three years, I mean, because in the end the I abandoned to be frank I abandoned to some teaching in High School to gain more experience and I did gain more experience for six years and I regained the University teaching in 2010.I found it and I I think it was a very, very great experience for me and thank God I can face now, how can I say, tens and tens of students without fearing or without any fear.

R: Yes. In terms of years, how long have you taught Oral Expression to first year students, three years, four years in all?

T:Euuh I mean, three years

R: Three years.

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T: Yeah, three years.

R: Is there a syllabus designed to teach Oral Expression?

T: Not at all. Each student, each and every one of us has his or her own syllabus. We have been teaching our own way, we have been teaching in our own methods, using our own methods, our own syllabus, but, but, but at the end we, we, we met in one way. So, this way was the students were talking the same, I mean, .euhhh, the same....I lost my words....

R: It is ok. You said your syllabus. How did you design it? On what basis is it built?

T: On the basis of, euhhh...for example, with regards to the themes, I have chosen the themes like how do you get jobs? How do you ...when you walk outside, something which is very clear, which is very simple, when you are walking outside and you meet a person, how do you tackle him? How do you start a discussion with him if ever he is asking the way to such a place, how would you answer him so these are rudimentary things that the students have to understand and to learn so..., then we enter the dialogues, we enter the plays, we enter the domain of euhhhh high domains of euhh how the students could meet the public yes without inferior, because they told me we are so ashamed when we speak in front of the crowd, so I made them at ease , take it easy for them psychologically, I told them, take it easy, it is easy, just choose the theme and I would help you how to face people. So it was easy for me to, I mean, most of the thing is how to frame the student. The theme or the topic on which, no, the way you are dealing with him is most euhhh, psychological way to come to an end. And this end is to see the students getting good marks or to see the students speak without giving a mistake.

R: Ok. So what objectives and aims did you set for this course? At the end your learners should be able to do what? What aims and objectives did you set?

T: Ah my objectives....is to euhhhhhh, my main objective is to let them speak purely English, a good English without any mistakes, without any lapsus, without any....euhhhh, as if, like an English person can, or British or American or person comes here and starts to speak to an Algerian student or a British so I wanted them to make the difference between Algerian students and British students. I wanted them to speak perfect English. This is my aim without any mistake. This is the aim of an Oral Expression teacher. Something else, I think that these are extra, so with regard to the intonation they get, for me this is extra; the way they speak, they alter the word, the way, euhhh, the way they start discussing with people, I want them to speak, I want them to be punctual, not punctual, how do you say, I want them to be...

R: Accurate?

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T: Accurate, no, not accurate, what is the word?   Spontaneous, yes, spontaneous in English. Do not think of the word and then speak it like in Arabic. Like you speak in Arabic, you speak in English.

R: What about pronunciation? Was it included in your course?

T: Of course.

R: Can you tell me more about it?

T: Pronunciation was included in my course. Why? Because English is based on pronunciation. French no, English yes. Because the way you write in English is not the same way you write in French. The way you write in French you pronounce it in French but the way you write in English is not pronounced in English. The phonetical aspect is not the written aspect...yes or no? So why I focus on the Oral Expression is the phonetical aspect which is the basic element in Oral Expression. Because you can speak Arabic like you say I am going to Oran, yes I am trying to travel, no, I am trying to travel this is the correct English not I am going to travel. You see?

R: What about the way you taught it? Which aspects did you teach first in Oral Expression? Phonetics, you said Phonetics you said pronunciation. Which aspects did you teach? Sounds? Stress? Which elements did you focus on?

T: I mean when you teach Phonetics you are obliged to include all aspects of Phonetics, sounds, syllabus, how do you say, homemes, everything is included, you are obliged, you cannot do without it. When you try to correct the student when he says, This is my native country, no this is my native country, try,you pronounce try . We write. Or, let us say, three, you have the tendency to write it. Sometimes, sometimes I imprint some hard things in the walls, I say, let us write it in a phonetical way on the blackboard. I write three, yes, I write it. You have to pronounce it and to hear it. Yes, it is not like in French. Yes, three is not tree. Someone who live in Oran or in Tlemcen say I have a tree at home, oh , no sorry, I have for example three sisters or tree brothers. No, sorry you have three brothers. He finds some difficulties to utter the three. The English language is difficult in the sense that the Algerian people are not used to, that is why we try to help our teachers to find a way out and this way out is to better use these kinds of services, kinds of words to make   of everything without making mistakes. The main thing for me is to be a perfect English student, and to be a perfect English student is to speak perfectly.

R: Ok. Those elements of pronunciation, is it something in the lesson that is planned or you correct mistakes?

T: No, no, no. I did not plan. To be frank, I am not lying. I did not plan for anything, the only thing that I did is to correct them on the spot and sometimes at the end not to, to,

euhhh, as we say, not to disturb them, I wait till the end of the lecture to correct them and tell them, this is the kind of mistake that you did, you better correct and start speaking that way.

R: So, this leads to ask you a question about "Do you pay any attention and try to correct their mistakes in term of rhythm, intonation, stress?"

T: Of course, mainly stress. For example, some words are stressed on the beginning, some on the second syllables and some on the last syllable it depends like information, economics like yes, economics, economics, you would better this way. I did mix everything. Sometimes, I repeated, I am not lying, I repeated three, four, five times to make the information, euhhhh, to be well understood. I repeated many times, that is why frank, I liked it. It is not difficult, it is hard because you are, you are tired up again. You are pronouncing, you are speaking and speaking and speaking and you are feeling yourself as you are doing nothing. But at the end, like me, I am talking about me, I am so, how do you say? Euhhhhhh, euhhhhh

R: Keen on…

T: Yes, so that is why I repeat, I repeat, repeat, repeat again. So, the students say, Miss, it is Ok we have understood, no need to repeat. It is my nature. That is why I am telling you that, euhhhhh, from the phonetical angle, the students, at the end, were able or capable to pronounce a good, without any mistakes, they got the stress, the pronunciation, the syllables, that is why they were correct. They were correct enough.

R: All right. What about the activities you used with your students? What activities did you implement?

T: Sometimes, I used written activities. Why? To enrich their vocabularies, response words, used dialogues, written dialogues, and most of the time I used oral expression activities, like for example, I give them free choice, you are free to choose any topic, you got ten minutes to think about the topic, yes Miss it is, ...No, I gave you the words, yes, I gave you the vocabulary, you organize yourself, organize your ideas. At the end, I give you a while to make everything correct and you ask me and you give me your, so even if you cannot do it alone, another possibility, you can make at help with your friend. Second possibility, you can do it alone as a monologue or a dialogue. So I gave them ten minutes and they were, they gave me a dialogue of six or seven lines and it was very very enriching and very satisfying. I mean, I was satisfied with the work, with the job.

R: Thank you. And have you noticed any improvement?

T: Of course, in the end, at the end, in the middle no.

R: All right. How did you notice that? And what elements have they improved on? First, how did you notice that?

T: I noticed that by giving them activities, you cannot notice without improving the students, without evaluating the students. I evaluate him or her by giving them several activities, then you know whether this student has improved or not. Otherwise, you would never know. And you said?

R: What elements have they improved on?

T: Many elements, I mean, vocabulary, pronunciation, everything I mean, they were correct. Except some, but most of them were good enough in Oral Expression.

R: What about coordination sessions? Did you have any with your colleagues?

T: No, never, never.

R: Why not?

T: I have never understood why we did not have any coordination sessions but the only thing I know that we had verbal coordination sessions, just on phone, we just call each other or one another to know where are you on the sector, we follow you that on the phone. And to be frank, to sit in one table and discuss about what is missing, the improvement and the level of the students, no. To be frank, no. At the end, yes but within the year no.

R: So, what about coordination sessions with teachers of Phonetics? Teachers of Oral Expression and teachers of Phonetics?

T: No, never, never, never. There has never been this kind of coordination sessions.

R: All right. What about the listening skill? How do you tackle it within your course Oral Expression? Does it have any room, any place?

T: Yes, I have. Sometimes that is right to get a room but most of the time I did have my room and the listening, I mean, the students were numerous attending the lecture and they were really listening during the lecture, and it was correct, no problem.

R: Do you use any materials, equipment?

T: Never, no.

R: Why not?

T: They told me why like power point or but no, I did not want. It is artificial for me. What I wanted was to speak, to listen is another module, Listening Comprehension which was

not available in our University. It was available in 1005 but not in our University, that is why we were missing that kind of equipment so some tapes, we did not have, otherwise, we would have done this kind of module.

R: Did you use any textbooks for Oral Expression?

T: No, this is for Reading Comprehension. Never. Just copies; I took them from the net or sometimes I organize them myself, I write them at home to prepare them for the students next. That is why I told that Oral Expression is the most difficult module because you are doing it by yourself and everything is you. For example, Civ or Lit or Didactics, you have the tendency to rely, we rely on the textbooks, but we have all no.

R: Thank you very much for your time and patience. It was really informative.

T: Never mind. It was a pleasure for me to have a discussion or this interview I wanted to tell this kind of missing objectives that the students have the tendency to ignore. We do not have to ignore Oral Expression. It is a very hard module that only professional can teach.

R: Thank you

T: Never mind

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Appendix 13f: Transcription of interview #6

R: Good morning. Thank you very much for accepting to answer some questions. Alright. The first question is linked to your experience, how long have you been teaching English for?

T: So, good morning, Sir. I am very thankful for giving me the chance to contribute in this interview. I have been teaching English at least in University for two years.

R:All right. And how long have you taught Oral Expression to first year students for?

T: Yes, I have taught Oral Expression only for one year

R: Ok. My next question is linked to the syllabus. Did you have any syllabus to follow in your course?

T: No, I did not have. And if you allow me to say, I was upset that year because it was my first year and I needed, how to say, a contribution of my colleagues. So, I felt as if I was euhh fo euhh forced to take the module and to teach it and I had to euhh, how to say it, to decide myself about how to deal with the students.

R: So, what did you do then? How did you build it? What did you include?

T: Yes, I have tried to, to include role plays for students and group work, that means to propose topics for them, or to let them choose other topics, and to come to, euhh, and to perform them.

R: Right. What about, euhh, you said no syllabus, ok, but you tried to include some activities, what objectives and aims did you have for your learners?

T: Yes, that means, so the objectives has to deal with improving the students' pronunciation and, euhh, how to say, euhh, to help students interact with themselves.

R: Ok. So, you said pronunciation. Which aspects of pronunciation did you focus on ?

T: Euhhhh

R: For example, First, did you plan a lesson to teach some pronunciation or you corrected on the spot or you adapted, you remedied? How did you manage that?

T: That means to correct students' pronunciation and mistakes and to show them, euhh, how, how to deal with each other.

R: So, what mistakes of pronunciation did you correct?

T: Euhhh

R: For examples sounds, pronunciation of sounds?

T: Sometimes. It depends. Because I felt, how to say, frankly speaking, I felt other time, that I, myself, needed to improve myself and I did not really, euhh, appreciate the idea to teach for the first year the Oral Expression, yes, coz I needed to improve myself first to help them. So, I was not satisfied really about the experience I got as a first experience

R: Ok. So, the pronunciation you focused on was at the level of sounds?

T: That is all.

R: Stress for example?

T: No.

R: No. Rhythm, intonation, no?

T: Not all of these things.

R: Ok, all right.

T: To be honest.

R: Thank you for that. What type of activities did you include in your teaching?

T: Oral Expression?

R: Yes.

T: So, that means to, how to say, to propose topics, interviews or may be so that sometimes students had to propose to be journalists or to prepare a programme about something, different topics and to deal with them.

R: Ok.

T: At least in the group itself, the student had to, how to say, to perform different positions and personalities. To have debates.

R: There was, group work, pair work, individually? How was it managed? The students most of time, were working in groups or individually?

T: It depends on the situation.

R: Ok.

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T: Yes, yes.

R: All right. Have you noticed any improvement on the part of your learners' ability to communicate and speak?

T: Yeah, of course.

R: Hein hein

T: It was better than the beginning. Because they were first year students, so at lest they got a chance to deal with each other and to, euhh, they liked the experience.

R: What aspects have they improved on?

T: Interaction, we used to have interaction, and I have noticed that students also, how to say, that means, they, euhhh, they did their job and they, all time, try to improve themselves by bringing something new.

R: Ok. So, what about coordination sessions? Did you have any, with colleagues?

T: Nothing.

R: Nothing. Why not? Did you ask for and it was not possible? Why did not you have coordination sessions?

T: I remember that I used all the time to, how to say, to meet just Miss Selimane, if you remember her, so I used all the time to share ideas with her, that is all.

R: We do not have Listening Comprehension module at the level of University, did you try to include it in your Oral Expression course? Have your learners improved on their listening skill?

T: No, I have not used it at that time

R: Ok. Your learners were exposed to you, as a source of English, did you expose them to other sources?

T: For example?

R: For example, recorded materiel, listening to.......

T: I used to tell them, that means, to listen to native speakers, to try to improve their pronunciation, yes, because I was certain that mine was not, yes haha, was not ,euhhh, I was not satisfied about it. Yes, because, how to say, I feel that since I have taught in the Secondary School, I have lost much pronunciation, or the way the more I have tried to

simplify the language, for the students in the Secondary School, I thought that my pronunciation needs to be improved later.

R: Ok. So, what about the classroom context, no extra material, no other materiel?

T: No. I used to tell them, that means, at home for ......, how to say, for homework to look for, or to listen.

R: So extensive listening?

T: Yes, that is all

R: Did you rely on any textbooks or coursebooks for your lessons?

T: I remember that have used a coursebook but I do not remember the title.

R: Ok. That was British English? American English?

T: It was British English.

R: Was there any pronunciation included? No focus on pronunciation?

T: No.

R: No. All right. Thank you very much for your time and patience. That was very kind of you.

T: Thanks a lot. Thanks a lot.

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Appendix 13g: Transcription of interview #7

R: Good afternoon, Sir.

T: Good afternoon.

R: Thank you for accepting to answer some questions.

T: With pleasure.

R: I would like to know how long you have been teaching English for?

T: Well, I have been teaching English for five years now, including different subjects and different modules.

R: What I know is that you have already taught Oral Expression to first year students?

T: Exactly, second year students.

R: Hen, hen. How long have been teaching Oral Expression for?

T: Euh, for one year.

R: Eh hen. All right. And did you have any syllabus for that course?

T: Frankly speaking, I do not have any syllabus. But I try to do all my best to implement the needs of the learners. Because I always, in all my modules, especially in the Oral Expression module I first…on the needs of the learners and then I design or I modify the syllabus in accordance with the needs of the learners.

R: All right. So, what needs did your learners have and what objectives did you set for them?

T: Yeah. First of all, then I started first, let us say, the meeting, the first meeting with the learners to which I taught the subject of Oral Expression, I have, I noticed that the learners need, let us say, self confidence, they lack some vocabulary, they sometimes, they do not, they are not communicative as much as it is needed from a student at University. Therefore, I try to implement certain activities at the same time motivating them to, let us say, embrace, let us say, this module. Because it needs, it is challenging for the learners, because they have to face the others, they have to face their fears and they have to be self confident. And I try to be, let us say, I try to make the session joyful, amusing and academic at the same time. And euhhh the most important objective is to, let us say, develop their oral skill by means of expressing their ideas, communicating the message they want to communicate via the oral skill.

R: Ok, thank you. What can you tell me about their pronunciation proficiency?

T: Right, haha. Yeah, I forgot to talk about the pronunciation, let us say, deficiency because when they come from the High School, they are used to a particular pronunciation which is more or less wrong rather than correct and I, sometimes, I used to emphasize by means of a recast. A recast is a technique in which indirectly we correct the shortcoming of the learner. So I try to give them some corrections on, let us say, how to pronounce these words in the right way. And it was very, let us say, challenging, let us say, activity, because learners are euh have some errors as far as pronunciation is concerned. They come cross saying, goingg instead of going and then they keep on saying it many many times even if you correct them. But by means of formative assessment which takes, let us say, the whole year, I succeed, I, I may say that I succeeded to a given extent to, let us say, replace these shortcomings by correct pronunciations. But for the summative, I am not really satisfied because they keep on doing that, but formative I noticed that have become or they had become better than they used to be in the first sessions of Oral Expression.

R: So did you tackle pronunciation, the instruction was formal or just remedial? It means did you plan for pronunciation lesson or something remedial according to the mistakes?

T: Frankly speaking, I did not plan but I believe that an oral expression session needs to cover different angles so I cannot come or pre-task at home just saying well I am going to focus on the pronunciation I have to, I just come to the classroom with different, let us say, competences which I believe that I can master and then when I give the or I initiate, let us say the talk or the discussion or a given activity, I just, let us say, quickly notice the shortcomings and I give them immediate feedbacks each time, sometime about the language, sometimes about the pronunciation, sometimes about the formal English, informal English and I try to cover all what is academic English as far as the oral session is concerned.

R: Ok. As you said earlier that there were some mistakes in terms of pronunciation that you corrected or focused on. Can you tell me what aspects of pronunciation you focused on?

T: Euh, the aspects of pronunciation I focused on. Right, especially because I believe that pronunciation is distinctive, there are many, let us say, persons including most important students they believe ..ahh, I may say goinggg or goin it is the same thing as long as I am communicative. I would rather say no, because pronunciation for academic, let us say, fields is very distinctive; it distinguishes between the grammatical categories of the words. When you say record and record, they are not the same…they are written in the same way but they are pronounced differently. So, I try to focus on the pronouncing which is not all the mistake they come across because I believe that the coming year they are going to come across different euhh modules in which they have, they are going to develop their

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pronunciation skill, but I try to correct the huge pronunciation mistakes in which they sound strange when they pronounce them in the wrong way. But I keep on giving them piece of advice and, let us say, corrections at any time.

R: Hehe. Is it linked to the pronunciation of a word, the pronunciation of words it means segmental, a sound or supra segmental linking the words? What do you focus on more?

T: Euhhhhh

R: I do not know if I have made it clear!!! For example, do you focus on rhythm, intonation?

T: Yeah, yeah a bit of all because .....right ...I am not a specialist in Phonetics when I come across them as I told you when I launch the oral session, module or session I do not preplan as to get deeper into the pronunciation as such, but I believe that in the oral skill they need to master the segmental and the suprasegmental given the fact that the intonation is very important for emphasis, I still remember when I taught euhh, I , we tackled the issue of "imagine if you were a given person" and I proposed to be the ambassador of a given country so as they bring cultural ideas and they present different country with their own country. And I, I emphasize on the fact that when they give a presentation they have to master these suprasegmental, let us say, features of pronunciation, giving the fact they have to use the rising tone, the falling tone to express kind of doubt, kind of being sorry for something, so they have to play with these tones and rhythm.

R: And how do you do that? Do you raise their awareness? How do you do that?

T: Euh, yeah, I, I exemplify, I just act sometimes. I go to the board and yeah, this is how do we do it, how it is done, so when you are sad or just say or when you want to express kind of doubt, you know, you use a falling tone, or when you are very motivated or when you are sure of something you want to emphasize as far as the audience is concerned, try to , let us say, use a rising tone.

R: Ok. Have you noticed any improvement on your learners' communicative language ability?

T: Yeah, sure. But as summative I am not satisfied but formative, I am really happy because at the end of the year I just come across very communicative discussions, very convincing and coaching ideas and good not very good but, let us say, academic talk being, let us say, debating, being polite requests, how they can ask. For the formative, you know, I am satisfied but for the summative, no, I sometimes do not find what I wanted but generally talking, I am really satisfied with the majority of the learners because they succeeded in.....I really emphasize for the mistakes or the shortcomings, I always, I do not leave them to finish I say, I sometimes, ok, wait a minute, I go to the board and say, why

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did not you say it in this way? So, it is better, do not be afraid of the other just try to and I believe it was a really successful experience.

R: What about the elements of pronunciation, was there any improvement?

T: Euhh yeah, yeah, I believe that they are more, let u say, efficient in pronouncing English as it should be done....academically talking.

R: Right. And how do you see the role of pronunciation within communication?

T: Euhh, sometimes it is a kind of a double edge sword for me because I believe that learners, there are some learners who are more oriented towards pronunciation and there are other learners oriented towards, let us say, communication. But I believe that if we bring both of them, it would be better. There are some learners who come across that ...it is a car, they want to have an English which is distinctive as far as the others are concerned but they keep on saying," she go, she make, she do". They give more importance to pronunciation. And there are other learners, who are, they do not care about the pronunciation they say," she is going to school", like that, but they keep on saying very correct English talking about this ... I believe that I always push my learners to the best, why not both of them....good pronunciation and good, let us say, language. And if we merge between the two, we are going to have far a good or less a competent learner who can be a good person who pronounces English and he speaks in a good language.

R: All right. Talking about coordination, did you have any coordination sessions with colleagues teaching Oral Expression?

T: Frankly speaking, I did not have any coordination.

R: Why not?

T: Because I have been given the module to teach and no one called me to have...I would not have said I am not available, but no one, let us say, ever called me for a meeting or invite me for a discussion. So, I cannot, I cannot, haha, I could not, let us say, do it without the person because I was not the person in charge of the coordination. There were other teachers but I did not have the chance to meet them and discuss the programme or the way to teach.

R: Ok. What about coordination with teachers of Phonetics? Did you ever experience that?

T: No, hah, no.

R: Ok. The next question is linked to the types of activities you implemented.

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T: Oh, right, yeah. As I told you that according, in accordance with the needs of the learners, I designed the activities. I still remember the first semester I designed activities in which I enhanced, let us say, the vocabulary and, let us say, the communicative skills. How to introduce a discussion, a presentation, or how to defend your views, and how be polite in talking to the others and how to answer the questions in a polite way. And among the first ..... I still remember the activity was, if you were someone. So, my purpose was not to, was to, let us say, to give them the chance to make a research about given countries, to develop ideas about the culture, their custom, their traditions and values and morals, and then to come to classroom with a kind of, let us say, the rhetoric of an ambassador because, you know, ambassadors or big persons like these should have a certain rhetoric in terms of talking to the others. And then I had been very satisfied about the way with my learners managed to ... I forgot. I used the jigsaw technique. I used to bring for learners in which I designed the person or the student, let us say, ...

R: Spokesperson.

T: Yes, spokesperson or leader and the others ... as to form group work among the learners. And basically, this is what I... Right. And I was very satisfied about the way they came to the board. They used the board. They used their body language. They, let us say, They used a good language, the pronunciation. And there was a debate. I used to say, you are the ambassador and these are ... You are the journalists...You are the...So try to…I didn't go beyond, let us say, reality. Because sometimes in oral sessions, they just go what takes place. So if I were imagination and this...no. I just wanted it to bring to the reality to use the rhetoric, expressions and to be, let us say, part of what is happening today. And to develop their language skills and pronunciation skills as well.

R: The next question is linked to skill of listening. Did you target it? Did you work on improving it?

T: Honestly, listening…Frankly speaking…Our common practice here...so people are not taught how to listen to the others. It's a common problem because I came across many situations in which I found my learners just being naughty, being not respectful as far as the person talking was concerned. And I...not academically but morally, I used to say one someone is talking each time you have to listen to him till the end even if he is making a lot of mistakes. Try to listen. Listen to him or to her. And try to respect the…but academically, to develop the listening skill of the learner, I did not, let us say, teach them how to develop the listening skill.

R: Did you expose them to other sources...I mean, were they exposed to your English or other sources? Did you use any material? Did you have them listen to records?

T: Records no. I did not. But I believe other teachers were using videos for to enhance...But since I had some objectives which had been, let us say, predetermined as far

as the session or the oral session concerned, I did not feel the need for, let us say, videos and...because I spend all the year working in groups and..I did not say that it was useless to use videos and expose the learners to other pronunciations but I did not feel the need at that time to use videos and to expose my learners...and believe learners are exposed to other pronunciations outside the classroom. Because when they watch the TV and news and radio, they more likely to, let us say, to listen to other speakers of English.

R: One last question.

T: Hopefully.

R: Did you rely on any textbooks or course books for your course?

T: No, I did not. It's not...I do not believe that I know academically how teach Oral Expression but I believe that one has to use references and books so as to enhance, let us say, the learners' oral skills. But I did not use them, frankly speaking.

R: Thank you very much for your time and patience. It was very informative.

T: My pleasure.

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Appendix 13h: Transcription of interview #8

R: Good morning. Thank you for accepting to answer some of my questions. First, I would like to know how long you have been teaching English for.

T: Euhh, I think I have been teaching English for thirteen, fourteen years.

R: Great. What about the tertiary level, University level, how long for?

T: Ten years.

R: Ten years. All right. You have taught Oral Expression to first year students….

T: Yeah.

R: Ok. I would like to know if you followed any syllabus in your class.

T: Euhhh, Yes.

R: Is it a syllabus written or a syllabus.... what kind of syllabus was that?

T: Mine.

R: On what basis was it built? Is it or was it based on content? Was it based on competences to develop? Was it based on notions?

T: May be on content and competence.

R: What kind of content and competence did you target?

T: Ohhhhhh…….

R: Which competence were you trying to develop in your learners?

T: Speaking.

R: Ok. How do you define speaking? What is speaking for you?

T: For me?

R: Yeah.

T: Euhhh..., I try to develop their way of speaking, it means, I want to improve their way of speaking......in order to speak fluently.

R: Ok. So to reach that objective, what aspects have you tried to work on and develop to help to reach that speaking competency? Were you working on developing vocabulary? Were you working on developing active listening? Were you working on developing their pronunciation? What aspects so that....

T: Everything, I think

R: Ok

T: I think it is important for vocabulary for pronunciation, everything is important I think.

R: Ok. Did you give any share to pronunciation? Was it part of your oral class?

T: Yes, yes.

R: Can you tell me more about that?

T: I I tried to develop the way they pronounce words.

R: Ok.

T: Euhh...,

R: Is is something that was included in your syllabus or it was remedial? It was a remedy to certain weaknesses?

T: I think yes….

R: It was the second…it means because of mistakes they made

T: Yeah..

R: All right. You focused on aspects of pronunciation.

T: Exactly, exactly.

R: Ok. What objectives did you have in Oral Expression? What objectives?

T: I told you in the beginning of, euhh, of our classes…..we tried to speak in general about different aspects, ok, that we are going to do, different activities that we tried to develop, how can I say........

R: Ok. Let us come back to pronunciation. In pronunciation, you told me you were trying to remedy and correct. What kind of mistakes, pronunciation mistakes did you focus on? So, you told me pronunciation of words.

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T: Yeah.

R: Di you give any importance to intonation, rhythm, juncture?

T: Yes, for example, the word conTent and Content, different pronunciations of the same word and different meanings....

R: Ok.

T: This kind of words.

R: OK. If we take segments, like the sound, and suprasegment, intonation, rhythm, juncture....which, do you think, participate more in developing oral communication?

T: I think both.

R: Both. Can you explain more?

T: I think both are important to develop the skill, their level, their English, haha.

R: Ok. Have you noticed any improvement on the part of your learners' communicative ability?

T: Yes, I think in the beginning they are shy, they do not want to speak, they are afraid of making mistakes etc..I think at the end of the year, it was good. I think, all the students could participate, they tried to speak fluently, but the result was good. It has been improved, the level has been improved.

R: And, how, how, what did you use to notice that or to....? What indicators did you follow? That was during tests or the oral class in general?

T: No, the oral class in general.

R: Ok. What kind of activities did you include or have you included?

T: Euhhh…we did some games,

R: What kind of games? Can you give examples, one or two?

T: Yes, games…the aim of these games is to learn new vocabulary, ok....we did some proverbs, it is important, I think, to know English proverbs....and we have done for example, I give them a statement, ok and I ask them if they agree or disagree with the statement etc..and they try to develop their ideas and....

R: There was discussion more than…

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T: Yeah, yeah ... much more discussion than something else.

R: Did you involve them in dialogues, conversations?

T: Yeah , yes, during the test also ...they used to prepare a play, or a dialogue, a conversation between two or three students and they could perform, they could...they were good.

R: Ok.

T: At the activities.

R: What do you think of the role of listening in speaking? Yeah, the listening skills in the speaking skills?

T: ………………………………

R: Do you think it has any impact?

T: Yes, because when they listen for example to word, how it is pronounced, they could speak or pronounce the word correctly, maybe....

R: Did you work, have you worked on improving their listening skills?

T: No.

R: No. Why not?

T: I do not know, hahaha..

R: Ok.

T: Yes, that is interesting. Why not?

R: Have you exposed them to other models than you? It means, you were the speaker, they were listening to you. Have they been exposed to other sources using, I do not know, recorded materiel?

T: No.

R: No. Ok. The last question, did you rely on any textbooks to devise activities for speaking?

T: I think yes….but a long time…I do not remember which one.

R: Ok. That was very informative. Thank you very much for your time and patience.

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T: Thank you.

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R: Good afternoon Sir.

T: Good afternoon.

R: Thank you for accepting to answer some questions.

T: A pleasure of mine.

R: Thank you. First, I would like to know how long you have been teaching English for.

T: Euh, ten years.

R: Ten years.

T: I have been teaching English for ten years.

R: What about the tertiary level, how long for? At the University level?

T: Ten years, too.

R: Great. I know you have already taught Oral Expression to first year students.

T: Yes.

R: I would like to ask you some questions linked to that module.

T: Ok. I welcome, too.

R: First, did you have any syllabus for that module?

T: Euh, waw, this is quite an interesting question…No, I do not.

R: Why not?

T: Sorry?

R: Why not?

T: Because I think that Oral Expression module is a kind of module that you have to.....let the students free to talk.

R: Ok. So, what objectives did you set for that module?

T: To talk….. let them talking.

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R: Since you said, let them talk, what is the meaning of talking to you?

T: Giving a coherent sentences with a coherent topics with a coherent mind. That is it.

R: Ok.

T: But euhhh, to be fair, euhh just recent years, I used to do do with them what is called the ice breakers first. Then, to introduce them the way to talk. And of course, it is how to manage the classroom. That is it.

R: Ok. So, What type of activities exactly, ice breakers, what kind of ice breakers did you use?

T: Oh to introduce themselves, using, talk about your names, talk about your family, talk about your village, your town etc.. that is it. And may be occupations etc.., hobbies, What they do.

R: All right. You tried to improve some communicative language ability in your learners?

T: What do you mean by communicative language abilities?

R: It means to help them become communicative.

T: They are communicative because when they like, if they like English, they are communicative, you know, because you have also to manage the fact if they like or not and etc...and you know how the University is ......the students are chosen ,ok, to do English or not.....to learn English.

R: Ok. Did you feel any improvement on their part? Comparing the beginning of the year and the end of the year?

T: Yes, of course.

R: On what aspects?

T: Aspects vocabulary, of course, and the way that they feel free to talk, they feel free to express themselves....not all of them, of course, but the majority, ok. Because it is always concerning with the fact if they are motivated or not, and that is it.

R: Ok. If we take into consideration the pronunciation of English, Did you teach it to your learners during Oral Expression?

T: Euhhhh, no, no.

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R: Did you, did you treat it in a way or another? Did you correct mistakes? Did you pay attention to mistakes?

T: Yes, when the mistakes are obvious, for instance, if it is a tree and a three, etc.., when it is obvious of course. But sometimes, even if the teacher does not know the mistakes, you know, does not know the way the words are pronounced.

R: All right. From the examples you gave me here, you focused on pronunciation of words, in terms of phonemes.

T: Yes.

R: All right.

T: Rather than rhythm and intonation and stress.

R: So you did not pay any attention to them?

T: No.

R: Why not?

T: I do not know, because may be……. I would like them to be free. If I stop them each time, it means that I am going to break them somehow.

R: Ok. See.......let us say, pron, this is suprasegmental and segmental features , rhythm and intonation all right, if you were to introduce them to your learners, would you start with the phonemes, sounds, consonants then vowels then move to intonation or the other way round, start with the intonation and rhythm of the language then go down to phonemes?

T: I think it is better to start with phonemes, with sounds then to move to what is more difficult for me to teach and I think this is part of Phonetics module rather than Oral Expression. Do you understand what I mean which means you have to be prepared during euhh Oral euhh Phonetics sorry than in Oral Expression they have just to improve the way that they are talking and then the target is just vocabulary no more.

R: Ok. What about coordination sessions, did you have any?

T: No.

R: Why not again?

T: I do not know. I do not know but a good question, this is a good question

R: All right. Would you like to have some?

T: Yes, of course.

R: All right. What about the aspect of listening or the skill of listening, listening skills, did you work on them with your learners?

T: Not really, not really. Because of so many embedments you know, the first of them is lack of material even....ehhh no.

R: So, I understand they were exposed to your English, no other material?

T: Yes.

R: Ok. Last not the last question. The use of textbooks or coursebooks, did you rely on any material?

T: Yes.

R: What kind of textbooks

T: Talking about Speaking English or Speaking English or Improving English from Cambridge and the other one from Oxford, also. Talking, euhh, Keep Talking.

R: Why did you opt for these two textbooks?

T: Just because they are helpful. And the way they are designed is for Algerian learner

R: Last word is yours. I would like you to tell me about your experience with teaching listening euhh, sorry Oral Expression, the good part, the less good part.

T: The good part it means the hour of Oral Expression is the students' hour, which means that they are free to talk and they are free, euhhh, to express themselves, to express their idea and generally speaking, it is a kind of debate, you know, ok, and this is what we miss, what we miss what we miss in Algeria, places where people could debate and I think that this something positive. For the negative, the negative part, is the one concerning Phonetics and the one concerning a lack of materials. That is it.

R: Thank you very much, Sir, for your patience, that was very informative.

T: You are welcome. That was important for me to be interviewed by a so...euhh, you know, anyway, I have to stop.

R: I got it. Very kind of you.

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Appendix 13j: Transcription of interview #10

R: Good afternoon.

T: Good afternoon.

R: Thank you for accepting to answer some questions.

T: You're welcome.

R: First, I'd like to have some information about your experience. How long have you been teaching English for?

T: Well how long ...since...

R: For ages!

T: English?

R: Yes.

T: Well it means I can count even the years in private schools.

R: In general yes.

T: So since 1997.

R: Allah Ybarek (God bless).

T: Allah Ybarek fik (God bless you).

R: And at the university level?

T: At the university level since 2... well the university year...we can say that...I don't know...2008-2009.

R: Ok. How long have you taught Oral Expression to first year students?

T: First year student?...Well I don't remember very well, but I think for...let's count from that year. Let's say...I don't know, I have to count.

R: Ok for...

T: from 2009...No from 2010. From that year...since that year.

R: Ok. Do you have a written syllabus to teach oral expression?

T: No.

R: Why not?

T: Well, the first time I was asked to teach Oral Expression, I...it means...I didn't ask for a syllabus...and...because I was aware it didn't exist at all. It didn't exist even when we were students. So, we know it does not exist. We have to manage our own syllabus and then we teach it as...it means we manage to teach Oral Expression as we know.

R: Ok...

T: There is no syllabus, there is no...no guidelines to know how to teach Oral Expression at the level of university.

R: Let's forget about the syllabus and think about the objectives or aims set for Oral Expression. What did you aim at?

T: Well, personally...

R: With your learners...your learners involved in a module, what were your objectives for your learners? It means at the end of the course, at the end of the year, what competences, what skills did you want to let's say improve in your learners?

T: Well, first of all, em when I have a class of Oral Expression, and I know that these students had difficulties to speak, so my first aim is to make them, to push them to speak first of all. I don't care if they have a bad or a weak level or they have a weak pronunciation, I don't care. At the beginning, right at the beginning, I have to attract more students to speak. This is my...it means I have to...let's say establish at them a kind of self-confidence so that they start em speaking. They start participating. This is my first aim as a teacher. It means it is my personal aim. And then, we try, let's say to improve fluency before accuracy. Em, it means for Lic1 even Lic2...

R: Lic1.

T: Lic1, it is a new experience for them. Most of students if not the big majority, at the level of secondary school, they didn't have tutorials simply for speaking. So, most of students do not dare to speak. So, that's why I told you that my first objective is to make them participate in the classroom. And then, we try to...em...Let's say establish, first of all fluency.

R: Ok...

T: Much before accuracy, and listening before speaking because even sometimes they have a big problem to let's say comprehend or to understand what is required from them. So I

try sometimes when I ask them "Did you understand?" Most of them are just looking at me. So, I...em...it means at the beginning it was...in the beginning of my experience in Oral...em...let's say Expression classrooms, I started to...em...let's say...em...be aware that the fact that they didn't speak was mainly because they didn't understand. Alright...so, these are the main...

R: That leads me to ask you...em...how you define speaking. What is speaking to you?

T: Well, here speaking...let's say involves many competences. First of all, I think that speaking should include listening comprehension, em, let's say debates between students. It means there are many parameters which are included. It's not simply speaking for the sake to speak, but it's to...how do we say...to...to manage or to communicate between the classmates. Sometimes an idea is given but there is no...eh... how do we say... follow up. So here lies the problem. Are they shy? They didn't understand or what? So speaking involves comprehension...eh...listening, speaking...em...imagine communication and interaction between the classmates and even the classmates and there teacher.

R: Ok. So what kind of teaching practices do you include?

T: Well there are many. In the beginning because as I told you because may be my field of...eh... I'm in the field of Educational Psychology, I always emphasise on the affective parameters. As I told you in the beginning, I try to make most of students participate. Never mind if they speak about x or...I let them choose whatever topics they prefer. Then we manage to select some specific topics that they voted for or they prefer and then we try include later on when they know each other it means when there is a kind of better contact between them, there are some role plays; there are some stories which are told. It means filling the gaps of stories. There is a variety of activities. But, first of all, it means in the beginning, the selection is bit restricted because most of them are shy. If not...ok...let's shy.

R: Have you noticed any improvement in their communicative language ability?

T: Em...to some extent it means with some willing students...em...especially when they speak to the teacher when they confess it means...em... sometimes I go to some students and I ask them "why don't you speak?" Sometimes it is in the tutorial and most of the time it is after. It means when they are alone. And they confess, they tell me "sometimes we know the idea but we are afraid to say something because of...". It can be the mistakes. It can be the fear of the teacher, the fear of better students. So, that's why I told you when I try to establish a kind of self-confidence, we can know what kind of needs they have. And then we move to the selection of topics or the activities. So, sometimes I...I see the improvement but I think the improvement is much more when it comes from them when there is that kind of self-confidence which is established. Sometimes, there is improvement in terms of accuracy.

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R: Ok. What about coordination sessions? Do you/Did you/Have you had any?

T: Formally never but informally yes.

R: What do you mean? Can you give me more details?

T: Of course. Here sometimes when I find myself in some difficulties that classroom is not really talkative, I try to ask some colleagues "Do you think that if we...em..." It means through informal discussions between us, we try solve...I personally, try to solve my kind of problems asking the other colleagues what kind of activities do you prefer with your classroom or...I don't know...It means here, we do not have formal coordination between teachers to select given activities never. But like this it means between us we try to solve that kind of problems.

R: Great. Earlier, you spoke about listening. I'd like to know you opinion about the status and the importance of listening in an Oral Expression class with speaking.

T: Well, there is a big importance of listening as I told you in the beginning. Here most students do not speak simply because they did not understand the question or did not understand the situation of the topic. So, listening...em...I can repeat the same example because again I told you in the field of Educational Psychology we always refer to L1 acquisition, here listening always precedes speaking. We internalise all the sounds and vocabulary, the words for a period of time and later on we can or the child starts to formulate words and phrases. It's the same principle for a foreign language; we can never ask a student to speak for the first time. We prefer to establish that kind of listening. It means we provide him with...em...songs or movies or...it means a source...eh...where he can listen to the language and then we can ask him to discuss that topic or... Here, we...I personally, prefer to establish listening at the same time or before speaking.

R: Ok. And do you have them listen to other people than you? Or you are the only source they are exposed to.

T: Generally speaking, I'm the only source. It's rarely that I brought some CDs or songs. Because of, you know, we do not have...How do you call them?

R: Equipment

T: Equipments. It means it would be better. May be it can even motivate those students who are not really motivated, but unfortunately I'm the only source for them most of the time.

R: What listening strategies do you implement?

T: I implement or I'd like to implement?

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R: That you do.

T: Well, what I do generally...I bring a story with gaps so they listen to that story and they propose words or for example a morale behind the story and they discuss it. It means they listen to a story, listening

R: Storytelling?

T: a storytelling with gaps...eh...for example I did it rarely again filling the gaps of the lyrics, a song. Movies, I would like to but unfortunately again equipment I'm not well equipped, and I'm afraid of this technology...so, I'm afraid to waste time. So...For the time being, this is what I remember if... Sometimes they listen...well sometimes I invite a student who is going to tell a story or a movie or summarise a movie and so on. It means I am the source and sometimes the students are the source.

R: Ok. Another set of questions linked to pronunciation. The importance...how do you see importance of pronunciation in speaking?

T: Well, personally speaking, it means I'm subjective here; I do not give a very big importance to pronunciation at this level especially with Lic1 because they are new...because teachers are not native speakers. They may make mistake in pronouncing (Laughing). It can be my case. That's why I cannot blame them every time. I encourage them to use dictionaries to check their words. But if they make mistakes in terms of pronunciation, for me, it can be tolerable. It means it is a tolerant mistake. That we...it means at the level of correcting their mistakes, it's not the first or the second at all. It means fluency then accuracy then...pronunciation is not so important at that level. It means for Lic1, especially in the beginning of the year.

R: Alright. So for you, as long as they're intelligible, pronunciation mistakes do not matter.

T: Do not matter too much...Oh well, it means sometimes some words...there are some common mistakes in pronunciation. If it is...I don't know, if instead of saying...eh...three, they tree; here I can intervene because it changes completely the meaning. But if the word is understood, so here it doesn't really matter.

R: Let's put it differently. What pronunciation mistakes do you think can alter clarity and communication?

T: Well, as I told you ...when...they alter the meaning, the example I always correct at my students when they say instead of three they say tree.

R: So here it is linked to segments.

T: I don't know.

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R: It is linked to the pronunciation of a sound

T: Ok

R: The point is do you include because for you this kind of mistake can alter communication alright. What about mistakes in intonation and rhythm? Do you think they are as important as that?

T: Eh...It means the degree of importance is not as important as this one unless it is for example they are speaking about...I don't know...and intonation. When intonation has a role for example in their dialogue yes; if it is falling or...but if it doesn't alter the meaning. It means if the mistake has an impact on the meaning yes here we can correct. As long as it doesn't here we can tolerate it. For example, I can remember another example in terms of if it can change the verb to the noun 'reCORD' and 'Record' here may be for them I'll tell them it is simply for your information so that when you use this it is not the same meaning; it's a noun or a verb. But if it doesn't change, if the message is conveyed; it's alright.

R: Ok. One more question.

T: Yes of course.

R: Do you rely on textbooks to design activities for your course

T: Textbooks no. It means there's a variety of sources from the net from some textbooks but not one. It means as I told you in the beginning we managed to have our own syllabus, and it depends on the students, what do they...at which level are we in the beginning of the year it's not the same at all as at the end. So, here it's a variety of activities but they are not always taken from the same source. One textbook no. It means it can be the net; it can be sometimes from their own sources. They can bring their own activities. To rely on textbooks no.

R: Thank you for your time and patience. That was really informative and helpful.

T: You're welcome.

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Appendix 13k: Transcription of interview #11

R: Good morning

T: good morning

R: Thank you for accepting to answer some questions.

T: That is a pleasure

R: First, I would like to know how long you have been teaching English for.

T: I have been teaching English for four years now

R: Ok

T: So a very limited experience

R: Every experience is valuable. What about teaching Phonetics to Lic1, how long?

T: For two years, yes two years.

R: Can you tell me about the syllabus you use to teach Phonetics to Lic1?

T: For the first year, I followed the syllabus designed by my colleague and it was Ms Bereksi to who I would like to send my regards and for the second year we tried to design, I think my colleague and our colleague designed it for us and we agreed on the syllabus she designed.

R: So what about the content of Lic1 syllabus to Phonetics?

T: Concerning what exactly?

R: What is the content, what elements?

T: So, first we started by showing the students the difference between sounds and letters and that there is no one to one relationship between sounds and letters and I think this is very important and then we proceeded to articulatory Phonetics, that is the speech organs and how sounds are produced and the difference characteristics of the English sounds.

R: And what are the aims here when you have such a content? what are the aims, let us say the objectives related to Lic1Phonetics?

T: Indeed, I think that the primary objective is that our students become aware that English is not like French and it is not like Arabic. Its sounds system is rather a bit different although it is very to, the sounds we find in English are very similar to Arabic but there is no relationship, this one to one, this systematic relationship between sounds and letters. That is " th" may be pronounced as /ð/ as /θ/ so depending on where it occurs in particular words.

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R: Now if, the question is, what is the status, what is the role of Phonetics within licence? It means how can Phonetics help a graduate? What is its role within this process?

T: I think that first it has to do with pronunciation, proper English pronunciation. It is very important because, I used to give my students a lot of examples about intercultural miscommunication, sometimes even presidents, who are not native speakers of English, mispronounce some words, and how this leads them to to , euhh, embarrassing, sometimes embarrassing and sometimes very difficult situations. Yes, euhh, yes, I used to provide my students with a lot of such examples where they realize how important it is to properly pronounce English words.

R: This leads me to ask you, what about suprasegments? Do you have any chance to cover them?

T: Yes, suprasegmental aspects of, euhh, that is in Phonetics we used to cover them at the end that is at the last term where we focused on stress. Well, I did not have the chance to deal with intonation but we focused more on word stress.

R: And why not starting with suprasegmental features? Instead of starting with segmental ones?

T: Well, I think that if we start with segmental ones, it makes sense. Because first students are introduced to to first to this language, to be able to distinguish between sounds and letters that is, and then move on to word stress. I think this makes sense; it is rather logical euhh, a smooth transition between things that they should know first and I proceed with other things.

R: Ok. Do you have any coordination sessions with teachers of Phonetics?

T: Indeed, we used to have a lot of coordinating sessions with my colleagues.

R: How often?

T: Very often, let us say each time we euhh, we covered a particular title within the syllabus, I used to contact my colleague who is a specialist in Phonetics and I am not. So we used to do it through emails.

R: And are you the only modal to your learners or do you use any other material?

T: Yes, I used to use, for example, audio recordings of native speakers, for example reciting a particular poem, and then I ask my students first they have to, I ask them to recite the poem and then listen to poem by a native speaker and then ask them to try recite it again.

R: Have you noticed any improvement on their part in terms of pronunciation mastery?

T: Indeed yes, I have noticed improvements and what is important is that I noticed that my students started to break with their pre conceptions and their former attitudes to Phonetics. They used to tell me that they did not really, euhh they were not really motivated by

Phonetics and they did not use to like like Phonetics when they were in the secondary school. And then within their Phonetic course in the first year they said that it is different now, they have different perceptions and attitudes towards Phonetics.

R: Ok. What about improvements linked to Pronunciation, their performance?

T: First, I noticed that, euhh, yes indeed, I noticed that they are more aware about how to pronounce words, they were keen to know the appropriate and the proper pronunciation of a particular or of any word they may use.

R: Last question linked to course books, text books you have used. Can you tell me more about?

T: Well, I have taught Phonetics last year and I am not sure I can remember all the books I have used because I draw on plenty of books and also plenty of internet material because I select what I consider or I judge interesting for my students and motivating for them too.

R: Thank you very much for your time.

T: It is a pleasure.

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Appendix 13l: Transcription of interview #12

R: Thank you for accepting to answer some questions. First of all, I would like to have some information about your experience and know how long you have been teaching English for.

T: Well, I have been teaching English for about seven years as a permanent teacher.

R: At University level?

T: At University level for about seven years.

R: Ok.

T: At a temporary teacher for about five years.

R: Ok. So, it means seven plus five? I understand it that way?

T: Yeah, yeah.

R: All right. And how long have you been teaching Phonetics for?

T: Three years.

R: Three years. All right. The first question is linked to the syllabus. Do you have a written syllabus for the Phonetics module?

T: Euhh, yes.

R: On what basis is it built? What is the content? What is the approach....implemented?

T: We start generally with definition of Phonetics, branches of Phonetics, what else..., difference between letters and sounds, euhhh, not the practical side but the practical lesson.

R: Theoretical part?

T: Yes, the theoretical part, just to distinguish between for example the manner and the place of articulation, description of consonant and vowel sounds. Description of consonant sounds and vowel sounds. So, I think this is the first part. And then we go to the word stress, well this is for the first year, first level, first year Phonetics. Then, word stress, syllables, syllables and word stress.

R: Ok.

T: ...of this level. Ok, I have never dealt with sentence stress, intonation, etc.

R: Why not?

T: Well, sometimes………because....

R: Time constraints?

T: Yes, the level of the students, I say the truth, well I do not master intonation....., sentence stress more or less, but intonation, rhythm, etc... I am not a specialist, ok, I am more specialized in sociolinguistics, pragmatics, etc, but I love teaching Phonetics. So, I have got to do more efforts, ok, to be able to teach intonation and so ever.

R: Ok. If we think about objectives for Phonetics course, what objectives did you have for your learners? The aims? It means, at the end of the course after a year of Phonetics instructions, what kind of product do you aim at?

T: Well, really when you say Phonetics, you say pronunciation, ok, but, whenever you say Phonetics, you say how the speech sound is produced, that is as far as I know, how speech sounds are produced using organs of speech, etc. Ok. So, I think that the students must know the theory, in terms of organs of speech, description of consonant and vowel sounds, etc, ok, and at the same time to have a good pronunciation of the ...dealing with English, English pronunciation. Ok. Well, here there is maybe a problem, we focus, I know that we focus more on the theoretical part than the practical part. We deal more with theory, let us say may be sixty percent theory, and may be forty percent practice.

R: Is it possible to change it?

T: Yeah, I think so, nowadays, it is possible since we can do audio... we can bring with us materials, etc.

R: Ok. Now, the question that I have is, what is the role of Phonetics, teaching Phonetics within a licence? It means, what is the status? What is the place? What is the importance of Phonetics instruction within the whole curriculum? What is the role? Is it to make, help people become more professional at pronunciation? What is the role?

T: That is it. I think so. Yeah, I think so. Yeah, this is it. But since with teaching, university students with teaching Phonetics at the level of University ok. So, the module is called Phonetics, when you say Phonetics, the students must master, I mean, the pronunciation, the pronunciation of course, ok pronunciation and at the same time they may have, they must see the scientific level of Phonetics, you see?

R: Ok. You, you, the gradation you gave me, according to the syllabus you have, you start from the smallest units moving to larger units, segments, you spoke about sounds, then some supra segments like word stress. Why have you opted for this gradation and not the opposite, not the other way round, exposing them to supra segments then moving to segments? I do not know if my question is clear!!!

T: Yeah, yeah. Well, well, I have never thought of it like this. I do not know, well.

R: And what do you think of it now that it has been raised?

T: Well, I think that it is difficult for the students.

R: In what sense and why?

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T: They start, we start with stress, etc, and then we go back to euhh....

R: The point is why not exposing them to authentic, real English with the different features of pronunciation let us say intonation, raising their awareness and working on that and the sounds, pronunciation of the sounds will work itself by itself?

T: Yeah, it sounds good. I will try it. I do not know..ha, ha ha.

R: Well, because if I tell you that following that approach from smaller to larger units, we do not have time to cover them and at the end, we end up with students who can understand their teacher, or their teachers but when it comes to speaking to native speakers they fail. The same thing in speaking. What do you think of it?

T: Euhhhhhhh

R: All right, you did not think of it before. Ok, let us move to something else. What about coordination sessions, did you have any coordination sessions with other teachers of Phonetics?

T: Well, not really. We have got our syllabus for euhh, three years ago, ok, and so we keep the same syllabus. That is it. Just like with Mrs Belkheir, she was my, well, she helped me a lot, she helped me a lot dealing with the syllabus, etc. And then last year I worked with another teacher, and she gave me more or less the same syllabus, and both of them are specialists, so may be just following them. Ok.

R: What type of activities have you implemented or do you implement in your course with your learners?

T: Euhh, songs, poems, conversations. That is it I think.

R: Ok. Do you rely on any textbooks or course books?

T: Euhh, yeah...... I forgot the name of the author.

R: Gerald Kelly, Kelly?

T: Kelly, More English Pronunciation in Use, how do you call this? Euhh, I have forgotten the name of the author.

R: It is ok, ok.

T: It is English Pronunciation in Use. They deal more really with practice. Kelly remains, have manners, description of vowel sounds, etc. But English Pronunciation in Use, they rely more on practice. Ok, so I like it more than Kelly or the others.

R: Ok. If we consider the two modules, Phonetics and Oral Expression. Do you see any link between the two? Do you think they are linked, they should be linked? Do you think there should be coordination?

T: Yeah, of course, when we say Oral Expression and pronunciation, we have speaking, we have speaking. So when the student starts expressing himself, we try to focus on his pronunciation, pronunciation, word pronunciation, sentence pronunciation, stress, sentence stress, word stress, etc.

R: And what is according to you the place of pronunciation within speaking? What is the importance?

T: Well, sometimes, we may have what you call it euhh, misunderstanding, ok, of a word, just because we mispronounce a word, may be we mispronounce a word and we have misunderstanding, just because of the wrong pronunciation.

R: What is for you more problematic in terms of pronunciation causing breakdown in communication and speaking, segments or supra segments? Mistakes in segments or mistakes in supra segments?

T: Suprasegments. Yeah, suprasegments.

R: Thank you very much for your time and patience. That was really informative.

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Appendix 13m: Transcription of interview #13

R: Good morning.

T: Morning.

R: Thank you for accepting to answer some questions. It is really kind of you. I would like to know how long you have been teaching Phonetics.

T: Euhh, well, I cannot say because I have not taught Phonetics continuously. It means I taught it three years ago, that is it three years ago, to be more precise I taught it from 2007 to let say 2011. I stopped and I am presently teaching Phonetics, it means starting from this year. And I am supposed to teach it next year.

R: Ok. Let us consider first year students, what kind of syllabus is set to the subject of Phonetics?

T: Well it has to do with vowels first, because we follow Gimson, Gimson's book in which he starts with Phonetics, euhh sorry with vowels. Yeah, that is it.

R: And what objectives or aims are set to this kind of syllabus? What are the outcomes?

T: Ok it is to attain native like level in terms of producing vowels, this is the ultimate and point the ultimate objective. The outcome, students still need more practice, they need laboratories, they need to listen, to be exposed to native speakers more than the teacher. The teacher is not a native speaker. So, they need more exposure to native speakers.

R: So, if I got it right, the first features you introduce are segmental.

T: Yeah, exactly.

R: How do you see the introduction of suprasegmentals?

T: It is paramount and I think is advisable to do it right from the first year.

R: Why don't you do it then?

T: Well, first because of time restrictions. Second, I have, euhh I am not specialized in Phonetics to decide. It is just out of experience, my modest ……experience in Phonetics and well, to be honest I started with vowels following my colleagues who are specialized in Phonetics and to decide to, to, to where comes suprasegmental Phonetics, I think this decision is rather collective, it comes out of discussion and we need to talk all, I mean those teachers who teach Phonetics need to talk and collaborate to decide at the end whether to integrate suprasegmental Phonetics from first year.

R: Thank you. So, have you noticed any improvement on the part of learners concerning suprasegmentals, well you got experience interacting with learners third year students, Master students, have you noticed any improvement in their mastery of suprasegmentals?

T: I have, but with some students not all of them. The group I am talking about, the one who has improved is the group who listens to native speakers through videos, Youtube and imitates, imitating more and more native speakers when they come to classroom we see this change, and they tend to link what they do in classroom with what they listen to through internet especially. Internet yeah, television as well through movies but internet plays a great role. And I ask them, because I ask them how they did ….to improve their pronunciation, that what they said. I am giving you a present example, example of this year. I noticed this with students, graduation especially those in the second year. And what they do, in parallel, plays in the school and they practice and to do like native speakers you see, there is a kind of imitation.

R: What about the subject of Oral Expression? Have you noticed any coordination sessions with both Phonetics, teachers of Phonetics and teachers of Oral Expression?

T: Well, I am afraid not. There is no coordination. Coordination is created by the students themselves, they try to bridge the gap. It is, euhh, it depends on their own effort. That is it.

R: Thank you. The course book you follow, you told me Gimson?

T: Yeah.

R: What about the type of activities? What types of activities do you implement?

T: Yeah. When I said Gimson, it is rather the theoretical part, the practical part, as far as the practical part is concerned, I rather rely on Pronunciation in Use …

R: Gerald Kelly

T: I would say Raymond, I do not remember the name Raymond and …. There are two, one is Intermediate and the other one is advanced. It is English Pronunciation in Use. If you want, I would give you the exact names.

R: Yes. Well, I would like to thank you, Thank you very much for your time and effort. It was very informative.

T: Oh good.

R: Thank you very much.

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Appendix 13n: Transcription of interview #14

R: Good morning.

T: Good morning.

R: Thank you for accepting to answer some questions. First, I would like to know how long you have teaching English for.

T: I have been teaching English since 2003.

R: At the University level since 2003?

T: Yes. As a supplied teacher and then as ….

R: Ok. I know that you have taught Phonetics to Lic1 students. Can I know how long for?

T: Well, I taught that subject during or for, I do not remember, but may be four or five years.

R: Do you have a syllabus for that course?

T: Yes, yes of course.

R: Is it a syllabus that you designed or a syllabus that was imposed on you?

T: Yes, yes, I designed the syllabus.

R: What objectives did you have or did you set for that course?

T: Well, it depends there is the main goal and there are many objectives for each course. So for example, with the …, so by the end of the year the students would be able to recognize and transcribe the phonemes, the English, the RP English phonemes, that is one objective. By the end of the year also, they also would be able to differentiate or to tell what syllable is and so on, so it depends on the lectures.

R: Ok, According to you, what is the impact of Phonetics in the language ability of the learner, it means what kind of learner do we need to have in three year time and how can Phonetics help reach that aim? It means what is the role of Phonetics?

T: Well, Phonetics is a very important subject especially in English because as Saussure said, Pronunciation is a guise , a disguise not a guise, haha, I do not remember, it means it is a guise for what is written, what is spelt, it means, it is completely different, sometimes, you know, as also De Saussure said….., he said that the, I mean, the spoken form was first created, or, euhh, the spoken form existed first and then the spelt or the written one. So, if students learn the wrong pronunciation, they may make mistakes at the level of writing and spelling. So it very important not only for understanding or misunderstanding or intelligibility but also it is important when they are writing their lessons or ideas or essays or whatever.

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R: Shall I understand then that Phonetics according to you has a role to play in improving learners' pronunciation?

T: Yes, learners' pronunciation and also it is part of the language and language should be, should be learnt with all its angles and perspectives. Ok, it is like , you cannot just, because the problem , is that language has often been dealt from the grammatical of from, I mean focus was mainly on grammar and lexis, then, later on, on style, Pragmatics and so on. Phonetics and Phonology have most of the time been neglected, because we think that Phonetics is not as important as grammar, because as long as we understand one another, it does not matter, so this is the communicative approach. It means, just we, if we, the idea is just to make it, we can understand one another that would be fine, I mean, we do not care about how it is produced or how it is pronounced. But Phonetics is important, learning Phonetics and knowing the right pronunciation is important. We do not ask students to perfect their pronunciation or to sound native like, ok, this is not the target, but at least to be intelligible. Ok.

R: Ok. Great. Fair enough. In terms of content, what do you start with? What features of pronunciation do you start with?

T: Well, first since Phonetics is introduced as a subject for the first time to Lic1, what we do first, euhh, for the syllabus design that you asked me about that, is introducing some terminology, what is a sound? What is a letter? The difference, what is Phonetics first, and phonology? What is a Phoneme, an allophones and so no. So this is the first part. What is a consonant? Because it is not obvious for students, I mean, to know what is a vowel and how it can be different from a letter. Ok. Because in English this is the issue, it is not like Arabic, Arabic or French or even Spanish because they are used to this kind of languages, however, English is quite different. For example, you have five vowel letters whereas you have twenty vowel sounds which is, which is tremendous to Lic1. Yes, because there is a problem of recognition.

R: Ok. So for Lic1 this is what you need to cover?

T: Yes, first, introducing first the theoretical part, first we need them to learn the terminology to identify, because I cannot start teaching them, euhh, vowels if they do not know, conceive and perceive what a vowel is first. So, first we need to introduce terminology and then start with vowels and consonants and stress and intonation and so on….progressively.

R: So, first for the first step you cover segments?

T: Yes.

R: Do you think, well it is not part of yours, but do you think students will or cover the suprasegments in their...as a learner?

T: Yes, we also, I mean, normally we also, we also introduce some supra, suprasegmental features.

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R: Which ones?

T: Especially for example, aspiration, dark /ɫ/, euhh, the, euhh, velarization, euhh, what else…it has been for years that I …

R: Ok. You are starting from the segment, from the phoneme and you move higher.

T: Yes. In fact, the first, the first step, so, after learning terminology, some or the terminology used and some of the frequent terminology used in Phonetics course, so teach them sounds in isolation first, and sounds that same some sounds in connected speech for example, they learn, they need to learn that 't' is an alveolar plosive, and then we move forward and tell them that 't' can be realized when inter vocalic, or between two vowels, as /R/ or as /tʃ/ or it depends or as /ʔ/ as a glottal stop, and so on, they can be able to recognise the sound when they listen to it. Ok.

R: How can this develop their communicative competence?

T: Because it is very important, it is a matter of intelligibility, it means, if you, if a student hears a word such as 'attitude' and they do not understand that attitude, /R/ refers to /t/ , it is quite important, they may be, they might get confused. Ok, so it is very important, at the level of, you know, euhh, language has four skills, and one of them is not only at the level, is not only the spoken skill but also the listening skill. So they should be able to listen and understand.

R: All right. The point is, do they have problems recognizing sounds?...

T: Yes or course

R: Are these, do they represent problematic sounds to the learner?

T: It is not a matter of recognizing sounds, it is a matter of discrimination, of discriminating between sounds. For example, especially with vowels, it is not obvious for students the distinction between long /i:/ and short /i/, ok, it is not that obvious and sometimes students make this mistake.

R: Ok. Have you, have you ever heard of top-down approach in teaching pronunciation?

T: Yes.

R: Well it means starting with the connected speech or the suprasegments, moving down to segments.

T: Yes.

R: In the way you presented the, the, the, your approach is bottom-up. How can you compare the two? Which one for you is more, let us say effective and efficient?

T: The thing is that the students, euhh, somehow because I tried it once and it did not work.

R: Can you tell me more about it?

T The problem is that students, euhh, you give them too much information, and it is problematic for students to grasp that sum of information. So, it is better to accompany them step by step and to show them, euhh, each part, why it is taught and how then it can be in different contexts. So, they are, the problem is that they are used to that particular methodology in learning, ok, so when they have learnt in the same way from primary to school to high school in a particular way, it is quite difficult introducing a new subject and changing as well the methodology is quite difficult at the level of, of when you are not teaching. It is very, because Phonetics is, is a new subject and is also complex because there are a lot of words which are new to them and they discover for example, so it is quite difficult. Ok.

R: Ok. I will put it very simple, do you see Phonetics as a subject to help study the language scientifically or as a subject to help learners in improving their pronunciation and their oral competence?

T: Well, well, I think with the first one goes the second one, I mean they cannot be detached. The first cannot be detached from, from, from the second simply because English pronunciation, especially English, because you know it is complex, euhh, it is part of the language, you cannot dissociate it from the language, and it helps them in the pronunciation, it helps them learn the language as well and how it functions. Ok. Learning how, what a syllable is and how it could be divided also leads them to learn how words are formed as well, in terms of the lexis and so on.

R: Have you noticed any improvement in your learners' pronunciation?

T: Euhh, yes with hard work and ….but the problem is that, well, I am working on this actually, for my thesis, ok, and the thing is that, euhh, vowels are, are, are the most difficult to learn and intonation. But they learn but it is not enough.

R: Ok. What about coordination, do you have any coordination sessions with teachers of Phonetics?

T: Yes, at the beginning of the year once or twice that is all, I mean just to prepare the exam topic; that is all.

R: So the aim of that meeting is to …..

T: Yes, for evaluation, assessment, ok.

R: Ok. What about the link between Phonetics and Oral Expression? Do you see any?

T: Euhh, well, euhh, Oral Expression, well as long as it is the spoken form, learning Phonetics might help in the way they produce, and speak, speech

R: Have you experienced any coordination sessions between teachers of Phonetics and teachers of Oral Expression?

T: Never.

R: Ok.

T: What I know is that, they are, students love Oral Expression, euhh, most. The experiment I did for my thesis is that all students obtained ten, the average in Oral Expression, and they did not in Phonetics, so I am not sure how the relationship, hahahah.

R: Well; that is another issue you know, for assessment and subjectivity.

T: Yes. I am not sure, I cannot speak about that.

R: What type of activities do you implement in your course?

T: Well, it depends, you know, it depends on the lesson, it depends on the objective, it depends on, on the level of the students, it depends on the complexity of the lesson, it depends on so many factors, so for example if they need, if they are introduced to a sound, they need to listen and repeat, so this is one activity. If they need to transcribe, for example, to make the distinction between how to transcribe schwa from a sound, so here they need to learn, they need to learn how to transcribe it on their notebooks, and so on, ok; or copybooks or whatever. So it depends on the activity and the lesson, yeah.

R: What about text books or course books you rely on, do you have a list or it is a material that you designed?

T: Yes, it is a material, all, I mean, of course, I, I, euhh, I, let us say, the syllabus design is based first on the, on what the Ministry asks from us and then it is up to the teacher to design according to the materials, especially RP English, books on RP English, such as Gimson, such as Peter Roach the most common and mainly those that can be found by students at the library, but of course I rely on books for that, but I give them handouts.

R: Thank you very much for your time and patience That was very informative.

T: Well, I hope, I helped somehow, hahaha

R: You do. It does, it does.

T: Good luck.

R: Thank you very much.

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Appendix 13o: Transcription of interview #15

R: Good afternoon.

T: Good afternoon.

R: Thank you for accepting to answer some questions.

T: You're welcome.

R: If I do remember very well, you did teach Phonetics and Oral Expression.

T: Yes.

R: All right. I'll have two sets of questions. The first one is linked to Phonetics, and the second one is linked to Oral Expression. All right. I think there is a syllabus for Phonetics L1.

T: Yes.

R: All right. Can you tell me on what basis it is built or designed?

T: Should I give you the syllabus or the basis why did we design...

R: Yes.

T: Well, we have to proceed in a very logical manner. They do not know anything about Phonetics. They do not know anything about pronunciation. So, the first thing is to define Phonetics. What is Phonetics? What are the different branches of Phonetics? Articulatory, acoustic and auditory branches. And to make them aware that sounds are not just what you say, they are used in studying the waves the sound wave transmission and the way the hearer is going to perceive and the different processes that happen at the level of the ear. Then, we have to make this...I think it is very important to include it...we would not...Personally I did not say it when I was a student...making the difference between letters and sounds. It is the beginning, so the difference between a letter and a sound because in English you write one way and you are going to pronounce in a different way. I always give them the examples of 'birth' 'worth' ok. They are written with 'i' and 'o' but

it's /ɜ:/ for both. And we have other examples, for example 'ch' sometimes it's /k/ sometimes it's /tʃ/ another...So I focus on the practice so that students understand what is really is the difference between sounds and letters. Also we have the idea of homophones, homonyms, homographs, ok...Then, we are going to start with the organs of speech. We tell them they are going to focus on Articulatory Phonetics. We do not have a language laboratory, so we cannot teach you Acoustic Phonetics because we do not have equipment for that. We do not have it here. If we had a laboratory it would be better. They would be in contact with different sounds...different vowels...because when person says /ʌ/, it is different from...This is why we focus on Articulatory Phonetics. We've done...sorry...Before that we speak about the different proceed, speech proceed. How is sound produced in some aspects...initiation of process...air is taken inside and outside...from the lungs to...larynx...the vocal cords...they vibrate, they do not vibrate...when you reach the...I said when you reach the larynx, it is before the voiceless stage the we can see if the sound is voiced or voiceless...it makes difference in consonants because vowels are always...when you reach the velum that goes up or down that will give up a nasal or an oral sound. After the position of the velum, when you reach the mouth we reach the articulatory stage, the articulation stage. Now, I think it is very important to notice and also understand first how we produce...how speech is produced. Here it is a very general introduction about speech sounds in general not the sounds of a specific language but languages in general and speech sounds in general. Then, we move on to...consonants...the sounds of English like what are the sounds of English? They need, in fact, to produce so consonants, vowels...We start with consonants because consonants, I think, as first year students, they need to know consonants because they are easier to describe than vowels because vowels you do not have contact, you do not have contact to take more background...vpm also to distinguish between the consonants of the English language, ok. We have twenty-four excluding the glottal stop, we have twenty-five if we include the glottal stop. Then vowels: monophthongs, diphthongs, triphthongs...they need to know what we mean by voicing that we have voiced and voiceless and what does it mean like whether you have vibration or not. What is its place? For example, /p/ lips are together, they are in contact with each other. These are very briefly. We do not go into details because it is detailed in section two. Then it is just a matter of...if you can see what

I am doing with my organs of speech then you can reproduce it. The sounds we have in Arabic and French, there is no problem. The sounds we do not have, it is the problem.

R: Ok. Thank you. All right. The next question is with that syllabus, what aims does it have or does it set to have?

T: The aim is to teach them first how to...what is Phonetics because they do not know...Then to show them that Phonetics is not pronunciation but you learn how to pronounce thanks to Phonetics. When you say Phonetics is the scientific study of human speech sounds and everything that goes with it. But when you say pronunciation, it helps you pronounce with exercises and drills and practice. What we are trying to do in fact is to combine both. We cannot keep it theoretical otherwise it will not be useful to the students. They need to know how to produce consonants. They need to know how to produce vowels, especially vowels that people use in English not like those...Eh...French for example, the /ɑ:/ of English is different from the /a/ of French. They need to know this difference in respect and where it is from.

R: How can you link those aims to the final ones? It means the final product as L3 students, how can you link aims of Phonetics you set or you have with general aims at the end with the final product?

T: When they graduate?

R: Yes, How can it build the user of English L3?

T: We have to speak about the second year. Because it is first and second year, it is first sounds; as I told you consonants and vowels. Then they have to know about...there is...dealing with the suprasegmentals. Segments, sounds in isolation...they have to know that it is not enough to use sounds correctly alone. For instance, you say /ə/. Good that you managed to say /ə/. For first year students, if they manage to say /ə/, they say /æ/, it is ok. We need to put them together in a syllable, in a word, in a phrase, in an intonational group, in a rhythmic group; and see how these suprasegmentals are going to help you have a native-like pronunciation. Try at least to be close to it. You can never be a native speaker. We are not native speakers. At least to achieve this...eh...native-like pronunciation.

Suprasegmentals are important, I tell them, in order to be understood by the hearer. With native speakers, you need to be able to produce everything…stressed and unstressed at once. They are going to be compressed for the rhythmic pattern. Then there are differences in the intonation pattern. In asking questions…'wh' questions, the pitch when asking 'yes' 'no' questions goes up to show that there is something else, an answer. All these elements are going to help them somehow answer. They are going to help them have an acceptable not a perfect, at least a correct pronunciation; and may be help them also have knowledge about this branch of Linguistics that is restricted to sounds. Just I told you having a look at the name of the module, ok, Phonetics, we cannot exclude Phonetics. They gave us pronunciation with teaching sounds.

R: Ok. What about your teaching methodology? What approach, what methodology?

T: You mean learner-centred or teacher-centred?

R: For example…

T: Yes, may be…I try at least…Sometimes I lecture, especially when I deal with pure theoretical aspects of sounds, I lecture. I give…the focus is on me. They are listening. But each time there is like an activity or an exercise in that turn I try since students they are not are not numerous…in groups…I try to have more participation by going to that word pronouncing…you say it, ok. I try to use songs where rhythm is used…

R: That is the next question. Do you use any particular equipment?

T: Yes. I use my laptop because we do not have here…and I bring my speakers, the ones I have at home. It is very heavy but I try sometimes…from time to time try to bring them because it is interesting. So, they are going to have a song…for example rhythm…not rhythm, sentence stress…I bring a song a passage of the song, and I tell them to listen and try find words…because…I tell them try to speak the words that are unstressed very quickly and then try to produce the words that stressed very slowly and then ok…very slowly, and then try to focus give energy. There is all these elements of stress: long euh not heavy to be longer stronger and…a…somewhat energetic…try to speak it up…So I tell them in this passage of the song I remember it was Phil Collins…euh…True Colours. And

it has a different version. This is why I chose it. Because Cindy Lauper, the original singer Cindy Lauper. She was the first to sing it and then Phil Collins…He made another version. It was British. And then there was a recent one from Glee…It is a TV serial and…euh…Pronunciation was easy. With the American, they had troubles; with the British no. With this one because she articulated everything and there was no stress…sentence stress mainly…even though function words were clear. They hear them clear. They could manage to understand. The first time, they said "We have understood nothing. What do they say?"…This what they…This is a tool. This is one of the tools. I also bring them like dialogues. They have to listen to and tell me the weak forms. Where are they weak. Sometimes the words are used in their strong forms. Sometimes with the rhythm, it is very difficult to tell or try to tell them. They tell me here, I find a sentence. I try to tell them this is the rhythm; and they tried.

R: Ok. One more question. Do you use any textbooks or course books?

T: Yes.

R: Do you remember any titles?

T: Peter Roach, Phonetics; Peter Roach, English Phonology…euh…I have got English Pronunciation in Use. I do not really remember…We have an entry level and an advanced level; we try to combine both.

R: On what bases have you selected those textbooks or course books?

T: I have also a book on intonation in English…I have got many in fact. Each time, I have stress for example, I would look at different references. I try to look at different references because…euh…for example, I told them this year, next year I will try to innovate. I will try to bring other exercises. Another perspective…This is why I do not have a very…euh…I would say the standard would be Roach. .euh…Gimson, Pronunciation of English. These are the references. Then for practice, I would use other references.

R: Ok. That was the first…

T: So Internet…sorry to interrupt…is very useful.

On the Relationship Between Teaching Pronunciation and Teaching Speaking: From Technicality to Fluency

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R: Ok. That was the first part of the interview linked to Phonetics. The second part is linked to Oral Expression sessions. Well, I will start with the question: Do you, as a teacher of Phonetics, a teacher of Oral Expression with other teachers, do you have any coordination sessions? It means coordinating between teaching Phonetics and teaching Oral Expression.

T: No. Honestly no.

R: Do you not feel the need?

T: Teachers of Phonetics, sometimes, they do not agree.

R: Ok.

T: So how do you take those of Oral Expression…I agree…We should have this coordination.

R: All right. And again the same question, do you have a syllabus for Oral Expression?

T: No.

R: Why not?

T: I tried. I did make one. But it is not something common.

R: Ok.

T: You find each teacher of Oral Expression teaching in his own way.

R: What about yours? On what basis is built?

T: Euh…There is first year, I taught them last year because with the second year it was my first year. I cannot say I did; I was trying. It was my first attempt…Last year I tried to establish like a syllabus. So, first, I started with elements like how to greet, how to introduce themselves, giving them dialogues, giving them topics, giving keywords, try to have dialogues that focus on a situation, different situations, and perform. This was the first…I had different patterns. I had role play. Sometimes they had cards. They had like a

situation written. Each one has each pair has a situation written. And they try to come up with a dialogue or with a conversation. And then, they will…It will have a common topic, for example it was the black out, a different situation, sometimes in different settings, at the metro, at home, in an elevator. And they would imagine what to say. And…Euh…songs…any song that I do to…include them because I think they are pretty good. Listening. They would listen and…euh…I give them the lyrics of the song. They would have like some words of the song. They try to determine those words. And for example this the first and the second part sometimes you have one word, and then two, and then it gets..euh…three four until the end of the song. They have a video to watch. And then we have a debate about the movies…Other things, I tried a lot of…

R: Varied activities

T: When I teach Oral Expression, I tell them it a very difficult module. I do not like free topics. I use free topics occasionally so that to give them the floor to see their levels, to assess somehow sometimes. I like plays. I like to bring some new ideas to be innovative. This is a very difficult task. I had all my ideas when I was going to teach the day after, the day before and going make research on the Internet. It is tiring.

R: Sure. What objectives and aims set for Oral Expression?

T: First is to talk. Make them talk; and then to develop the four skills. I tell them you have to develop the four skills. First, it is speaking of course. Then listening; and I tell them you cannot speak without listening. Reading again is used when I give them cards and plays, they read. And then writing; they write their dialogues and so on. Even though it is bit not that important in Oral Expression, it is somehow developed practiced.

R: What about pronunciation? Is there…

T: Argumentative skills, sorry.

R: Ok.

T: There are other skills, the argumentative skills. Try to defend your point and try to have arguments not just ideas like that.

R: Ok. What about pronunciation? Do you include or have included any formal instruction.

T: Euh…I tried…

R: Or how do you deal with it?

T: I try to refer to Phonetics each for example there is a word they do not know or did not see. This is not the correct sound or vowel. I try to transcribe it. Or sometimes without the transcription; I say it and try to repeat it.

R: Ok. Do you focus on any features segments or suprasegments?

T: For pronunciation.

R: Yes. In your Oral Expression course.

T: First segments are important. They may have probems with vowels. Even sometime, first year I cannot judge them on suprasegmentals; but I try at least word stress. It is for example in PREsent and preSENT.

R: Do you feel any improvement on the part of learners' ability to communicate orally comparing…

T: Yes. I think they are better, for example, I would say beginning of the year and the end of the year in my comparison. But the way they started, they were very shy. They would not dare speak. They found very bizarre to go and face the audience and try to act in fact. But through time, there was improvement. I was lucky, I had a good group, good groups both of them.

R: Ok. What about textbooks or course books you are using in Oral Expression?

T: I have…euh…one about dialogues…I think it American…conversational dialogues…I do not remember because last year…

R: Thank you very much for your help. That was great and informative.

T: Welcome.

Appendices

Appendices

Appendix 13p: Transcription of interview #16

R: Good morning.

T: Good morning.

R: Just to make sure you taught Phonetics and Oral Expression to first year students.

T: Correct.

R: What would you like to start first with Oral Expression or Phonetics?

T: As you like.

R: All right. Phonetics?

T: Go ahead.

R: How long have you been teaching Phonetics for?

T: Phonetics or English in general?

R: Start with English in general.

T: English in general seventeen years.

R: Allah yberek. And Phonetics?

T: Phonetics let us say ten years, more than ten years,euhh fifteen years.

R: And what are the objectives set for the Phonetics course?

T: Well, first year? You're talking about first year?

R: Yes Lic1.

T: When we get to first year, we would like just our students to be conscious, to be aware of the sounds, of English sounds and how do they give up onto the other sounds. For example, when I am teaching let us say the consonant 't', let us say the 't', I would like to focus on the fact that 't' is different from …..different from'e', different from 'a', from French and from Spanish sometimes. I would like our the students just to be aware about the different vowels and the different vowel qualities, this long 'i', this is short 'i' etc. So……… more on consonant in isolation, consonants and vowels in isolation, sounds in isolation. And of course, we start by defining that we are more interested in RP English, that we want, we would like to have a reference,although now RP is not spoken anywhere. But again we…. … system that we are teaching RP English. RP English, sounds in general, and the difference between this. I would like them to be aware of how to make these sounds, how to produce these sounds, recognize and produce these sounds.

R: Why, why have you chosen to start with segments?

T: Well, I have been taught so, and this is the syllabus anyway. I have been following the syllabus. I have been taught so by Mr Dekkak…Professor Dekkak. He was our teacher, first year. I remember I had him as a teacher. And this is what… This is the way we proceeded. Ok.

R: Have you ever questioned that syllabus?

T: No, I have not. Actually I have not. Because I said to myself, this is logical. You know. We start first of all with recognizing sounds, producing sounds in isolation then sounds in words and then the difference and then if they, if they make, our students are able to make the difference between this, that is very nice.

R: Ok. What about suprasegmentals? Do you think our students within a three year course can cover suprasegmentals and master them?

T: No, no I do not think so. I do not think so. We have an hour and a half per week and this is insufficient.

R: So what about starting with suprasegments and the segments can work on themselves, themselves, by themselves?

T: I think we insist on that indirectly, indirectly.

R: How?

T: For example, I am teaching Oral Expression, for example, I insist on stress without teaching them stress. Actually we deal with stress etc, Pay attention, in this word there is a stress, primary stress in the first, look in education, stress is on the penultimate syllable, try to give them hints but not teaching them stress, just giving hints, well doing that indirectly. But the focus is on the words in isolation, the sounds in isolation.

R: We move to coordination sessions, do you have any coordination sessions with teachers of Phonetics?

T: No, actually no.

R: Why not?

T: These are too rare, unless we have two sections for example, and the sections are taught by different teachers, we try to coordinate just for the sake of examination but we are not doing that for having a good ……..

R: What about coordination sessions with teachers of Oral Expression?

T: Never. We never did.

R: You coordinate with yourself.

T: I did coordinate with myself.

R: What type of activities do you implement ?

T: The type of activities, well different types of activities, about Phonetics?

R: Yes.

T: That is it. So, first of all, well let us take what is technical, somehow technical, for example plotting, how you get the vowels, plotting the vowels in the diagram, describing vowels, describing consonants according to VPM, circling the sounds, circling the 'f', circling the 't', so these are the basic exercises, transcription, we do ask them to transcribe, euhh, and sometimes we give them a transcribed passage and we ask them to write it in normal, euhh, to write it in letters let us say...so these are type of exercises that we have.

R: Ok.

T: True or false activities sometimes, we write something just to test them…..

R: Ok. A last question linked to Phonetics. The text books or course books you have been using.

T: I personally like using Peter Roach, English Phonetics and Phonology because it is very, euhh, you know, it is, it has several exercises, simple English, strict to the point. I use also, I used to use O'connor and of course AG Gimson Introducing English Pronunciation I think is the title.

R: All right. This is the first part of the interview. The second part is linked to …

T: Oral Expression.

R: Oral Expression. How long have been teaching Oral Expression for to first year students?

T: To first year students? Well, let say around twelve years.

R: All right. Experienced teacher.

T: Experienced teacher yeah.

R: The same question is linked to the syllabus. Do you have a syllabus?

T: I try to have a syllabus on my own because actually we do not have a syllabus at the Department….this is what you have to follow, but I try to develop a syllabus on my own, like this is I want my students to be able to do after six months or after the course. So, this is it, just focus on fluency, how to be fluent. And I just , I think I have been focusing on the fact that euhh, pushing them to speak without being afraid, without being anxious

R: To develop self confidence

T: Exactly. So that was the first thing as far as I am concerned, that was the first point I insist on like ….the first aim I have in …..when I started teaching Oral Expression. Because I think that my students need to be, to feel self confident, to feel at ease…..on confidence and only that we can start speaking. To be more confident.

R: Ok. After having built that relaxed atmosphere, what are the other skills or competencies?

T: I insist much on pronunciation, on grammar of course, I try to convince them that they have to use simple English, simple sentences, subject, verb, object and on that basis we stop.

R: Let us focus on pronunciation. How do you tackle it?

T: Since I have, I have been teaching Phonetics, so what do I do, sometimes I take just some examples some exercises and I apply them, apply them on Oral Expression session.

R: So this is linked to segments?

T: Linked to segments and stress as well. Some suprasegmental Phonetics as well.

R: Stress. Word stress or?

T: Word stress yes, mostly, mostly word stress, intonation, rhythm, I try to introduce them to poem ….

R: How do you deal with that? So Poems? You are the modal and they follow you?

T: No, no sometimes I prefer not to be the modal, I just have a rec….

R: A record?

T: A record and sometimes I do not have a record. Sometimes, I just write it and ask them to pronounce it…..yeah correct.

R: All right. So you try to raise their awareness about suprasements.

T: I try to raise their awareness because it is funny and different from …..so I give them poem and ask them to repeat, repeat the poem, to read it out loud. And I ask them to read the different passages of the poem one by one, and try to keep up the same rhythm, the same speed,

R: How how, what role do you give to listening?

T: Listening……, sometimes I try to have some records, sometimes a movie, just a sequence of a movie and of course ask questions….

R: Comprehension questions?

T: Comprehension questions of course, fill in the gaps for examples, sometimes through songs. I just play a song, they listen and then I give an exercise where I ask them to fill in the gaps so that is it in general.

R: What about text books you are using or you have been using with them?

T: Well, I used them a long time ago , but now I am trying headway sometimes not textbooks. That is it.

R: Thank you very much for your time and patience. That is very kind of you.

T: You are welcome.

Appendices

Appendix 13q: Transcription of interview #17

R: Good afternoon.

T: Good afternoon.

R: Thank you for accepting to answer some questions. What I know is that you taught Phonetics to Lic1 and Oral Expression to Lic1.

T: Yes.

R: I have a set of questions concerning Phonetics and another one concerning Oral Expression.

T: It is ok.

R: All right. The first set of questions linked to Phonetics. Did you have a syllabus to teach Phonetics?

T: Yes.

R: What objectives did you set to teach Phonetics to Lic1?

T: Ok, there are so many objectives and the most important one is to improve their pronunciation and, euhh, I mean, to correct some mistakes they have been accustomed to make in speaking English in using some words.

R: Ok. So what do you know about pronunciation? What is the definition of pronunciation to you?

T: Ok. Pronunciation is, euhh, how to say it, to sound correct when speaking. To respect some rules and to, ok, how to say it, euhh, to speak like, not really, I mean, not exactly like a native speaker, but …

R: Native like.

T: Yes, native like speaker but, I mean, to adjust to the pronunciation of native speakers of English.

R: Ok. So what features or pronunciation points you introduced in the syllabus and in what order?

T: You repeat the question please.

R: Yeah, first what pronunciation points or elements did you teach include in your syllabus? And in what order? What was first, what was second? What was third?

T: Ok. The Lic1 students, ok, we, euhh, ok, in the beginning we teach them, we introduce them to the different sounds of English. To mean, consonant sounds and vowel sounds. Ok,

and to define the different characteristics that characterize each sound. So, we started, ok, with consonant sounds, we describe them, their properties, the difference between one sound and another and then we move to vowel sounds and to describe each one, euhh, I mean each characteristics, the characteristic of each vowel sound.

R: Ok. How do you think these aspects can help in improving learner's pronunciation and sound like a native speaker of English?

T: Euhh, ok. We cannot if you want stop at the level of consonant sound and vowel sound to speak about pronunciation. We have to move forward, I mean, to practise their use within words. Ok, and then to move into, to move after that to sentences, I mean to utterances. I mean to begin talking about pronunciation is especially at the level of words, and then utterances, I mean long stretches of speech. Euhh, in talking about descriptions of consonant sounds and vowel sounds, it remains just a theoretical point, I mean something that is introducing us or introducing these students to pronunciation if you want. So it is the basis of pronunciation.

R: Ok. So if I got it right you started with segmental so phonemes, teaching sounds, teaching consonants and vowels, then suprasegmentals are not included. When I say suprasegmentals, I mean stress, rhythm, intonation and the…..What if we change the approach and start with intonation, rhythm, juncture so that the sounds will improve themselves by themselves?

T: It is ok. It is a very good idea because I noticed that teaching vowel sounds, euhh, consonant sounds in the beginning, I mean is necessary to move, I mean, forward to talk about words and pronunciation at the level of words and utterances. No, we cannot start by teaching them, I mean, the stress, the pronunciation of words and suprasegmentals, rhythm and so on, and by the way teaching them the different characteristics of the sound.

R: Ok. Concerning coordination sessions, did you have any with teachers of Phonetics? Did you have coordination sessions with teachers of Phonetics?

T: Yes, ok, yes.

R: How often? When?

T: It happened, euh, sometimes, euhh, two to three per year.

R: What about your learners' pronunciation skill. Did you notice any improvement?

T: Yes, I did. At the end of the year.

R: Ok. And what do you think improved more? Aspects of pronunciation that improved more

T: Euhh, ok, euhh. By the end of the year, they, my students have realized that in fact there is a difference between a noun and a verb.

R: Ok, so that is a kind of integrative approach.

T: Yes, euhh, in talking about, for example, how to say it, homographs, ok and homophones, here they have the ability for example to distinguish, if I give you an example of the word, to obJECT and an OBject if you want, so they know that this one is a noun it should be pronounced this way and the other is a verb it shoud pronounced the other way, and it is the same thing with adjectives and , euhh, ok.

R: Ok. What types of activities did you implement in Phonetics teaching?

T: Right. Generally I give them words to transcribe. And sometimes it happened to me to give, if you want sentences within which I use words that interest me, I mean in pronunciation…that I find they have to know their pronunciation.

R: Ok. Did you rely on any course book?

T: Not really.

R: Well, that was the first set linked to Phonetics. We are going to move to the second set and I would like to bridge the gap between the two. How do you see the link between teaching Phonetics and teaching Oral Expression?

T: So, if you want, euhh, in the course of, euhh, if you want Oral Expression we have to practice pronunciation. So it is an oral path in which we are going to use words, to use, euhh, to speak. And then we have to practice things that we have learned in pronunciation.

R: First, the syllabus. Did you have any syllabus for Oral Expression?

T: In Oral Expression?

R: Yeah.

T: Euhh, look, when I was asked to teach Oral Expression to Lic1, I did not have any syllabus in the beginning of the year, I just tried to test my students first to know, if you want, euhh, how to say it, deficiencies not deficiencies, problems in using language, the English language in terms of pronunciation and in terms of grammar, too. So, I just tried to look at the way they speak, the way they use language in general, and then decide about the syllabus that should be, euhh, if you want, chosen for the year.

R: So what kind of syllabus did you opt for?

T: Ok, it was not the same for the three past years that I taught Lic1 Oral Expression. It was not the same program for each year. It is ok. This is why I talked about the difference between students. Right, for example, I can remember one in which with Lic1 students, right, we start with very simple things, I mean, they may look childish for example, talk about how to say, euhhh, what can you found at University? What can you find at University? What can you find at the market? To describe vegetables, fruit that we can see, and then by the way, look at their pronunciation, and control their grammar.

R: Ok. As the whole course, what objectives did you set? what aims I should say, what aims did you set?

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T: To improve their pronunciation and to correct their grammar

R: All right. So the point here is how do you link pronunciation and grammar to the communicative ability? Is pronunciation very important or just as important as any other skill?

T: It is very important, it is as I said it before, ok, when we are asked to make the difference between a verb and a noun and so on and so on, and we are speaking, we are not writing, so the hearer have to distinguish between, ok, I mean the parts of speech of each word. We are talking about this word, not this one. Ok, so this is, I mean, the basic points of having a good pronunciation. At the level of grammar, English is grammar, any language is based on its grammar. We have to be correct at the level of grammar. But in pronunciation, I mean, there are things that we can let go, and there are things, I mean that we have to take into consideration in teaching pronunciation and understanding it.

R: Ok. Now focusing on pronunciation in Oral Expression, did you plan to tech it or it was done incidentally and accidently?

T: Euhh, ok, we cannot talk about things, I mean, it was not accidently nor, hahaha, incidentally, I was not obliged to teach it, I like it. So, I have been, if you want, euhh, given the module to teach and then I have decided to take it, I mean, it was not a problem for me.

R: What about teaching pronunciation?

T: Ah with my students.

R: I mean with your students Lic1 Oral Expression, did you plan lessons of pronunciation in Oral Expression?

T: Ah yes…

R: Or it was something incidental?

T: Ah right. You talk about the lessons, right. Euhh, perhaps, I, euhh, for, ok, I prepared some, if you want, euhh, points about the course. But when I go to the classroom, I find myself, in, if you want, creating, producing, if you want, in giving examples and in moving to things, I mean, that have got relationship with, euhh the lesson, things that have not prepared before. It is ok.

R: You deviated in a way.

T: No, I stay within the course but I give examples inspired from the environment.

R: Ok, What type of activities for Oral Expression, for speaking?

T: For speaking, Oral Expression?

R: Right.

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T: We talked about, euhh, ok, to describe things for example, to describe a situation, to describe objects and then let them speak and focus on the use of adjectives and other, and at the same time, the pronunciation, I mean of adjectives, of the nouns, of the verbs and so and so.

R: Did you focus on any communicating strategies?

T: It was by the end of the year that we moved to communication, conversation…

R: All right.

T: When I find it, I mean, by the mid of the year, I find it for the students, I mean the students are able to move to conversation, they are able, if you want apt to get engaged into conversation stretch, then we decided, I let them choose the topic they, they like and then we talk about it. I let each student talk about his topic.

R: Ok. How did you deal with mistakes they made in pronunciation?

T: Euhh, right, when they speak ok, euhh, there is, the mistake is here, I let the student finish his speech and then I stop him, and then we try to revise what the student has said and to let the others, if you want, euhh, find out the mistake if there is any……They are able to find it out and then we correct it.

R: Did you correct all types of pronunciation mistakes? Segmental, suprasegmental included?

T: Euhh, it, euhh, when, it was only by the end of the year that we moved to suprasegmentals. So by the end of the year, yes, but in the beginning we only focused on segmentals.

R: Ok. Why did you follow this approach, starting with segmental then moving to suprasegmentals and not the opposite?

T: Because we have to decide it.

R: On what basis?

T: Hahaha, the group of teachers who were in charge of the module decided to follow this program.

R: So that leads me to ask you about coordination sessions. Did you have any?

T: Euhh, yes we did.

R: How often?

T: Three.

R: Not Phonetics, Oral Expression.

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T: Oral Exression, in Oral Expression we coordinated by the net.

R: Can you give me more details?

T: We only, euhh, I mean, with ok…the program is here but each teacher, euhh, if you want, how to say it, programmed lessons differently from one another. It means that the main syllabus is here, but as far as practices are concerned, we were different. Each teacher was free in selecting the kind of practices with his students.

R: Ok. The…the last set of questions is linked to listening. How do you see the status or the importance of listening in speaking?

T: Euhh..

R: Do you think it paves the way to listening? It is a starter? It is something that is acquired naturally not need to work on it? Or something that we need to raise awareness and to work on it deliberately?

T: It depends on the function of listening.

R: How do you see it?

T: Yes, euhh, when we listen to someone's speech especially when we are a teacher, we are going to listen to the mistake the student is going to make. This is important. Perhaps, euhh, I mean, the idea, euhh, the content is not very necessary, or is not very important for us, we are not going to listen t the content or to thing being talked about, but to listen to the kind of, euhh, I mean to , how to say it, to the intonation, to the kind of…, to the style, to listen to the grammar, to listen to the, euhh, I mean, how to say it, right to the English of the student.

R: All right. Now we are focusing on the learner, learner developing listening skills.

T: Yes.

R: How did you treat that skill with your learners? Did you work on their listening competence? Did you expose them to …

T: Ah from the side of the students?

R: Yes.

T: No.

R: Why not?

T: I did not pay attention to, euhh, right, euhh, in talking about the different tools used in teaching pronunciation, I mean, euhh, we could not focus on the Listening Comprehension.

R: Ok. So, they were exposed to your English.

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T: My English.

R: Nothing else.

T: Yes.

R: Right. Last question is, did you rely on any text books to teach Oral Expression?

T: Euhh, not really. I, ok, because I selected, I mean, if you want, practices from different books, even from the books of grammar, from the books, euhh, if you want, from the books of Secondary School and so and so…So I just selected things that can help their pronunciation skill, that improved their pronunciation skill, so it was not necessary to consult just the books of Phonetics in this sense.

R: Ok. We are going to wrap up because I did not ask you about your experience, your teaching experience. How long have you been teaching English for?

T: For about ten years.

R: At the University level?

T: At University yes.

R: All right, so ten years at University.

T: Yes.

R: Thank you very much for your time and patience.

T: You are welcome.

Abstract:

Oral-aural communication represents a pivotal area to develop amongst learners of English. EFL learners' communication expertise draws greatly on the mastery of listening, speaking, and pronunciation skills. At the tertiary level, departments of English are concerned about several challenges including the improvement of communication in spoken English. The present research seeks to determine whether the modules devoted to this particular aspect of the language and their content, the approach adopted, and the teaching practices are appropriate for and consistent with the set aims and objectives for oral-aural communication training.

Key words: Speaking – Listening – Pronunciation – Teaching – Communication – Competence

Résumé:

La communication orale représente un domaine essentiel à développer chez les apprenants en anglais. L'expertise en communication des apprenants en anglais comme langue étrangère s'inspire grandement de la maîtrise des compétences oratoires dans ses deux aspects : réceptif et productif. Au niveau tertiaire, les départements d'anglais sont préoccupés par plusieurs défis, y compris l'amélioration de la communication dans l'anglais parlé. La présente recherche vise à déterminer si les modules consacrés à cet aspect particulier de la langue et à leur contenu, à l'approche adoptée et aux pratiques d'enseignement sont appropriés et compatibles avec les objectifs définis pour la formation en communication orale.

Mots clés : Parlant - Écoute - Prononciation - Enseignement – Communication – Compétence

الملخص

يعتبر التواصل الشفوي مجالا محوريا يجب تطويره بين متعلمي اللغة الانجليزية. خبرة المتعلمين في اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية في التواصل توجه إلى حد كبير على إتقان مهارات الاستماع والتحدث والنطق. على مستوى التعليم العالي، الأقسام الإنجليزية تنشغل بالعديد من التحديات بما في ذلك تحسين التواصل في اللغة الإنجليزية المنطوقة. ويسعى هذا البحث إلى تحديد ما إذا كانت الوحدات المكرسة لهذا الجانب بالذات من اللغة ومضمونها، والنهج المعتمد، والممارسات التعليمية مناسبة ومنسجمة مع الأهداف والغايات المحددة للتدريب على الاتصال الشفهي.

الكلمات المفتاحية:

التحدث ـ الاستماع ـ النطق ـ التدريس ـ الاتصالات ـ المهارة