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SELF CONFIDENCE AND PRONUNCIATION TRAINING TO ENHANCE THE EFL SPEAKING COMPETENCE: a CLASSROOM-ORIENTED RESEARCH ON FIRST-YEAR LMD STUDENTS AT ABU BEKR BELKAID UNIVERSITY, TLEMCEN

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"No one walks alone, and when you are walking on the journey of life...you have to start to thank those that joined you, walked beside you, and helped you along the way"

David H. Hooker

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Abstract

(...) The classroom is the crucible—the place where teachers and learners
come together and language learning, we hope, happens.
It happens, when it happens, as a result of the reactions among the
elements that go into the crucible—the teachers and the learners".
Gaies (1980) in Allwright and Bailey (1991:18)

In Practice, this may denote that an essential pyramid process exists within the teaching-learning process; namely between the teacher, the learner and the classroom. None of these elements go into the classroom with 'empty-handed', but rather every one brings into the classroom a number of influencing factors. The learner, on the one hand, will recall in the classroom his own learning experience, his life, his style, his emotions and his personal differences. The teacher, on the other hand, will bring into the classroom his learning/teaching experience, his personal character, and his course entailing all its connected variables. Various interactions take place between the teacher and the learner within the classroom setting. Chemistry of variables may come to light in the classroom setting, even the best laid-out lesson plans are subject to far reaching modifications as a result of the manifold existing challenges.

All these issues call attention to the urgent need to accomplish research regarding the different aspects of teaching and learning languages in a classroom setting, with the intention of gaining deeper understanding into these challenging processes and formulating new but practicable ways of enhancing their effectiveness and thus, their success. Thus, a classroom-oriented research is central for a better understanding

of the pyramid process. The present research concentrates, then, on three variables that may influence learners' achievement; notably pronunciation training, self-confidence and speaking competence.

Considering speaking as one of the most anxiety provoking skill which may be caused from learners' lack of self-confidence, this work is based on a "cause and effect" dimension. It attempts at looking on how may pronunciation practice enhances learners' self-confidence and therefore, develop their speaking competence. In view of this, the broad aims of this research work are to investigate and analyse relationships between self-confidence and pronunciation practice and the effects of this on EFL learners' general speaking competence; to examine the factors which may influence self-confidence, pronunciation and general speaking ability; to investigate learners' and teachers' perceptions of the factors involved; and to explore the learning processes associated with pronunciation and general speaking competence.

To achieve the settled objectives, four research instruments were used for collecting data, including questionnaires, diaries, a semi-structured interview and a speaking test.

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

ANOVA: Analysis of Variance

AF: Absolute Frequency

CBA: Competency Based Approach

CBE: Competency Based Education

CSP *:*   Classroom Speaking Performance

DF: Degrees of Feedom

EFL: English Foreign Language

ELT: English Language Teaching

ESP: English for Specific Purposes

FLL: Foreign Language Learning

FL1:   First Foreign Language

FL2:   Second Foreign Language

ICTs: Information and Communication Technologies

L.1:   First Language

L.2:   Second Language

LLS: Language Learning Strategies

LMD: Licence, Master, Doctorate

MS: Mean Squares

PC: Personal Computer

PLS: Pronunciation Learning Strategies

PPT: PowerPoint

r:	Pearson Coefficient Correlation
R.F:	Relative Frequency
SD:	Standard Deviation
SPSS:	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
SS:	Sums of Squares
TEFL:	Teaching English as a Foreign Language
TPE:	Techniques de Production Ecrite
TPO:	Techniques de Production Orale
TGC:	Test General Confidence
TOEIC:	Test of English for International Communication
TSC*:	Test Speaking Confidence
1°A.M:	Première année moyenne (First-year Middle School)
2°A.M:	Deuxième année moyenne(Second-year Middle School)
3°A.M:	Troisième année moyenne (Third-year Middle School)
4°A.M:	Quatrième année moyenne (Fouth-year Middle School)
1°A.S:	Première année secondaire (First-year secondary school)
2°A.S:	Deuxième année secondaire (Second-year secondary school
3°A.S:	Troisième année secondaire (Third-year secondary school)

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction: Setting the Groundwork

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1.1. RATIONALE

The growing importance of English as a world language and the advance of technology and education reform are believed to be key-determinants for new developments in English language teaching/ learning profession. Studying English as a foreign language is a challenging effort for students whose goal is effective communication. However, among the most crucial areas of difficulty learners may face is the sound system of English. Fortunately, there is now a move for an intensive change in the area of English pronunciation teaching (Richards *et.al,* 2002; Brown, 2010).

For a long time, it seems that pronunciation teachers in many EFL perspectives have been adopting what some would characterize as a conventional methodology for teaching English pronunciation based on drilling and automatic exercises. The result of this reveals that many learners display significant phonological difficulties which prove highly detrimental to successful communication in English.

In this demanding age, and perhaps owing to the effects of the globalization process as a widespread phenomenon, a sound attention has been drawn towards the importance of pronunciation teaching (Hismanoglu, 2006). Nonetheless, some teachers may claim that pronunciation teaching seems to be discouraging since not all learners achieve native-like pronunciation, and successful communication may take place even without good pronunciation. This is clearly revealed by Kenworthy (1987: 3) who states that: *'for the majority of learners a far more reasonable goal is to be comfortably intelligible'*. However, the present research work puts a special emphasis on pronunciation practice as an

enhancer and motivator to raise learners' self-confidence to speak competently.

Research has thrown considerable attention on the nature of spoken discourse at a large extent. Speaking is described as being an interactive process involving the production and perception of information within different contexts. It requires from learners not only to know how to produce what they want to say, but also when, why, where to produce language. This may involve other dimensions such as the psychological side of learners.

Self-confidence appears to be among the variables which may affect the progress of learners' speaking competence. Thus, the dynamic correlation between self-confidence, pronunciation and speaking achievements has been placed at the heart of research for the present dissertation. Such a puzzling debate is one motive towards conducting the present research work. It strives, then, to raise these problems and resolve some aspects of the current debate for a valuable contribution to the English language teaching profession.

1.2. EARLY STUDIES

In language learning and teaching, many educational psychologists place a heavy emphasis on some personality traits that may influence learning a foreign language. It is often assumed that learning a foreign language may be a distressing experience for individuals. For instance, Stengal (1939), discussed in Arnold and Brown (1999:21), used the term *"language shock"* to describe apprehension experienced by individuals learning a foreign language. Attention was then drawn to psychological

variables such as anxiety, motivation, apprehension, self-confidence and self-esteem within the classroom setting. Self-confidence generally appears to be one of the vital variants that may promote either failure or success in language learning. Thus, teachers need to be aware of their learners' self-confidence when dealing with a task.

The affective dimension of learning is probably one of the most significant variables which may influence language learning success or failure (Oxford, 1996). Successful language learners often appear to be those who know how to control their emotions and attitudes about learning (Naiman, Frohlich, and Todesco, 1975; Wenden, 1987). Negative feelings can stunt learning process and thus, its progress. Conversely, positive emotions and attitudes may facilitate language learning and make it more effective and enjoyable.

Another idea revolves around the "*vicious circle*" of learning problems where self-confidence and anxiety seem to be at the heart of the issue. Cheng *et al.* (1999:437) for instance, attempt to unveil the different elements of anxiety in speaking and writing. They estimate that learners with low level of self-confidence are likely to feel little assurance about their abilities to learn another language; they concluded the study by stating that in order to enhance learners' self-confidence, non-threatening and supportive classroom atmosphere is compulsory.

Nonetheless, it is often reported that EFL learners may feel much anxiety and lack self-confidence in the process of language learning. What seems to be noticeable from a number of studies is that speaking and listening seem to be the greatest source of anxiety among students. This point is made particularly strong by Horwitz (1986).

Therefore, quite a number of researchers and language teachers seem to be aware of the urgent need to boost EFL students' self-confidence, both in terms of their general linguistic abilities and also their oral achievement. It is worth pointing out that self-esteem is one of the primary affective elements (Oxford 1996). It is a self-judgment of worth or value, based on a feeling of efficacy and a sense of interacting effectively with one's own environment. Learners with high self-esteem maintain positive evaluations of themselves (Tesser & Campbell, 1982). Amber (in Tyacke & Mendelsohn, 1986) found that unsuccessful language learners had lower self-esteem than successful language learners.

Similarly, in the search for psychological variables that might characterize "*good language learners*", a significant number of researchers in the 1980s and early 1990s focused on one facet of the primary personality trait "*extraversion*" (Beebe, 1983; Ely 1986, 1988) which could be most relevant to foreign language learning, namely risk-taking. The interest in that particular variable at the time was probably not just a coincidence. A few years earlier, Naiman *et al.* (1978) failed to confirm their hypothesis that good language learners (as defined by their test scores) would be more extraverted. This disappointing finding reverberated through the world of applied linguistics (Dewaele and Furnham, 1999) and reduced the initial enthusiasm about the predictive power of this personality dimension on success in foreign language learning (FLL).

From another intricate level, within the hierarchy of personality traits, a further facet which may have an influence on learners' success in FLL is the degree of risk-taking. There is a *prima facie* evidence that the

extraverts are more inclined to take risks in using the FL in class (Ely, 1986: 3). Besides, extraverts tend to be more optimistic and hence more confident in the pay-off of their risk-taking.

The conclusion drawn from these studies is that whenever learners are called on to perform a task, a number of psychological manifestations come into view. In speaking tasks for example, learners take the risk every time they open their mouths to speak a foreign language. In this context, it is worth quoting *Beebe (1983) (in Seliger and Long 1983: 126)*

> *They (learners) fear looking ridiculous; they fear frustration coming from a listener's blank look, showing that they have failed to communicate; they fear the danger of not being able to communicate and thereby get close to other human beings. Perhaps worst of all, they fear a loss of identity. Given these realities, we must conclude that all second and foreign language learning involves taking risks.*

Beebe's (ibid) point of view links at a large extent language learning and achievement with risk taking. Hence, producing speech in a FL is a gamble and not all learners are equally inclined to face the potential social embarrassment of getting something wrong. As Brown (2001:166) points out: "*Interaction requires the risk of failing to produce intended meaning, of failing to interpret intended meaning, of being laughed at, of being shunned or rejected. The rewards, of course, are great and worth the risks*".

The third studied variable is pronunciation practice. A number of studies demonstrate the effect of classroom pronunciation teaching on learners' language learning progress (Yule & Power, 1994; Elliot, 1995;

Derwing, Munro & Wiebe, 1997, 1998; Derwing & Rossiter, 2003). Some reach the conclusion that pronunciation practice may have positive effects on learners' speaking improvement (Jamieson & Morosan, 1986), Derwing, Munro, & Wiebe, 1997) illustrate that the long-term ESL individuals' pronunciation training and practice may significantly direct learner to achieve *intelligibility*, *accentedness* and *comprehensibility*.

Conversely, some studies attain a more negative effect of pronunciation instruction than positive. Under certain conditions, Suter (1976) conduct a study on non-native speakers of English on pronunciation aspects for the sake of reaching significant relationships between pronunciation accuracy and speaking. Unexpectedly, Suter found a negative correlation when analyzing the pronunciation scores, he concludes his study by stating that the more formal training on pronunciation a speaker had had, the less accurate the pronunciation tended to be.

As a result, the present study is, then, a classroom-oriented experiment, which is based on the assumption that there is a high correlation between pronunciation practice, self-confidence and learners' speaking performance. It attempts to reach the conclusion about whether learners' capabilities are being set in stone or changeable through hard work, classroom involvement and strategic approaches.

1.3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

We are living in an educational world where speaking competence is seen as a necessary positive personal characteristic (Daly, 1991: 7). Global expansion of English has increased this demand to acquire good

communication skills. However, it is often assumed that learners of English frequently express a feeling of stress, nervousness or anxiety while learning to speak English and claim to have a *'mental block'* when speaking (Glenda & Anstey, 1990; Brockner, 1988; Bandura, 1982).

This research is, then, based on Arnold's (2000:3) analysis of what learners face in speaking. He posits:

> *The speaking skill is so central to our thinking about language learning that when we refer to speaking a language we often mean knowing a language.... Many researchers have pointed out that the skill producing most anxiety is speaking (MacIntyre and Gardner 1991).... This anxiety comes in part from a lack of confidence in our general linguistic knowledge but if only this factor were involved, all skills would be affected equally. What distinguishes speaking is the public nature of the skill, the embarrassment suffered from exposing our language imperfections in front of others.*

According to him, among the hurdles to speaking is anxiety which is correlated to the lack of self-confidence in the learners' linguistic aptitude. Acknowledged by a great number of researchers (Tesser & Campbell, 1982; Beebe (1983) in Seliger and Long, 1983; Arnold, 2000), the fear of speaking in public is related to a large extent to the learners' beliefs about themselves, i.e., the more confident learners feel about their competences, the more likely they are to take risks in the learning process and succeed. Thus, students' language learning progress and their self-confidence will gradually increase if teachers reflect on their own teaching and endeavor to support students to attain their goals.

Thus, self-confidence is the variable that attracted the researcher's attention in the present work, and motivated her to link it to EFL learners' speaking achievements and to pronunciation practice. Moreover, another drive towards conducting this study is the remark made by Morley (1991:500) about the changing goal of pronunciation:

The goal of pronunciation has changed from attainment of 'perfect' pronunciation to the more realistic goals of developing functional intelligibility, communicability, increased self-confidence, the development of speech monitoring abilities and modification strategies for use beyond the classroom.

In the same line of thought, Kenworthy (1987) believes that students' personal attitudes and self-confidence are main features in improving English pronunciation. He believes that it is not merely exposure that matters, but also how the students react to the opportunities of listening to English spoken by a native speaker.

Therefore, this research work is an attempt to investigate how learners' self-confidence enhancement through pronunciation practice may influence their speaking achievements.

1.4. THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL APPROACH

Considerable attention has grown within research in second and foreign language learning and teaching during this changing and challenging age of globalisation. This has led to an increasing professional activity and development which is highly reflected in the growing number of books, journals and conferences devoted to issues of research. Our

experiment is based on a *classroom-oriented research* approach, which combines different approaches. For instance, a classroom experiment may be accompanied by rich descriptions of the different instructional interventions or by analysis of classroom discourse twinned with qualitative and quantitative analysis of students' achievements. Combination of these approaches may afford comprehensive results and effective conclusions. As believed by Allwright and Bailey (1991:68): "*increasingly it appears, second language classroom researchers are calling for judicious selection and combined approaches rather than rigid adherence to one approach over another*".

Hence, within a classroom-oriented setting, a number of researchers point out the necessity of a particular methodology that needs to be adopted when conducting this kind of research. In this respect, Johnson (1993) addresses six different approaches, which she claims are not *mutually exclusive*, but interact with one another in experimentation. These six typologies are: *correlational approaches, case studies, survey research, ethnographic research, discourse analysis,* and *experimental research.* This study relies for the most part on an experimental methodology, while integrating statistical, correlational and survey techniques as well.

1.5. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The main objective in writing this thesis has been to demonstrate that individual differences in the affective dimensions of learning are related to some of the core issues in applied linguistics and that they can be significantly coupled with the most important processes underlying foreign language research. Strangely enough, very little is said about the

learners' *self* and the actual processes and mechanisms that are responsible for causing the differences amongst learners (MacIntyre *et al.* (2001), as cited in Brown, 2007).

In view of this, the aims of this research work are to investigate and analyse relationships between self-confidence and pronunciation practice and the effects of this on general speaking competence; to investigate the factors which may influence self-confidence, pronunciation and general speaking ability; to investigate learners' and teachers' perceptions of the factors involved; and to investigate the learning processes associated with pronunciation and general speaking competence. In a clearer picture, the objectives of this research are:

- ❖ To measure correlation between learners' pronunciation, self-confidence and speaking competence.
- ❖ To highlight factors influencing learners' speaking performance based on learners' and teachers' perception.
- ❖ To compare some high- and low-confidence learner groups in terms of their learning goals and the quality of their learning experiences in order to find out if it might be possible to enhance students' speaking competence by modifying certain parameters of our instructional contexts which, perhaps, may trigger our learners' self-confidence.

1.6. RESEARCH QUESTIONS & HYPOTHESES

Therefore, within the context of higher education, the objective of this research is to answer the following general question: What relationships are there between pronunciation practice, EFL learners' self-

confidence and speaking competence? On the basis of this research question, four sub-research questions were formulated as follows:

- ❖ What might be the relationship between self-confidence and EFL learners' speaking competence?
- ❖ What factors (in the perceptions of the learners) influence their speaking ability and their speaking scores?
- ❖ What factors (in the perceptions of the teachers) influence learners' speaking ability and speaking scores?
- ❖ What relationships might exist between pronunciation achievement and EFL learners' self-confidence?

To investigate these questions, the researcher puts forward the following hypotheses:

- ❖ High level of self- confidence may lead to improved speaking abilities, and vice-versa (they are inversely proportional).
- ❖ Psychological problems such as anxiety, lack of self-confidence, worth and negative feedback together with lack of vocabulary may create barriers towards learners' confidence to speak.
- ❖ Negative evaluation, demotivation, afraid from making mistakes may affect the learners' speaking abilities.
- ❖ Improved pronunciation practice may lead to higher self-confidence and this in turn may lead to improved general speaking competence.

1.7. INITIAL LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The major limitations in the present research might be summarised in the following points:

- The study involves a small sample which restricts the generalisability of the findings to larger populations.

- Besides, the results achieved are related to a limited time-span, and may have been different if the study has been conducted earlier or later.

To put it in a nutshell, this research work has advantages and disadvantages like any other experimental research, i.e., greater depth and understanding, then, is needed to further clarify the issue in question. Possible studies based on large samples and statistical testing may help reach the generalisation of the findings.

1.8. ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

To test the above hypotheses, six chapters are devoted to this research work: this first chapter has, in fact, been dedicated to setting the groundwork for the present thesis; it attempts to describe the rationale for this study, its objectives, its research questions and hypotheses; and also it brings into play the limitations and the delimitations of the present thesis.

Being the literature review of this research work, the second chapter discusses some key-concepts used in this work, including pronunciation learning, speaking skills and self-confidence as a psychological variable which may be either a speaking enhancer or a handicap towards learners' academic achievements.

The methodology chapter presents basis for an empirical study in the English Department at Tlemcen University. The researcher selects a

descriptive approach in this chapter which aims primarily at providing *knowledge* (i.e. descriptions and explanations) about the target setting and population. It also portrays the research design and methodology including the instruments used for collecting data including questionnaires, diaries, a semi-structured interview and a test of achievement in speaking.

Based on the description presented in chapter three, chapter four strives to analyse both quantitatively and qualitatively the data obtained, attempting as much as possible to answer the questions set out at the onset of this investigation. The researcher also relies on statistical methods to increase the practicality and reliability of the results.

The fifth chapter suggests a set of techniques used to better learners' pronunciation in EFL classrooms proposing a state-of-the-art methodology related to designing a speaking-lab based course to EFL learners, which gathers pronunciation knowledge, learners' '*self*' and oral capacities. It also endeavours to provide the teacher with innovative ways of assessing the speaking skill in a more relaxing, motivating and non-threatening atmosphere for learning.

The concluding chapter summarises the important findings and discusses the implications, in addition to proposing a number of recommendations and suggestions for further research.

2.1. INTRODUCTION

When looking at the history of foreign language teaching, one could suppose that teachers have been much concerned with the various range of approaches and methods rather than with their content within a context. However, an important issue worth raising in this work, is related to possible relationship between pronunciation, self–confidence and the EFL learners' speaking competence.

It is widely advocated that a high level of proficiency requires from non-native speakers, at least, an intelligible pronunciation from both teachers and learners. Apparently, pronunciation teaching, or what some researchers tend to name *'the forgotten skill'* (Kelly, 1968), may provide a certain amount of confidence which would help learners communicate more freely and effectively and thus, develop their speaking skills.

The purpose of this chapter is manifold: First, to critically select the relevant literature from the non-relevant literature; and second, to search similar previous studies to compare the findings of this study with the findings already achieved by other researchers. In other terms, this chapter presents a critical analysis of the relevant body of literature by shedding light on the key-terms used in this work, such as aspects related to pronunciation teaching and practice, the relationship between pronunciation and the other language skills, emphasising on speaking and its characteristics. Third, it introduces the concept of self-confidence as a psychological variable which may either inhibit the learners' practice and progress, or at other times facilitate the learners' integration and interaction in classroom, i.e., the learners' confidence when speaking.

2.2. A CRITICAL REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

As language teachers, sometimes a feeling comes to our minds that our lesson did not really succeed notwithstanding the careful planning, good preparation and knowledge of the subject. Teachers often ask themselves questions like: "where is the problem?" is it related to the teaching performance? Or is it because of the learners' interests and motivation? Or because of other influencing factors? Answers to these questions might be crucial for a better teaching experience. Hence, a great number of studies strive to find out reasons behind learner's failure since learning a foreign language is believed to be a complex process (Young, 1999) influenced by cognitive and affective factors which result in individual differences (Tallon, 2009).

Recently, factors involving the individuals' self are in vogue in research on applied linguistics and language pedagogy. A number of studies (Gonzalez-Pienda, Nunez, Gonzalez-Pumariega, 2000; Kong, and Hau, 2001; Huitt, 2004 & Khodadad, 2003; El- Anzi's, 2005; Romero, 2006; Hayati and Ostadian, 2008) have shown that a possible correlation may result from connecting learners' self with achievements. To put it differently, affective factors may be considered as one of the vital issues which may determine success in academic performance in general, and learning a language in particular.

Early studies within the same area of research may be displayed in the following table:

Gardner and Lambert,1972 Nogueras & Rosa, 1996; He,1996)	*Motivation, Self-esteem as important factors in successful language learning*
Naiman, Frohlich, and Todesco, 1975	*Emotions and attitudes about learning*
Tesser & Campbell, 1982	Self-esteem and Positive evaluation
Beebe, 1983; Ely 1986, 1988	Risk taking and speaking
Wenden 1986b	Successful language learners
Horwitz (1986	Anxiety and self-confidence in speaking
Hoppe, 1995; Caruso,1997; Shan,1999; Reasoner,2004b)	Positive relation between self-esteem and academic achievement
Clement, Dörnyei and Noels 1994	Self-confidence as a motivational sub-system in FLL
Cheng et. al. (1999)	*anxiety in speaking and writing*
Heyde,1979; Hassan,1992; Truitt,1995; Shumin,1997; Timothy et al., 2001)	self-esteem is strongly associated with oral communicative proficiency
Gardner, 1972; Hutchison,1972; Swartz,1972).	Reading proficiency and self-esteem
Sledd (1993), Koulourianos & Marienau (2001) Pajares, Johnson, (1993).	Self-confidence and Writing competence
Bailey (1993)	Competition and anxiety
Frankburger,1991; Grodnick,1996; Cronwell & Mackay,1999; Hassan, 2001	Self-esteem and writing achievement
Arnold's (2000)	Speaking and self-confidence
Miyagawa, L. (2010).	Self-confidence Vs Self-Esteem
Hayati and Ostadian (2008	Correlation between listening comprehension and learners' self-

	esteem
Molberg, H. (2010). eysook & lee,2003; Gregersen& Horwitz 2002; Cheng,1999).	Correlation between Motivation, Linguistic Self-Confidence and oral performance
Molberg, 2010; Al-Sibai,2005; Gregersen& Horwitz 2002; Brown, 1994).	Confidence and Readiness for participation in class
(Elrafei,2008; Pullmann & Allikk, 2008; Nagar et al., 2008),	Modest or low relation between self-confidence and academic achievement

Table 2.1. Selected Early Studies

Throughout the aforementioned studies, one may conclude that these studies focused mainly on possible relationship between learners' psychological status such as motivation, self-esteem or self-confidence and language skills, namely reading, writing, listening and speaking. Thus, the present study is meant to reinforce the findings of the earlier studies who found that oral tasks may be considered as the most anxiety-provoking and confidence lowering activities in the class. Based on their conclusions, the present research work will attempt to search possible relationship between self-confidence, pronunciation practice and speaking competence, i.e., it problematises how learners' pronunciation abilities may help learners develop confidence to speak competently in front of the whole class or in public with less anxiety. But before setting such a correlation, it sounds wiser to speak about some of the discrepancies in language achievements.

2.3. INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES IN LANGUAGE ACHIEVEMENTS

Individual learner differences appear to likely affect various aspects of language learning in general, and may help determine what practical activities may be optimal for learners' achievements. Individual differences have been researched extensively; making this arena one of the most systematically studied psychological aspects in language research (Dörnyei 2008). The most important result from these investigations was the conclusion that there exist factors which help learners excel within the learning process through the application of individualised learning techniques. In this line of thought, Segalowitz (1997:85) wonders:

> *Why do individuals differ so much in second language attainment success? After all, every healthy human being in an intact social environment masters a first language to a degree of fluency that, in other skill domains, would be recognized as elite or near elite levels...*

Thus, researchers emphasize individual differences from a person to another, merely to the extent that those individualizing traits display permanence over time (De Raad, 2000). With the shift towards more education-friendly and classroom-based approaches to language study, research has taken a new orientation since the 1990s and turned its attention towards more cognitive theories of learners' *self*. Therefore, bringing language learner identity and personality research more into the line with the cognitive revolution in the field of psychology has created the philosophy that shapes learners' psychological engagement while learning. These patterns of thinking may encompass for example, self-perceptions, self-efficacy beliefs, self-esteem, self-worth, and self-confidence (Pintrich and Schunk, 2002).

In view of this, the experimental and theoretical work conducted by Clément (2001) and his colleagues was designed to scrutinize the interrelationship between social contextual variables (including ethnolinguistic vitality, attitudinal/motivational factors, self-confidence, language identity, and L2 acquisition/ acculturation processes (Clément & Gardner, 2001; Dörnyei, 1999, 2001). From this angle, one would recognise that Clément and his associates' attention was turned more towards *self-confidence* as a variable which may be a key-component in language achievements and success.

2.4. SELF-CONFIDENCE IN PSYCHOLOGY

Over the past few years, the approach to the research, theory, and practice of *self-confidence* seems to have generated some interest among psychologists and researchers. Self-confidence from a psychological point of view appears to represent one of the few dimensions of human behaviour which broadens across the whole range of human existence. It has created ample interest for such a long time, much like the topics of personality or identity.

The maintenance and enhancement of self-confidence has always been identified as an essential human impulse. Psychologists have long emphasized the crucial role played by the learners' self-image, motivation, affect, and social interactions. Therefore, self-confidence is widely regarded as a valuable individual variable. For instance, if one takes a bird eye view and dates back to William James work (in Gerald, 2001); one may notice an important strand in psychology which has activated "*believing in oneself*" as a key to personal success. At present, on the other hand, attention is rather drawn towards "*self help*", which purports to

help learners improve and enhance their self-confidence and thus, be more optimistic.

Feelings of self-confidence and self-efficacy are believed to grow from mastery experiences (Bandura, 1986, 1997; Chowdhury *et al.*, 2002). People who feel effective are likely to keep on in the face of failure and achieve greater success because of their unstoppable efforts (Bandura, 1997). Having the sense of confidence about the attainability of goals may generalize a sense of optimism when confronting a challenge. For instance, optimists tend to take a posture of confidence and persistence (even if progress is difficult or slow). Pessimists, on the other side of the coin, seem to be doubtful, hesitant and unconfident. This divergence may even be amplified under conditions of serious adversity.

From another psychological angle, people who have strong confidence in their abilities to perform and manage potentially difficult situations will approach those situations calmly and will not be excessively disrupted by difficulties. Alternatively, people who lack confidence in their own abilities will approach such situations with uneasiness, anxiety and stress in so doing, they reduce the possibility that they will perform efficiently.

2.4.1. The Concept of *Self-Confidence*

Self-confidence is one of the most important factors studied by psychological researchers (Clément, *et.al.*, 1975) to express "*a powerful mediating process in multi-ethnic settings that affects a person's motivation to learn and use the language of the other speech community*" Dörnyei, (2008: 73). A straightforward definition of self-confidence is the amount of

reliance one has about himself, i.e., one's knowledge and one's abilities. Self-confidence seems to be among the first steps to *progress, development, achievement* and *success.* Additionally, self-confidence refers to the belief that a person has the ability to produce results, achieve goals or complete tasks proficiently (Dörnyei, 2008). Accordingly, it is also a building block for success throughout one's career and a key-competency in the self-awareness cluster.

Furthermore, Norman and Hyland (2003) suggest that there are three elements to confidence:

- ❖ *'Cognitive'*, i.e., the person's knowledge of their abilities;
- ❖ *'Performance'*, i.e., the person's ability to do something;
- ❖ *'Emotional'*, i.e., the learners' comfortable feeling about the former two aspects.

Having all this in mind, one may presume that a self-confident person is the one who would like to take further risks, placing himself in unfamiliar situations and examining his capacities in different contexts; in particular, making mistakes do not prohibit him to increase his ability to learn.

One other significant dimension that is worth considering when talking about self-confidence, are the symptoms interconnected with a lower level of confidence. There are two categories; *emotional* and *physical* symptoms. As for the emotional symptoms, they are as follows: apprehension, uneasiness and dread, feeling restless, strong desire to escape, avoidance behaviour, hyper-vigilance, irritability, confusion, impaired concentration or selective attention, self-consciousness and

insecurity, and behavioural problems. The physical symptoms are noticed through racing heartbeat, chest pains, hot flashes or chills, cold and clammy hands, stomach upset, shortness of breath, sweating, dizziness, muscle tension or aches, headaches, fatigue and insomnia (Wiley 2003).

Furthermore, levels of confidence are variable. For instance, a learner may possess the knowledge or skills required to do a specific task; but not be confident to act because of the specific situation or environment in which he is involved. Thus, he could be confident at one level of performance but not at another, such as being confident to write a passage but feeling unconfident about starting a pronunciation learning course (Eldred 2002). Therefore, teachers need to develop both situational and overall confidence.

This is fine in principle, but considering the reality, things turn out to be different. There are general impressions about which learners do and do not seem to have self-confidence as a general personality trait. Yet, one remains unclear about how those learners are coping with different language aspects being learned. However, the learners' over-self-confidence may interfere with the specific learning tasks at hand; just as lack of confidence may prevent some learners from fully exploit what they know.

Accomplishments and attainments will in all probabilities build up the learners' self-confidence even more. It is expected that learners with a certain amount of confidence are offered leadership and other responsibilities within groups. Ample opportunities automatically go to

learners with a high level of self-confidence. In a word, success will be generally attributed to learners with high self-confidence.

Helping learners feel good about themselves by making them believing in their capacities needs to be incorporated within the teaching process. For instance, some learners are good at this and others are good at that, but they need to recognize that they are all gifted in one way or in another. Besides, it is important to acknowledge the extension provided by Clément and his colleagues (Clément, 1980; Clément & Kruidenier, 1985) that self-confidence is a social product which is due to contacts between environments where different language communities exist together without excluding its cognitive components. In this vein, Dörnyei (2008:73) states that:

> *Linguistic self-confidence—derived from the quality and quantity of the contact between the members of the L1 and L2 communities—is a major motivational factor in learning the other community's language, and determines the learners' future desire for intercultural communication and the extent of identification with the L2 group....Linguistic self-confidence in Clément's view is primarily a socially defined construct.*

At first glance, it might seem that despite the fact that identifying key-definitions, noteworthy findings, or leading theories of self-confidence, one still needs further research to identify the most useful and accepted ways of defining such a concept. From a psycho pedagogical stand point, self-confidence is illustrated with research examples about confidence-building; it may be defined as a facet of competence and of worthiness. Self-confidence is not a concept reared in the same abstract discursive

tradition as self-worth or self-value; it is a more complex one. It may be seen as a competence and as worthiness (Rosenberg, 1979; Mruck, 2006).

Self-confidence appears to involve knowing one's own abilities and having enough faith in them to make sound decisions in the face of uncertainty and pressure. It is a belief in one's own abilities to take on a difficult challenge. A confident person displays a powerful *self-presentation* and expresses him- or herself in an influential, remarkable, and unhesitating way (Goleman, 1998). Thus, if confidence is viewed as competence, this depends on two things: an individual's hopes, desires, or aspirations, which are termed "*pretensions*," and his or her ability to realize them, which in turn requires competence (Mruck 2006). Accordingly, studies which converge from educational psychologists tends to focus on behavioural outcomes and the degree of discrepancy between one's "ideal" self and "real" self (Mruck 2006).

When combining confidence with competence, we may deduce a competence-based definition; we also may automatically maintain that it is a certain type of competence, notably in arenas related to individual's developmental history, personality characteristics, values, and so forth. A variety of studies have demonstrated the positive impact of confidence on performance.

Moreover, shaping attitudes about the 'self' seems to be more complex than doing so for anything else. It seems that a person's evaluation or judgment of his own "worth" plays an important role in bringing the notion of values into play. Therefore, the domain of behaviour

matters to an individual's self- worth, as recognised by Rosenberg (1979:30-31):

> *The individual simply feels that he is a person of worth; he respects himself for what he is, but he does not stand in awe of himself nor does he expect others to stand in awe of him. He does not necessarily consider himself superior to others.*

At some point, seeing self-confidence in terms of worthiness involves dealing with the issues associated with attitudes, self-image, self-representation and self-concept. Therefore, this vision may yield at least to one tangible power: viewing self-confidence in terms of an attitude may mean that it can be measured.

2.4.1.1. Self-Confidence Vs Self-Esteem

It seems to be wiser to be aware of the importance of self-confidence and self-esteem in order to set up clear differences between the two concepts. Dörnyei (2005:87) for example draws the attention towards the significance of the two notions: "*self-esteem and self-confidence are like the foundations of a building: if they are not secure enough, even the best technology will be insufficient to build solid walls over them*". Moreover, Branden (1969:110) offers such a distinction by putting self-esteem as a general term that covers both self-confidence and self-respect, he posits: "*Self-esteem has two interrelated aspects: it entails a sense of personal*

efficacy and a sense of personal worth. It is the integrated sum of self-confidence and self-respect".

On his part, Dörnyei (2008:211) establishes a fine relationship between the two concepts. He presumes the fact that *"self-esteem is closely related to the notion of self-confidence, which has a vigorous research tradition in applied linguistics and which, therefore, may have diverted scholars from the study of self-esteem".* Undeniably, both self-esteem and self-confidence unveil a common prominence on the *"individual's beliefs about his or her attributes and abilities as a person, and various measures of self-esteem and self-confidence/ efficacy have been found to correlate with each other highly"* (ibid).

In a more or less clear picture, and in order to better understand the notion of confidence, one needs to consider common misconceptions between confidence and self esteem. The two notions are related and yet are not the same. Confidence, on the one hand, is about how effective a person feels about himself in a *given situation* or when dealing with a *specific task.* Self-esteem, on the other hand, is about how much a person likes himself and how worthy he feels about himself. For instance, a learner can feel good about himself (high self-esteem) while not feeling positive about his skills in a certain area (confidence).

Besides, Dörnyei (2005: 211) believes that the notion of self-confidence is strongly related to self-esteem in sharing common emphasis on the individual's perception of his or her abilities as a person. Glenda & Anstey (1990) clarify further that many researchers used the terms self-

confidence, self-esteem, self worth self evaluation, and self satisfaction interchangeably.

2.4.1.2. Confidence Strategies

Students' confidence in language learning is one of the most significant factors which drive or inspire them to reach their goals. Confidence strategies may help students develop positive expectations and attitudes for successful achievement in language learning. In this context, Keller (as cited in Aik & Tway, 2006: 31) has developed a model which identifies four kinds of strategy known as the ARCS model (Attention, Relevance, Confidence and Satisfaction). This was summarized and discussed by Small (as cited in Aik & Tway, 2006: 31) to comprise a confidence strategy which:

- Informs the learner about the learning and performance requirements and assessment criteria.
- Provides challenging and meaningful opportunities for successful learning.
- Links the learning success to personal responsibility, for example by providing positive feedback to the learner about his /her efforts to learn.

On his part, Saetan (1991:8) identifies the characteristics of self-confident learners as likely to choose ways to self-check their learning outcome whereas others require someone to check their understanding of language learning.

2.5. SELF-CONFIDENCE and LANGUAGE LEARNING

In language learning and teaching, many educational psychologists place a heavy emphasis on some personality traits that may influence learning a foreign language. From a motivational perspective, the most important factor studied by the Canadian social-psychologists Gardner and Lambert was *self-confidence*, which was introduced by Richard Clément who added this motivational subsystem to Gardner's motivation model (Clément, 1994; Gardner, 2001; and Dörnyei, 1999). The concept of *linguistic self-confidence*, in general, is a vital variant that promote either failure or success in language learning. It is often argued that language learning entails much more than acquiring a body of knowledge and developing a set of skills, it is fairly crucial to consider the "self" of the learners and thus, their psychological state to overcome their difficulties in language achievements.

Noels (1994), in his part, expands the applicability of the concept of self-confidence by demonstrating that it is also a crucial motivational subsystem in foreign language learning situations where there is little direct contact with the target language members. Thus, EFL teachers need to be aware of their learners' affective domain when dealing with a task.

Discussing the affective factors unambiguously may help us explain the fact that there is a general consensus among researchers that it represents the emotional side of human behaviour, and it is a vital factor in the learner's ability to overcome setbacks or mistakes that may take place in the learning process. Affective factors denote a very important impact on students' outcome. For this reason, it is important to

understand students' feelings and know more about these factors. Many studies were conducted to examine factors that may affect EFL learners' performance; indeed, there are manifold psychological factors that most pervasively obstruct the learning process.

For instance, Krashen (1981) believes that self-confidence appears to be a central aspect of the '*affective filter*' which is defined as a psychological factor which filtrates the amount of language received by learners' brain. This filter may enable learners encourage intake, or valuable input. Thus, the affective filter hypothesis represents Krashen's (ibid) view that a number of 'affective variables' play a "*facilitative, but non-causal, role in second language acquisition*". Krashen (ibid) assumes that well motivated, self-confident and positive learners are more successful language learners. On the other side of the corner, demotivated, anxious and low self-confident learners can help raising the affective filter and create a '*mental block*' which impedes comprehensible input from taking place.

When affective factors are explicitly discussed, there seems to be a general agreement among psychologists that the notion of self-confidence may be considered as a key-factor in the learners' ability to overcome their language setbacks; it is normally assumed to have an influence on successful language learning. In this respect, Krashen (1981: 75) claims that: "*Not surprisingly, nearly all the available literature suggests that self-confidence is very much related to second language development…, the self-confident, secure person is a more successful language learner*".

Nonetheless, one should be aware that the lack of self-confidence may be an inhibiting factor for learners and this idea is shared by Naiman *et al* (1978) who believe that poor learners, in all probabilities lack self-confidence. Moreover, the higher anxiety learners experience, the lower scores they get, the less confident learners become. On the contrary, the more confident learners feel the higher scores they get. The more confident a learner feels, the less anxiety he experiences in learning as well.

2.5.1. Affective Filters in Language Learning

Krashen's affective filter, mentioned earlier, consisting of the variables of anxiety, motivation, and self-confidence seems to strongly enhance or inhibit second language acquisition by playing a critical mediating role between the linguistic input available in the educational setting and the students' ability to learn. He (1981:75) gathers them as following:

> *Self confident people have the advantage of not fearing rejection as much as those with high anxiety levels and are therefore more likely to put themselves in learning situations and do so repeatedly...[they] are less hampered by the conscious operation of the monitor because they are not so worried about how they appear.*

Thus, it appears essential to have a look on anxiety, motivation and self esteem as significant affective filters.

2.5.1.1. Anxiety

Like any other affective factors, anxiety is not easy to define, it is has been in the limelight of language research for decades. It is associated with "*feelings of uneasiness, frustration, self-doubt, apprehension or worry*" (Scovel, qtd. in Brown, 2000:151). Anxiety seems to be recognised as one of the most highly examined variables in psychological research (Horwitz, 2001: 113).

Psychologists like MacIntyre and Gardner (1991: 87-92) establish three approaches to study anxiety: *trait anxiety, state anxiety,* and *situation-specific anxiety.*

- *Trait Anxiety* is rather steady personality quality, it is "*an individual's likelihood of becoming anxious in any situation*" (Spielberger, 1983, qtd. in MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991: 87).
- S*tate Anxiety* is a temporary anxiety, a response to a particular anxiety-provoking stimulus such as an important test (Horwitz, 2001: 113).
- *Situation-Specific Anxiety,* refers to the constant and multi-faceted nature of some anxieties (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991a: qtd. in Horwitz, 2001: 113). It is aroused by a specific type of situation or event such as public speaking, examinations, or class participation (Ellis, 1994: 480).

In this context, Gardner and MacIntyre (1999: 3) concluded: "*The results of these studies of language anxiety suggest that anxious students will have lower levels of verbal production ... and will be reluctant to express personally relevant information in a second-language conversation*".

2.5.1.2. Motivation

There seems to be a considerable amount of research on motivation within the learning process. It is one of the variables which have a strong impact on student's success or failure. The theory of the Canadian psychologists Gardner and Lambert (1972) was one of the most dominant motivation theories of the L2 field for more than three decades. Certainly, the role of others in developing motivation is central to teaching and education, in this fashion, Scheidecker and Freeman (1999:116) believe that "*Motivation is, without question, the most complex and challenging issue facing teachers today*". Motivation is an inner drive or emotions that move people to particular actions (Brown, 2000). Without ample opportunities for motivation, even individuals with outstanding abilities cannot accomplish long-term goals, this is what Dörnyei (2008:65) deduces about motivation:

> *It provides the primary impetus to initiate L2 learning and later the driving force to sustain the long and often tedious learning process; indeed, all the other factors involved in SLA presuppose motivation to some extent.*

From another layer of analysis, motivation is affected by many factors as mentioned by Danis (1993:3) "*…interest in the subject matter, perception of its usefulness, general desire to achieve, self-confidence, self-esteem as well as patience and persistence*". As a result, teachers need to be aware of their own possible prejudices with regard to individual differences and psychological variables to help their learners develop the feelings about themselves and be more positive.

2.5.1.3. Self-esteem

Self-esteem is an umbrella term which covers other basic characteristics and traits. Branden (2001:252) defines it as *"the experience of being competent to cope with the basic challenges of life and being worthy of happiness. It consists of self-efficacy....and self-respect"*. As any psychological facet, self-esteem has multi-dimensions which are according to Brown (2000: 145): *global, situational* and *task self-esteem.*

- *Global Self-esteem:* represents general assessment a person makes about himself,
- S*ituational Self-esteem*, on the other hand, refers to abilities in specific situation such as foreign language context.
- T*ask Self-esteem:* relates to particular tasks within situations, for instance, within the educational domain, task self-esteem might refer to one subject matter.

In a more comprehensive fashion, Lawrence (2006:6) puts them as follows: *"g*lobal self-esteem refers to an all-round feeling of self-worth and confidence. Specific self-esteem refers to a feeling of self-worth and confidence with regard to a specific activity or behavior"*. What is more, self-esteem contributes to learners' failure or success, as put by Brown (1977: 352): *"A person with high self-esteem is able to reach out beyond himself more freely, to be less inhibited, and because of his ego strength, to make the necessary mistakes involved in language learning with less threat to his ego"*.

In the present research, the researcher duplicates this division on self-confidence to ease the task of measuring learners' degree of confidence regarding speaking skills. In this respect, and in a personal communication with Dörnyei (2011), he states that "*whatever the concept on which you build success in language learning, it can be global, situational and geared towards task*". (Dörnyei, Zoltan. Message to the author. 13 Oct. 2011. E-mail). Therefore, self-confidence displays also a multidimensional facet assembling global, situational and task self-confidence.

Accordingly, global self-confidence might be put as test global self-esteem, i.e., general feelings about oneself, situational self-confidence might be specific feelings at specific situations (learning English for instance), and task self-confidence might be one's skills and competence when doing tasks (confidence in speaking).

All the above was, in fact, an attempt to lay down the foundation of the issues of learners' self and its development. This research is but an attempt to find out the relationship between learners' self-confidence, pronunciation practice and speaking achievement.

2.5.2. Measuring Learners' Self-Confidence

> *No area of psychological research is currently more popular or more confused than that having to do with the measurement of the self-concept.*
>
> *(Combs et al., 1963, qtd. In Lawrence (2006: 53)*

That was years ago; however, the current situation did not really have a significant change. As all life skills strategies have evolved, new and different forms of qualified learning have been created, capturing wider ranges of learning, particularly in relation to the psychology of learners, i.e., special attention is drawn towards the 'learners' *self'*. Research on language revealed the belief that progress is made only when it is evaluated and criticised; still, there are difficulties to measure learning from a psychological view point. Responding to the question about what indicates success in learning, involves both learners and teachers measurement of confidence.

There is, a wealth of empirical evidence showing that self-confidence affect academic performance as part of general effect behaviour. (Fook et al.,2011; Aryana, 2010; Harris, 2009; Eldred et al., 2004; Lockett & Harrell, Schmidt & padilla,2003; Walter,2003 ;Bankston & Zhou, 2002 ; Lawrence,1996; Brown,1994).

The goal of confidence measurement is to accurately measure learners' true knowledge. A number of scoring schemes have been suggested in an attempt to account for this and reflect particular information about the '*self'* of learners. Among these studies, a number of proposed scales and surveys seek for differences between learners, and involves testing and measuring learners through samples, or assessing in relation to other variables, especially clinical or academic ones.

The dynamic nature of self-confidence leads to challenging measuring issues with which test designers need to consider. It should be recalled that self-confidence is a phenomenon that may be seen as being

global, task or situational in nature because human in general, and learners in particular carry out a certain basic level of self-confidence most of the time depending on the situation. The simplest example of how this factor affects a testing situation is when the subject has experienced a recent loss, gain, failure, or success, any of which can affect his self-confidence test scores. Unfortunately, many self-confidence tests are too general and seem to fail to tell us about the particular situations or specific areas of life that are important for an individual's self-confidence enhancement.

In contrast, like any psychological test, the most important problem that may face researchers is that they are subjective in drawing conclusions about the person, since they are related to individuals reporting their own experience, behaviour, or characteristics. The problem lies in the responses, due to the fact that even the most well-meaning subjects are going to be filtered by manifold factors which usually involve characters such as the self-perception, anxiety, anger, doubt, or mental illness.

Moreover, researchers and theoreticians grapple with the fact that there is considerable methodological diversity in the psychology of self-confidence. For instance, one way of understanding such methodological divergence in the social sciences is to organize it in terms of increasing degrees of objectivity (measurability), which may result in all probabilities in a kind of pyramid, as shown in Figure 2.1. by Christopher (2006: 42).
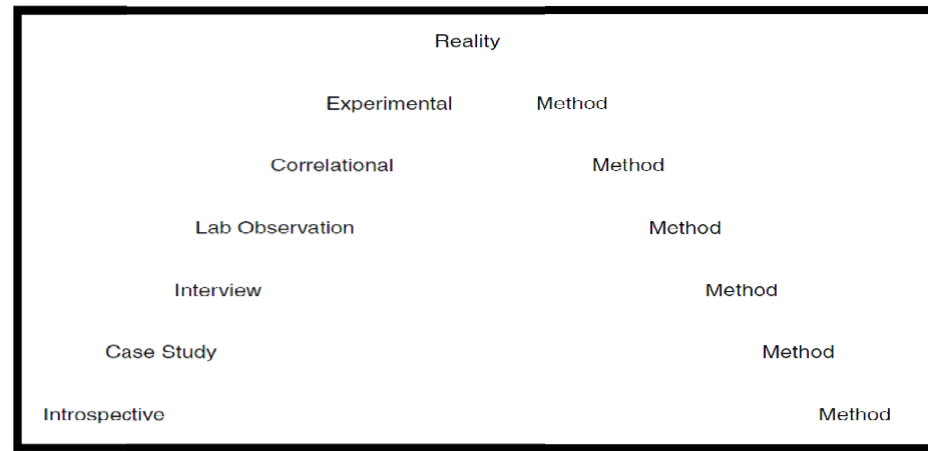
Figure 2.1. Confidence Theoretical Methodologies

Throughout this pyramid, various methods were used for searching self-confidence in terms of the strengths and weaknesses. The next adopted table from Christopher (2006) examines the range of methods from a different, more revealing angle:

Method	Strengths	Limitations
Introspective	It depends on the individual's perception about his\her own experience. Although introspection is at the bottom of the pyramid, it is not without value, at least as a source of insight.	It is vulnerable to problems with reliability and validity
Case Study	it allows us to investigate problems with the 'self' when looking at individual lives. Help establish the relationship between self-confidence and psychological functioning by comparing individuals and noting regularities or variations from regular patterns.	Although studying several cases can expand the subject base, such work is time consuming and results in a number that is too small to generalize. Also, the data generated and the procedures for analysis are not often amenable to

		duplication.
Interview	Structuring the interview in advance helps to make it more reliable, and an interview can be recorded and transcribed so that others have access to the data, which reduces some subjectivity.	Sample sizes are still relatively small and establishing cause and-effect relationships is another matter: Although a hypothesis can be formed, confirmation is difficult. Time that is involved in conducting interviews can place additional burdens on valuable resources.
Lab Observation	This method is limited in terms of its ability to tell us about cause and effect or why something happens, but it does offer the important advantage of offering more concrete information than previous approaches provide.	Because it is not possible to see self-confidence directly, laboratory-based observational methods are not used often in researching self-confidence.
Correlational	Surveys and tests are an especially attractive way to study self-confidence because once an assessment instrument has been developed; it can be used to establish correlations in many types of situations. The use such measures to assess an individual's self-confidence, in relation to their behaviour, performance, grades, or even personality. We can also set up pre- and post-testing situations for measuring.	Unfortunately, this approach is difficult to implement because, developing good self confidence measures means facing some serious research problems.

Experimental	According to Wells and Marwell (1976), there are two basic types of experiments used to research self and both of them usually involve some pre- and post-test measures. The most straightforward format is to set up an experiment so that subjects are engaged in an activity; the outcome of which they believe depends on their efforts. The experimental situation helps the researcher observe or measure changes in behaviour that may be linked to self-confidence and exciting.	However, it is actually the experimenter who controls the results, meaning that success and failure can be manipulated so that their effects on self-confidence can be observed especially when it comes to trying to demonstrate the link between self-confidence and behaviour.

Table 2.2. Methodologies Regarding Self-Confidence Measurement

2.6. SPEAKING SKILLS IN EFL CLASSROOMS

Speaking has often been called the neglected strand since compared with the reading and writing strands; it is the most easily cast aside. Therefore, it is frequently claimed that oral skills have hardly been forgotten in EFL courses though there is a great deal of focus on the speaking methodological debate. (National Association for the Teaching of English, 2002).

Seeking for an appropriate definition to speaking skills is, in fact a challenging task, because of its diverse dimensions, it is defined, for instance, as "*an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing and receiving and processing information...often spontaneous, open-ended, and evolving*" (Florez, 1999:1).

On a more significant level, the mastery of the speaking skills seems to be a priority for many language learners. Consequently, a great number of researchers evaluate learners' success with regard to their effectiveness as far as their spoken language proficiency is concerned (Harmer, 2001; Richards, 1990). For instance, Nunan (1991:39) states:

> *To most people, mastering the art of speaking is the single most important factor of learning a second or foreign language and success is measured in terms of the ability to carry out a conversation in the language.*

It is to mention that from the communicative point of view, speaking has manifold aspects, comprising two main classes, namely; *accuracy* and *fluency*. Accuracy entails the right use of grammar rules, vocabulary, and pronunciation; and *fluency*, which is *'the ability to keep going when speaking spontaneously'*. Gower *at al.* (1995: 99-100).

Theories of speaking are at variance, for instance, Bygate (1987: 3) conceives that in order to achieve a communicative goal through speaking; there are two facets to take into account; knowledge of the language, and skill in using this knowledge. He assumes that it seems insufficient to possess a certain amount of information, without being able to use it in different situations, i.e., being able to settle on what to say on the spot, clearly and flexibly during a conversation, he (ibid) posits that:

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

To further narrow his point of view, Bygate views the skill as comprising two components: *production skills* and *interaction skills*; the following table goes over the explanation afforded for a better understanding:

Production Skills	Interactive Skills
Speakers use devices which help them make the oral production possible or easier through 'facilitation', or enable them to change words they use in order to avoid or replace the difficult ones by means of 'compensation'	Besides being good at processing spoken words, speakers should be 'good communicators', which means *'good at saying what they want to say in a way which the listener finds understandable'*. Communication of meaning then depends on two kinds of skill: routines, and negotiation skills.

Table 2.3. Speaking Skills (adopted from Bygate' Theory)

One would argue that mastering speaking skills in English represents a priority for many foreign-language researchers. Consequently, success in language learning as well as the effectiveness of English course is often evaluated on the basis of how much learners feel

about their spoken language proficiency. Thus, it appears fundamental to be familiar with the various speaking methodologies throughout language teaching profession.

2.6.1. A Framework for Teaching Methodology in Speaking

A great number of language-teaching methods have been used to teach speaking; these methods have dominated language teaching at a large extent. This section reviews a set of methods, focusing specifically on how the method treats the speaking skills.

The main principle of *grammar-translation method* was that students are trained to examine grammar and to translate it from one language to another in addition to reading the literature of a particular culture. In this sense, Bailey (2006:130) believes that this method:

> *does not prepare students to speak English, so it is not appropriate for non academic adult ESOL students who want to improve their speaking skills. The method is not consistent with the goals of increasing fluency, oral production, or communicative competence of adult ESOL learners.*

The grammar-translation method does not train students to speak English; therefore, it appears irrelevant for learners whose goal is to improve their speaking skills. The method is not reliable when the goals set are to increase learners' fluency, speaking production, or communicative abilities of learners. In fact, this method has *"developed 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 second language mutism"* Hammerly, (1991:1). Besides, in

grammar-translation lessons, speaking consists largely of reading translations aloud or doing grammar exercises orally. In so doing, there are few opportunities for expressing original thoughts or personal needs and feelings in English.

Unlike the grammar translation method, the *Direct Method* emphasized on "*everyday vocabulary and sentences*" (Richards and Rodgers (1986: 9). Teaching points were introduced orally in which questions and answers were exchanged between teachers and students" (Richards and Rodgers,1986).

In the *Audiolingual Method*, speaking skills are taught based on drills, repetition of sentences and recite dialogues. In this sense, Shrum and Glisan (2000: 26) describe the techniques used in this method as: "*repeating after the teacher, reciting a memorized dialogue, or responding to a mechanical drill*". The most attractive feature of this method was drills which are designed mainly to introduce students with the sounds and structures of the target language. The theory behind this method was that students learn to speak by practising automatically grammatical structures; this will lead them to be able to engage in conversation as put by Bygate (2001: 15):

> *Teaching oral language was thought to require no more than engineering the repeated oral production of structures . . . concentrating on the development of grammatical and phonological accuracy combined with fluency.*

n contrast, the *Behaviourist Movement* is based on the assumption that in order to help learners form good habits, language lessons necessitate involving regular repetition and correction (Bailey, 2006). Teachers, at this level, correct *in situ* spoken errors quickly in order to prevent students from forming bad habits; for the reason that it is believed that "*if errors are left untreated, both the speaker and the other students in class might internalize those erroneous forms*" Bailey (2006:131).

Moreover, the language laboratory is the central technological component of this method; students are supposed not only to attend classroom lessons and doing homework, but also to spend time in the lab, listening to audiotapes. Nevertheless, when learners practise speaking in the lab, there seem to be no opportunity for constructing their ideas in English or expressing their own intended meaning. This tightly controlled practice does not necessarily prepare learners for the spontaneous, fluid interaction which occurs outside the classroom. As a result, audiolingualism rapidly lost its popularity because of the disappointing results obtained from classroom practice and the strong theoretical arguments that were advanced against it, which state that it "*did not lead to fluent and effective communication in real-life situations*" Ellis (1990:30).

This dissatisfaction with the audiolingual method, led professionals to reconsider some long-standing beliefs about how people learn a foreign language; consequently, communicative language teaching arose. *Communicative language teaching method*, predominantly moved from high beginner to more advanced levels; featuring more interaction-based activities, such as *role-plays* and *information gap tasks* (activities in which learners are required to use English to convey information known to them but not to their classmates) (Bailey). Furthermore, curricular choices,

such as task-based and project-based activities (Moss & Van Duzer, 1998), may endorse interaction; pair work and group work are also typically encouraged. In this method, teachers often downplay accuracy and emphasize students' ability to convey their messages (Hammerly, 1991).

With the growing demands of this digital age, school of thoughts have come and go to satisfy current needs, thus, language teaching profession has been subject to serious changes. *Competency-Based Approach* was one of the challenging shifts in language education. It is represented by Belmekki (2008:54) as:

> *Shifting from a knowledge-oriented education-essentially focusing on the question of what needs to be taught and learned in terms of concepts and conceptual structures, to a competency-based education relying on questions of why something has to be learned and how it can be used in solving a complex problem.*

Reflecting this approach on speaking skill, the aim to attain is to help learners develop their knowledge and skills to be able to recognise and solve complex language problems, i.e., having the ability and "know-how" skill to communicate effectively, consciously and with responsibility towards the learning process and progress. In this sense, Belmekki (ibid:55) states that within this approach, a learner is in charge of: "*understanding what he is doing, and how he is doing it will probably increase in him a sense of self-confidence that often reduces his high level of anxiety*".

2.6.2. The Units of Spoken English

Speaking appears to be among the most necessary human skills; therefore, it requires careful attention among researchers and educationalists. van Lier (1995: 15) deduces four levels of analysis regarding speaking units; he establishes a pyramid where he starts with discourse at the bottom of the pyramid, and syntax, morphology and phonology at the top, as it is demonstrated below:
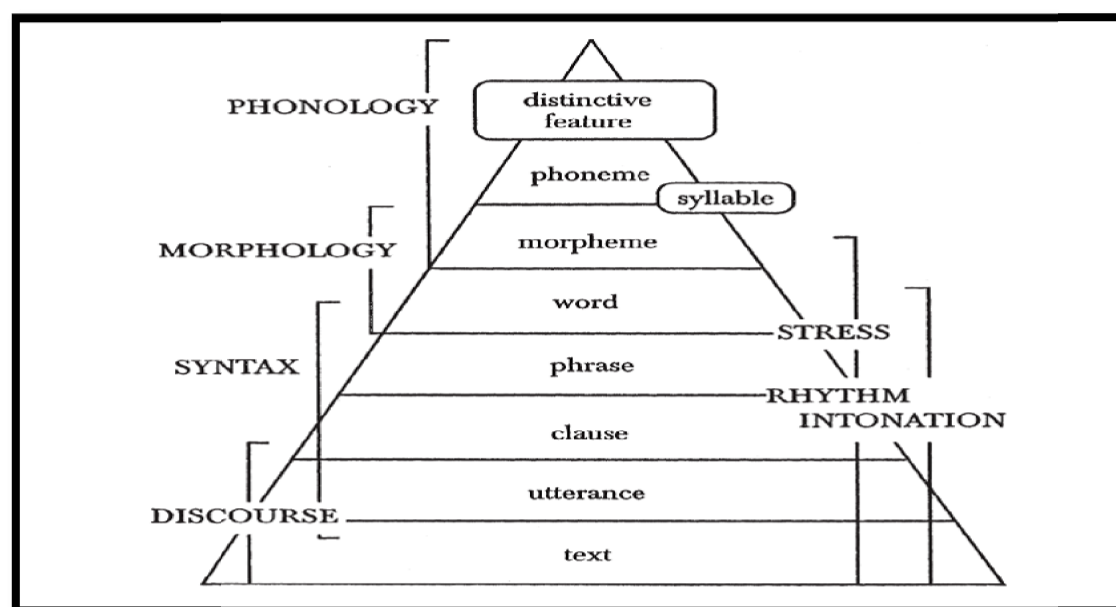
Figure2.2. Units of Spoken Language (van Lier, 1995).

Within discourse, *text* operates as a base (either spoken or written), which refers here to an infinite number of spoken sentences. Spoken texts consist of *utterances,* i.e., what someone utters; it may not always comprise a full sentence. Then the *clause* which is two or more words containing a verb and a subject. Quite the reverse, a *phrase* is two or more words which operate as a part but without a subject or a verb. At

this level, it comes the turn for the *word,* which is a single unit of language which carries a meaning. From the word, the *morpheme* is derived, which is the smallest unit of language that has its own meaning, either a word or a part of a word (free morphemes and bound morphemes). On the other hand, the *phoneme* exists within the syllable, which is a sound (either consonant or vowel) in a specific language capable of changing the meaning of the word. In due course, the last level refers to *distinctive features* which mean features which generally function to signal phonological contrasts, such as the contrast between voiced and voiceless phonemes and the like.

Strangely enough, van Lier (1995) assumes that it is not necessary for learners to have meta-linguistic awareness of these components in order to use them effectively; it is the role of the teacher to understand fully these interrelated components in order to help his/her EFL learners improve their speaking skills. To further narrow the scope, it seems crucial for teachers to be aware of the fact that within any other language learning process, a three-circle procedure is used starting from input to processing to output stage. This may be put as follows:
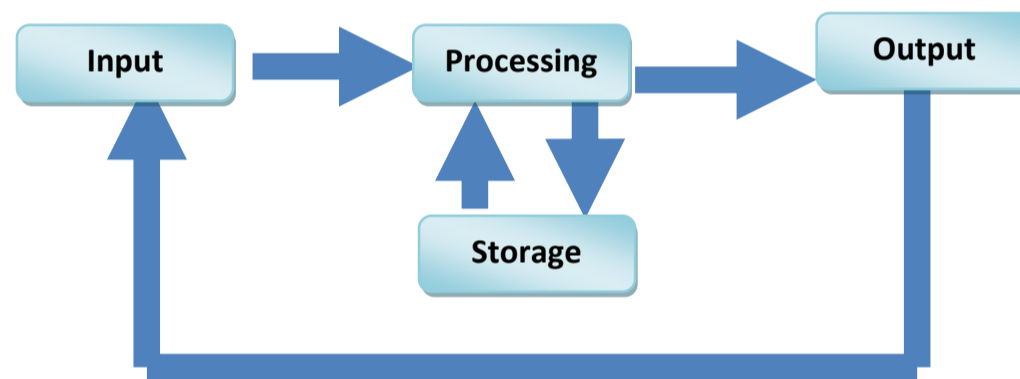
Figure 2.3. Language Learning Process

Let us reflect this process upon self-confidence and speaking. Within the speaking process, anxiety, lack of self-confidence and other psychological variables have been hypothesized to occur at all the three stages of language learning aforementioned, but before moving deeper, it seems imperative to define each process to make more or less the picture clear and complete:

Process	Description
Input	The first language learning stage, it activates Language Acquisition Device' (LAD) which is according to Chomsky an innate language-specific module in the brain (cited in Lightbown & Spada, 2006: 38), which carries out the further process of language learning.
Processing	Psychologists believe that learners have to process information and to 'pay attention' to produce any linguistic aspect by using cognitive sources. For instance, speaking requires more than one mental activity at one time like "choosing words, pronouncing them, and stringing them together with the appropriate grammatical markers", etc. Lightbown and Spada (2006: 39).
Output	It entirely depends upon the successful completion of the previous stages: *input, and processing,* i.e., learners' performance. For instance ManIntyre and Gardner assert, "High level of anxiety at this stage might hinder students' ability to speak... in the target language" (1994b, cited in: Onwuegbuzie et al 2000: 475).

Table 2.4. Stages of Language Learning

Bearing this in mind, teachers need to consider that before, while and during speaking, learners encounter psychological and linguistic difficulties and obstacles at the three stages before performing a speaking activity, i.e., it is not just the outcome which is concerned with lack of self-confidence and anxiety, but even the very first stages of the speaking task.

2.6.3. The Notion of *Speaking Competence*

Speaking seems to be an interactive process of constructing meaning which involves producing, receiving and processing information (Brown, 1994; Burn & Joyce, 1997). Learning to speak a foreign language requires more than knowing its grammar and semantic rules, the context also plays a crucial role in determining speaking form and structures (Shumin, 2002). He (ibid, 2002:204) states that:

In order to provide effective guidance in developing competent speakers of English, it is necessary to examine the factors affecting adult learners' oral communication, components underlying speaking proficiency, and specific skills and strategies used in communication.

Guidance may include the speakers themselves, their knowledge and experiences, the physical environment, and the purposes for speaking, i.e., competence in speaking may be defined as the capacity to communicate orally in clear, coherent, and persuasive language; suitable to purpose, occasion, and audience. This is well explained by Quianthy (1990): *"in order to be a COMPETENT SPEAKER, a person must be able to compose a message and provide ideas and information suitable to the topic, purpose, and audience".*

Speaking competence necessitates from learners to have the ability not only to know how to produce language skills such as grammar, vocabulary or pronunciation, but also recognize when, why and in what

way to produce the language. Furthermore, effective oral communication involves generating messages and delivering them with attention to vocal variety, articulation, and nonverbal signals. It is crucial, at this level, to be familiar with the basic speaking sub skills, like fluency and accuracy.

Usually, a distinction is made between fluency and accuracy. This distinction seems to be difficult to maintain. For instance, fluent speakers can express themselves accurately without hesitation, and accurate speakers do not make mistakes in grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. In the same viewpoint, Nation and Newton (2009:152) distinguish between the two terms as follows: *"fluency is typically measured by the speed of access of production and by the number of hesitations; accuracy by the amount of errors; and complexity by the presence of more complicated constructions".*

In the present study, an attempt is held to achieve EFL learners' speaking competence embracing a range of competencies; as language proficiency is not unidirectional construct but rather multifaceted modality (Shumin, 2002). Hymes (1971) believes that learners need more than linguistic knowledge but further, culturally accepted and interactive ways when communicating. His communicative competence theory encloses interaction between grammatical, psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic knowledge. Based on his theory, Canale & Swain (1980) proposed additional competences like discourse and strategic competences including the use of language in its functional aspect of communication.

Reflecting these elements on speaking competence, English learners need to use and understand English structures accurately and confidently which leads to their fluency (Shumin, 2002). Besides, competent speakers need to have a discourse competence, i.e., knowledge about discourse markers and a large repertoire of structures to express their ideas so that they can manage turn-taking conversation (Scarcella & Oxford, 1992).

Sociolinguistic Competence in speaking refers to ability to acquire, and thus use, the rules and norms governing appropriate timing and realisation of speech acts (Shumin, 2002). Moreover, before speaking, a competent speaker needs to be aware of when and how to keep a conversation going and how to end it; what to do to avoid communication breakdowns, in addition to comprehension problems (Shumin, 2002). Speaking also requires interaction; within the classroom, the give-and-take exchanges of speech may offer good practice and may help learners better improve their speaking ability. Furthermore, pronunciation intelligibility is also desired when speaking to reach comprehensibility and effectiveness, which may develop learners' self-confidence to take the risk of speaking. These competencies may vary from very basic levels to professional ones; and it is up to the teacher and learner to further enhance these abilities to speak confidently and intelligibly. The following proposed diagram might be adopted as our conception to speaking competence:
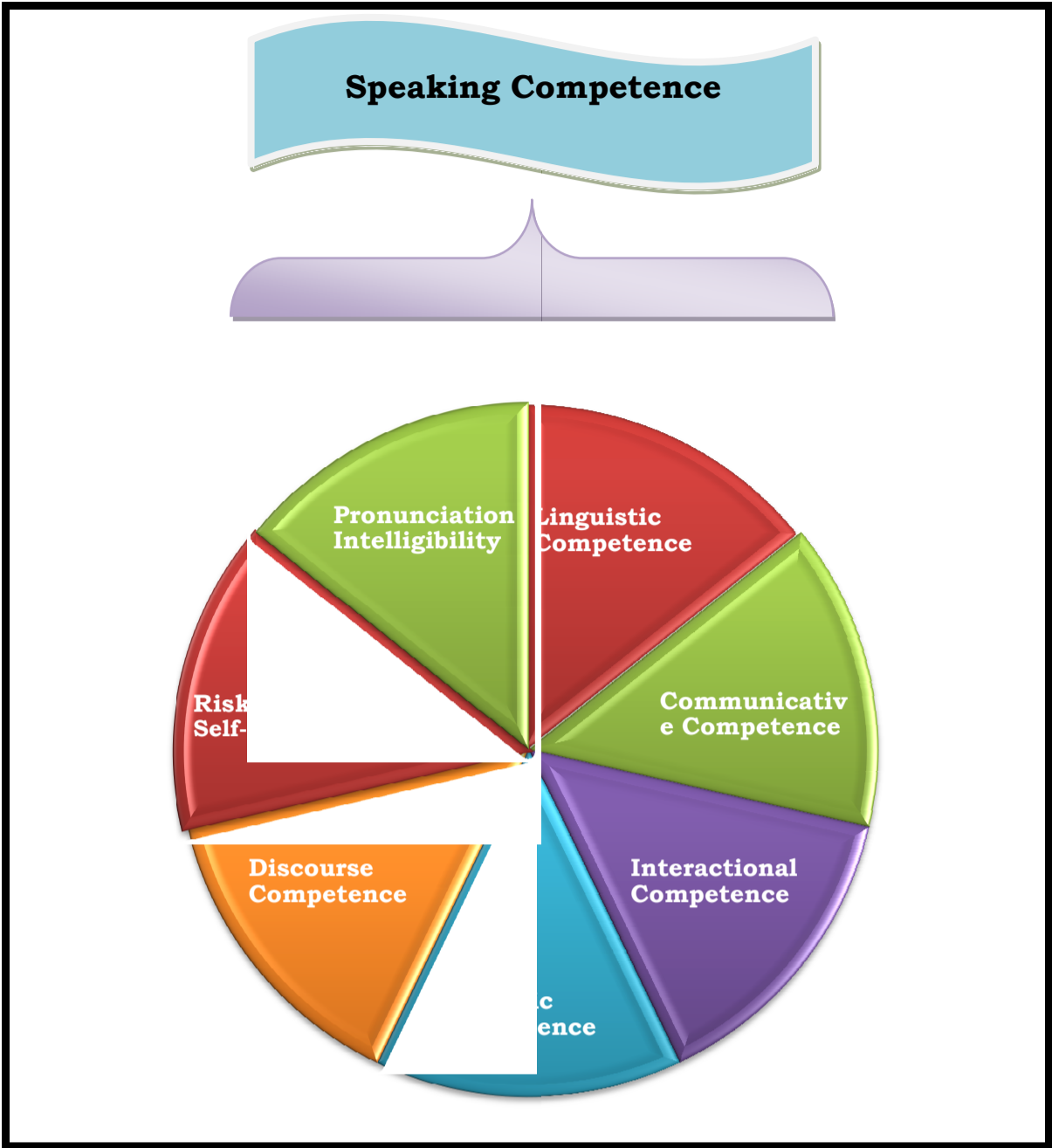
Diagram 2.1. Speaking Competence

2.6.3.1. Speaking as Risk Taking Situation

It has been long assumed that language learning involves risk-taking situations; whenever learners are called on to perform task, a number of psychological manifestations come into view. This is may be because learners:

> *fear looking ridiculous; they fear frustration coming from a listener's blank look, showing that they have failed to communicate; they fear the danger of not being able to communicate and thereby get close to other human beings. Perhaps worst of all, they fear a loss of identity. Given these realities, we must conclude that all second and foreign language learning involves taking risks.* (Beebe 1983, in Seliger and Long 1983: 126)

In a more specific context, if we take speaking tasks as an example, learners take the risk every time they open their mouths to speak a foreign language. In this sense, Beebe (1993:40) states that:

> *Learning to speak a second or foreign language involves taking the risk of being wrong, with all its ramifications. In the classroom, these ramifications might include a bad grade in the course, a fail on the exam, a reproach from the teacher, a smirk from a classmate or punishment or embarrassment imposed on oneself.*

Prior to move further discussing such a connection, it seems wiser to define risk-taking. It is "a *situation where an individual has to make a decision involving choice between alternatives of different desirability; the outcome of the choice is uncertain, there is a possibility of failure*" (Beebe 1993:39). The two leading researchers of risk-taking are Kogan and Wallach (1967); they strongly assume that there are aspects of decision situations which create uncertainty and lend a risky character to the decision-making process. These aspects may be represented as follows:
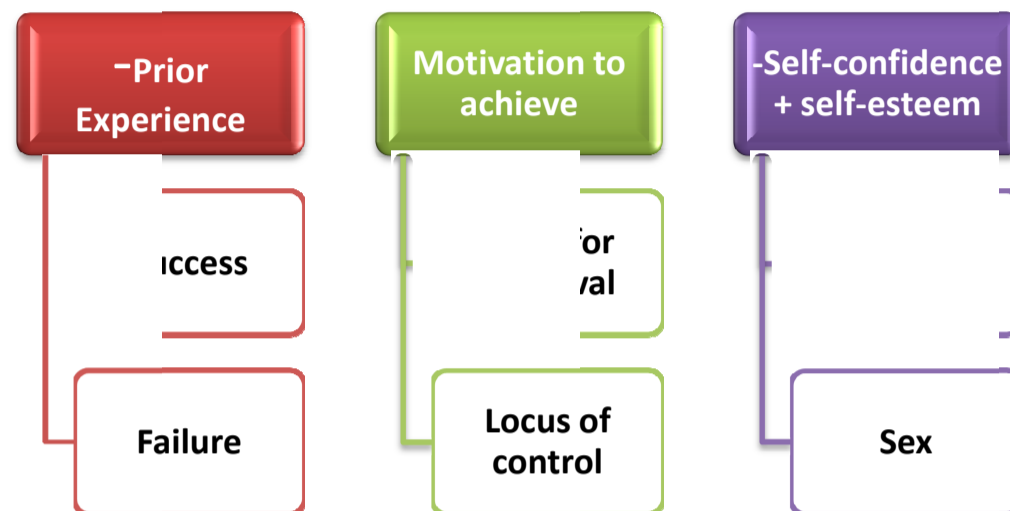
Figure 2.3. Decision Making Process

Adopted from Herlizer and Cutter 1971, Rotter 1966, Kogan and Wallach, 1967)

To move into deep elucidation, Beebe (1983) argued that L2 learners' willingness to take risks depends on the situations, for example, they are less inclined to take risks when their peers are listening because they do not want to look foolish.

Furthermore, Ely (1986) found that American students' readiness to take risks in using the Spanish L2 class was correlated considerably to their classroom contribution, which in turn pictures their proficiency. In a follow-up study with the same population Ely (1988) found that FLL risk-taking was positively correlated with attitudes toward activities involving relatively free language use. He also found

that language class sociability (*"a desire to interact with others in the second language by means of the L2"* (1986: 3) positively affected attitudes toward activities involving the sharing of ideas or "performing". Further studies have shown a positive relationship between risk-taking and final grades in the L2 (Samimy and Tabuse, 1992). Conversely, in her overview of research on individual differences in FLL, Oxford (1992:30) warns against simple cause-and-effect relationships because risk-taking does not, by itself, *"always create consistent results for all language learners"*. Undeniably, it interrelates *"in a complex way with other factors-such as anxiety, self-esteem, motivation, and learning styles-to produce certain effects in language learning"* (Ibid).

Language teachers, then, are called to create a positive encouraging classroom environment where participants feel confident but intelligent risk-taking will be rewarded (Arnold, 1999; Dufeu, 1994; Oxford, 1992). Teachers also need *"to assist learners in knowing when and how to take risks, particularly in conversational settings"* Oxford (1992: 38).

Surprisingly, there is little research about silent students and risk-taking situations (Labov1969). For instance, he has long maintained that silent students work based on the assumption that anything they say can

be used against them. They prefer to stay silent whenever possible or exercise other means to avoid answering the questions. They perceive talking in the classroom as a high-risk, low-gain proposition. It has been found by previous researches (Heyde, 1977; Lambert, 1967; Fitts, 1972) that one of the reasons why learners are shyer speakers around their peers and teachers in the classroom, is that they perceive the risk of being foolish. Heyde (1977:228) argues in this sense, that "*since speaking is an active skill which requires risking evaluation by others of the speaker's grammar, pronunciation, language facility and often personal worth*". Heyde, subsequently, connects speaking achievement to personal worth.

2.6.3.2. Self-Confidence and Speaking Achievements

One of the most important aspects of speaking is to have self-confidence in what to say and how to say it. It is mostly recognized that what a person feels echoes what he believes, and what he believes governs what he utters. Therefore, having a low sense of self-confidence in speaking English, for example, will create a threatening atmosphere in the classroom, and learners will unconsciously focus on their deficiencies and obstacles rather than concentrating on how to perform the task given to them. Oddly enough, though they have ideas to speak and share their knowledge, they easily lose trust in their capabilities and they just give up the attempt to speak.

On the other face, having a strong belief of one's own speaking capacities will, in all probabilities, lead them to approach threatening situations with more confidence and this will enhance their speaking

achievements and lead them to success Dörnyei (2008). For instance, it is often believed that classroom talks and speaking activities are anxiety provoking and confidence lowering tasks; therefore, it is of paramount importance to establish a relaxing, non-threatening environment where mistakes are tolerated and encouragement is desirable from the part of teachers.

A great number of studies summarized and reviewed the dynamic correlation between self-confidence and academic achievement; high levels of self-confidence lead to increased academic achievement, and vice versa. (Fook et al.,2011; Aryana, 2010; Harris, 2009; Eldred et al., 2004; Lloyd & Sullivan, 2003 ;Lockett & Harrell, Schmidt & padilla,2003; Walter,2003 ;Bankston & Zhou, 2002 ; Lavoie,2002; Lawrence,1996; Brown,1994).

Self-confidence particularly influences learners' oral performance since the output produced affects their communicative competence. The apprehension of speaking is strongly related to low levels of confidence and resulted in lower performance (Molberg, 2010; Chang,2004; Heysook & Lee,2003; Gregersen& Horwitz 2002; Cheng,1999).

Paradoxically, a number of recent studies indicate either a low or no correlation between self-confidence and academic achievement. (Elrafei,2008; Pullmann & Allikk, 2008; Bodkin-Andrews et al.,2008; Craven & Marsh, 2004; kimura,2002).

Another vital point to take into consideration is the learners' fear of being negatively evaluated when presenting a talk, this may be argued by Gregersen and Horwitz (2002) who assert that learners' confidence degree is strongly related to their fear of making mistakes, because learners

always want to save their positive image or impression in the mind of their teachers and peers alike; this may cause them anxiety and thus, lower their confidence to take risk talking.

2.7. PRONUNCIATION TEACHING

In the field of foreign language teaching/learning, the necessity for a method to teach pronunciation has become controversial among educationalists (Dalton, 2002; Celce- Mauricia, 1996). Many language educators have varied opinions on the importance of pronunciation practice in the target language which is supposed to lead to confidence in speaking. It is widely known that the students' goal when learning a foreign language is not only to increase their comprehension in the classroom, but also for the intensive need to communicate and interact in English outside the class in various situations. (Scarcella and Oxford,1994; Gilbert, 1995; Jenkins, 2002).

2.7.1. Pronunciation Defined

Pronunciation is one important element in language learning, it refers to the production of sounds to convey meanings. It includes both segmental and supra-segmental aspects (intonation, stress, timing, rhythm. Acceptable pronunciation may facilitate the drive to communicate in speech, and develop intelligibility at a large extent. It is defined by Richards *et at* (2002:175) as follows:

> *Pronunciation (also known as phonology) includes the role of individual sounds and sound segments, that is, features at the*

segmental level, as well as suprasegmental features such as stress, rhythm, and intonation.

Within the arena of pronunciation teaching in ELT, two contradictory paradigms need to be considered, namely "*nativeness*" and "*intelligibility*" (Levis, 2005). The "nativeness" hypothesis embraces the assumption that the EFL pronunciation should approximate and achieve native varieties (British Received Pronunciation and General American). Conversely, this view has lost its weight when research have demonstrated that achieving a native-like pronunciation appears to be cognitively conditioned to occur only in early childhood before adulthood (Strange, 2008). In addition to this, Munro and Derwing (1999) argue that there is no clear correlation between accent and understanding. Intelligibility, according to Munro (2008), is linked to the listeners' capacity to accurately understand the speakers' utterance.

The amount of attention given to the teaching of pronunciation in language courses seems to be at variance. For instance, many teachers sweep pronunciation teaching under the carpet, and do not deal with it in a systematic way; this may explain the learners' low pronunciation achievements. In this vein, Brown (2010:1) states: "*in spite of its recognized importance to communication, pronunciation is still a marginalized skill in many ESL programs*".

Therefore, it appears crucial to establish realistic pronunciation goals, for example, Brown (2010) believes that a native like accent is not a realistic goal, intelligibility, confidence in speaking and a reduction of

accent features together will help learners achieve comprehensible accent. The following table summarises the goals of pronunciation according to Brown:

Goal	Description
Intelligibility	Refers to the degree to which a listener can recognize words, phrascs. and utterances (smith and Nelson 1985, smith 1992, Derwing and Munro 1997).
Comprehensibility	Describes the ease with which listeners can understand a nonnative speaker (Derwing and Munro 2005). "*Comfortable intelligibility*" is also used in this sense (Abercrombie 1949, Kenworthy 1987: 16).
Accent	refers to noticeable differences between native and nonnative pronunciations.
Voice Quality	refers to pronunciation features that are generally present in native speech, like average level of Pitch

Table 2.5. Pronunciation Goals by Brown (2010)

To put it in a nutshell, one may state that without intelligibility, communication is impossible (Brown 2010), the choice of an inappropriate word to express meanings are the two types of errors most likely to make a student incomprehensible (Gass ancl Sclinker 2001, 266). Grammatical errors, on the other hand rarely lead to unintelligibility. Nonetheless, even intelligible pronunciation can be evaluated negatively by native speakers because of the accent (Pennington 1998, Levis 2005, Riney *et aI.*2000). Brown (2010) makes this point clear by suggesting the following example: the substitution of /d/ for /ð/ in the word 'them':/ðem/___*/dem/, while its pronunciation sounds understandable, it is "*stigmatized, distracting and stereotyped for native English listeners*" Brown (2010:3). Eventually,

voice quality is viewed to play a great role in accent building, i.e., some languages are typically spoken at higher levels (English, Japanese) of pitch, and others at lower levels (Dutch).

Besides, achieving an intelligible accent in pronunciation may be tied, to a large extent, to affective consideration. Unfortunately, many teachers pay little attention to the affective side of language teaching. There is great potential for embarrassment, ridicule and loss of face, especially with such a physical activity as pronunciation.

From another intricate side, a great number of studies (Avery & Ehrlich, 1992; Baker, 2006; Brown, 2010) assume that pronunciation is affected by factors which are beyond the control of the classroom like "*age, socio-psychological factors, amount of exposure to the second language (L2), amount of use of the L2, the native language together with universals, and personality*". Brown (2010:4)

Pronunciation learning is, thus, affected by age and socio-psychological factors, and this is explained by the amount of exposure and the extent to which learners use it (Trofimovich & Baker 2006). Personality of learners, on the other hand, plays crucial role in language learning. In this sense, Brown (2010:6) states that:

> *It is reasonable to suppose that outgoing, sociable learners should have an advantage over introverted, shy learners in acquiring oral-aural skills, including pronunciation. Outgoing students are more likely to*

participate in conversations with native speakers and will therefore have more opportunities to practice and to hear English.

The following table sums up the factors which effect pronunciation learning:

Factor	Description
Age	Adults learning Vs Children learning: *"Adults' greater cognitive abilities (especially analytic abilities) are less effective in learning a new pronunciation than the more natural abilities found in young children"* Brown (2010:6)
Personality	Outgoing learners Vs introverted shy learners
Socio-psychological	Native culture attachment of learners (conflict between English and his/her native language (culture)
Native-Language Background and Linguistic Universals	Similarities between a native language and English can either facilitate or hinder learning.
Amount of Exposure	Students who have spent three years in the US will pronounce English better than those who have spent three months. Similarly, students who use English a great deal in their daily activities are likely to pronounce the language better than those who rarely use it.

Table 2.6. Factors Effecting Pronunciation Learning

(Adopted from Brown 2010)

2.7.2.   A Historical Account of EFL Pronunciation Teaching

If one tries to get an overall view of the development of pronunciation throughout language teaching history, one would find that pronunciation, or as Kelly (1969) dubs *'the Cinderella area'* of foreign language teaching, has enjoyed less endorsement than it merits in comparison with other skills like grammar and vocabulary. Grammar and vocabulary have been much better understood by most language teachers than pronunciation.

It is worth pointing out that from the traditional ways of learning English, students lacked the basic knowledge of speaking. In the more distant past, conventional approaches to teaching pronunciation put a special interest on the study of phonemes and their meaningful contrasts, along with some structurally based interest in stress, rhythm, and intonation. From a pedagogic perspective, instruction mainly consisted in articulatory descriptions, imitation, and memorization of patterns through drills and set scripts, with an overall attention to correction. This was thought to develop the learners' capacity to eventually pronounce the English sounds 'near-like' a British native speaker.

Considering the range of language teaching methods that have had influence throughout history, one needs to be cognizant of the fact that pronunciation was, to a large extent, irrelevant. For instance, in Grammar-Translation Method, pronunciation was neglected, i.e., the focus was on grammatical rules, memorization of vocabulary and translation of texts. Languages were not being taught primarily to learn oral communication but rather to learn for the sake of being 'scholarly' or, in some cases, for gaining a reading proficiency in a foreign language.

The Direct Method was one of the most lasting legacies in the late 1800s early 1900s; it breaks away entirely from the Grammar-Translation paradigm. Pronunciation is taught through intuition and imitation. Students try as hard as they can to approximate the teacher' or the recorder's pronunciation.

With the advent of technology and communication, the need to communicate orally has become extremely compulsory. Pronunciation teaching in the Audiolingual approach 1940s and 1950s had a key-role and it was taught explicitly from the beginning of the language course. In the late 1960s, the cognitive approach, strongly influenced by Transformational Generative Grammar and the Chomskyan revolution, put a heavy emphasis on rule governed behaviour rather than habit-formation (Celce-Murcia *et al* 1996) . As a result, pronunciation was not explicitly taught like grammar and vocabulary.

Later, under the Notional-Functional Approach, came the need to advise learners to use language freely for communicative purposes. In this fashion, using drills and mechanical exercises were believed to be outdated. Therefore, pronunciation instruction was pedagogically neglected because of the difficulties in bringing it into line with more communicative approaches to language teaching. This was stressed by Jenner (1996) who believes that working on phonology could impede communicative practice and thus, threaten the learners' self-confidence.

In recent years, and with the renewed professional supports aiming at enabling students become more and more effective and efficient

speakers of English, there has been an incessant progress to bring pronunciation back on stage in view of the fact that, as many prominent theorists and researchers point out, it is a vital element of communicative competence. Having this importance, pronunciation should be given preferential treatment (Morley; 1991 & Taylor; 1991). At the present time, and possibly as a result of this new trend, a great number of educationalists are again keen on pronunciation. Spada (1997) For instance believes that clear instruction is important to the effectiveness of pronunciation training.

Nevertheless, EFL/ESL teachers, in particular, should be aware of the fact that there is no single best way to teach English pronunciation, as no superiority was shown of one method over another; teachers should be rather eclectic in their teaching performance. The following table is an attempt to summarise the statements that are thought to better represent the different point of views of approaches vis-à-vis pronunciation.

Method	Principle
Grammar Translation Method	Oral communication is not the primary goal of language instruction. Therefore, little attention is given to speaking and almost none to pronunciation.
Direct Method	Teachers provide students with a model for native like speech. By listening and then imitating the modeller, students improve their pronunciation.
Audiolingual Method	Pronunciation should be worked on from the beginning of language instruction. The teacher should correct any words mispronounced by students.
Silent Way	Language is not learned by repeating after a model. With visual cues, the teacher helps students develop their own inner "criteria" for correctness. They must trust and be responsible for their own production in the target language.

Community Language Learning	The pronunciation syllabus is primary student initiated and designed. Students decide what they want to practise and use the teacher as a resource.
Total Physical Response	Students will begin to speak when they are ready. They are expected to make errors in the initial stage and teachers should be tolerant to them.
Communicative Approach	Students should work with language at the discourse or suprasentential level. The ultimate goal is communication.

Table 2.7. Pronunciation vis-à-vis Language Approaches

(adapted from Larsen-Freeman, 1986)

2.7.3. The Importance of Pronunciation Instruction

Within the field of education, ideas on the value of teaching pronunciation are often at variance. Yet, in learning a foreign language, learners may acquire some basic skills, such as reading or writing, but still display difficulties in understanding a native speaker in a conversation. In this line of thought, Levy (1997:53) stressed that: "*SLA research has concentrated primarily on explaining the acquisition of morphology and syntax, but little is known about the acquisition of phonology*".

Similarly, Elliott (1995:96) has noticed that pronunciation does not enjoy the attention it merits. In this respect, he claims that *"the acquisition of pronunciation has fallen by the wayside and has suffered from serious neglect in the communicative classroom"*. Consequently, pronunciation instruction is still unduly neglected or ignored by many researches and teachers alike; this lack of research may be due to a widespread lack of confidence about the efficacy of teaching pronunciation

to EFL learners and also the lack of teacher training which has generated misgivings among them (Fraser, 2000).

In the same way, it is argued that pronunciation is, to a large extent, left to chance or given no place in the teaching/ learning process. The result as Baker (1992:1) states is that:

> *Advanced students find that they can improve all aspects of their proficiency in English except their pronunciation, and mistakes which have been repeated for years are impossible to eradicate.*

Although research on foreign language teaching/learning has always been fascinating, the teaching of pronunciation and oral skills, in general in foreign and second language classrooms, has often been low on the list of priorities (Peterson, 2000). Joining this idea, Gilbert (1994:38) claims that:

> *Pronunciation has been something of an orphan in English programs around the world. Why has pronunciation been a poor relation? I think it is because the subject has been drilled to death, with too few results from too much effort.*

In addition to this, Dan (2006) claims that language competence covers many aspects of language, and pronunciation, both theoretical and practical, constitutes the basis of speaking above all other aspects of language, that is to say, pronunciation is the foundation of speaking.

It should be wiser at this level to point out the importance of pronunciation practice not only for future teachers of English but also for students who plan to carry on studying abroad. Increasing the students' pronunciation skills beforehand can build more confidence and make them feel less reluctant to venture out to speak English. Students' personal attitude and self-confidence are major factors in improving English pronunciation. It is effective pronunciation teaching that offers learners a genuine choice in how they express themselves (Fraser, 1999).

Likewise, pronunciation is regarded as the first and most important thing native speakers notice during a conversation. Knowing grammar and vocabulary is important but still useless if the speaker is unable to pronounce those structures or words intelligibly. For instance, native speakers are more likely to understand someone, even in spite of grammatical errors, if this person uses understandable pronunciation.

The usefulness of teaching pronunciation depends, mainly, on the amount of the learner's success, since poor pronunciation may condemn learners to less social, academic and work advancement; whereas, good pronunciation may make the communication easier and more relaxed and thus, more successful (Dan, 2006).

In this vein, Harmer (2001:183) argues cogently that it is thanks to pronunciation teaching that students not only become aware of different

speech sounds and sound features (segmental and suprasegmental), but may also improve their speaking vastly. Subsequently, he claims that:

> *Concentrating on sounds, showing where they are made in the mouth, making students aware of where words should be stressed – all these things give them extra information about spoken English and help them achieve the goal of improved comprehension and intelligibility.*

It has been noticed that most of the available literature on pronunciation deals with the "what" and the "how" to teach, while the learner remains as a "silent abstract" in the classroom. Morley (1994) underlines that the prevalent focus on pronunciation teaching nowadays should be based on designing new wave instructional programmes to assist the learners; practice to progress. Moreover, she stresses that these instructional designs should take into account not only language forms and functions, but also issues of learners' self-confidence and learners' strategy training.

Furthermore, teachers should set realistic goals of pronunciation teaching that need to be addressed in order to develop communicative competence. According to Morley (1991: 175), these are the following:

> ➢ *Functional intelligibility:* which aims at developing spoken English that is easy to understand by listeners;
> ➢ *Functional communicability:* is set to develop spoken language that serves effective communication;

> ➤ *Increased self-confidence*: it is set to create a positive self-image;
> ➤ *Speech-monitoring abilities and speech modification strategies*: that will allow students build up intelligibility, communicability and confidence outside the classroom.

Celce-Murcia (1987), from her part, conceives that focus on language as communication has called for an urgent need for the teaching of pronunciation; since, the existing empirical studies and evidences indicate that there is a *'threshold level of pronunciation'* for non-native speakers of English. In other terms, oral communicative problems may occur if learners fall below this level no matter how skilful their control of English grammar and vocabulary might be. Therefore, pronunciation should be given as much attention as other aspects of language.

At another level of complexity, a number of features are involved in pronunciation training. For instance, according to Morley (1991:26), pronunciation training embraces two levels of analysis:

a. The micro level where instruction is focused on linguistic (i.e., phonetic-phonological) competence through practice of segmentals and the suprasegmentals, i.e., accuracy-based learning (studying Vowels and consonants).

b. The macro level attends to more global elements of communicability with the goal of developing discourse, sociolinguistic, and strategic competence by using the language for communicative purposes, i.e., fluency-based learning.

2.7.4. Approaches to Pronunciation Instruction

As schools of thought have come and go, pronunciation research has come in and out of fashion as various progressive movements in language acquisition have prevailed. Teachers of pronunciation have adopted two general approaches as described by Celce-Murcia *et al.* (1996). It is to be acknowledged that approaches about teaching/learning languages are, in fact, at variance; they have been proposed to condense the scale of controversy among researchers. Within the general framework of methodology in the field of pronunciation study, a number of approaches are supposed to improve efficiency in language classrooms.

The Intuitive-Imitative approach pays attention to the learners' ability to listen and imitates the speech sound and rhythms of the target language without the assistance of explicit instruction. It works best with beginner learners during the early stages of instruction. Technologies, such as audiotapes, videos, and computer-based programmes and websites, may offer rich resources of native speech as good models.

Furthermore, the Analytic-Linguistic approach introduces learners to some pedagogical aids provided with explicit, structured teaching of speech features utilizing articulatory descriptions and charts of speech apparatus, phonetic alphabet and vowel charts, in addition to a variety of interactive speech analysis software and websites. In this vein, Celce-Murcia *et al* (1996:2) states that: '*this approach was developed to complement rather than replace the intuitive-imitative approach'*.

Within communicative approaches to language teaching, a key-goal is paid for the learner to develop communicative competence in the target language. Therefore, pronunciation is considered as more than correct production of phonemes and practice sub-skills, it is rather a fundamental element of successful communication with meaningful task-based activities. The Current Integrative Approach researches draw a considerable attention on the use of pronunciation-focused listening activities to facilitate the learning of pronunciation. In addition, the suprasegmentals of stress, rhythm, and intonation are practised beyond the phoneme and word level.

2.7.5. Techniques of Teaching Pronunciation

There seems to exist manifold standard techniques for teaching pronunciation in the light of the selected approach. This section strives at selecting a set of practical techniques to improve the practice of English pronunciation.

- *Use of Phonetic Script*
At an intermediate level, students are sometimes helped by looking at phonetic transcripts of spoken language using IPA or by making transcripts of speech themselves using their dictionaries. At a more practical level, being familiar with phonetic script may enable students to search for the correct pronunciation of individual words.

- *Discrimination of Sounds*
If one takes a bird's eye view on the audio-lingual method, one would recognize that, if you cannot hear a distinction, you cannot make it.

This led to minimal pair exercises in which the students have to indicate what they hear exactly.

- *Imitation*

This technique has been the mainstay of pronunciation teaching, it is based on the repetition of words or phrases.

- *Consciousness Raising*

This technique calls for awareness raising of pronunciation, rather than concentrating on specific aspects of speech, the students' ears are trained to hear things better.

2.7.6. Pronunciation Learning Strategies

Language learning strategies are supposed to be used to improve the learners' listening, speaking, reading and writing level. Conversely, they still have not been effectively applied to pronunciation learning in a large scale. Thus, it seems crucial to bridge this gap between pronunciation and learning strategies. Looking at the current challenges in education, a gradual but a momentous shift has taken place resulting a great stress on learners and learning rather than on teachers and teaching. Seeing that language learning strategies (henceforth LLS) have through time gained a quick eye-catching popularity and have become a conventional part of foreign language teaching/learning, many researchers have devised a range of classifications in an attempt to familiarise learners with the massive amounts of descriptive research regarding learning strategies (Oxford, 1990; O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Rubin, 1981; Dörnyei & Skehan,

2003). The following section will be devoted to the shift of views through time about LLS.

Learning strategies seems to be involved in all types of learning and teaching; they are problem-solving procedures employed by the learners, in order to make their own language learning as successful as possible. Amongst all the definition of learning strategies, Oxford (1992: 18) views language learning strategies as:

> *Specific actions, behaviours, steps, or techniques that students (often intentionally) use to improve their progress in developing L2 skills. These strategies can facilitate the internalization, storage, retrieval, or use of the new language. Strategies are tools for the self-directed involvement necessary for developing communicative ability.*

Therefore, strategies are plans or methods to achieve a specific goal and affect the overall pattern to process a particular task. Tactics are manoeuvres and details that affect particular ways to control a situation. Moreover, O'Malley & Chamot (1990: 43) assume that learning strategies may include:

> *Focussing on selected aspects of new information, analysing and monitoring information during acquisition, organizing or elaborating on new information during the*

encoding process, evaluating the learning when it is completed, or assuring oneself that the learning will be successful as a way to allay anxiety.

Furthermore, Ellis *et al* (1994) suggest that perhaps the most thoroughly accomplished area of second language learning strategies is the ones concerning LLS classification. According to Peterson (2000), the most leading classification schemes appearing in most of literature related to LLS are that of the O'Malley & Chamot (1990) and that of Oxford (1990).

O'Malley & Chamot's (1990) study attempts essentially at integrating learning strategy research with cognitive theory. On her part, Oxford (1990) divides LLS into two broad categories; namely direct and indirect strategies and then further divides them into six sub-groups. In the present study; the researcher focuses on Oxford's (1990:17) classification. Despite the popularity of learning strategies within the teaching/learning process, there appear to be no available studies that deal with pronunciation learning strategies separately from other study areas (Peterson, 2000). A small number of studies have looked at pronunciation as one of the language skills. In this sense, Peterson (2000) projects Oxfords' LLS classification with pronunciation. The following table illustrates this combination.

Direct Language learning strategies (LLS)

Oxford's Strategy	Pronunciation Learning	Peterson's Strategy Model (2000)

Model (1990)	Strategies	
Memory	*Representing sounds in memory*	- Making up sounds and rhymes to remember how to pronounce words. - Using phonetic symbols or codes to remember how to pronounce something
Cognitive	*Practising naturalistically*	- Trying to recall how a teacher pronounced something. - Trying to recall and imitate teachers' mouth movements. - Listening to tapes, movies and music. - Concentrating on pronunciation when speaking. - Speaking slowly to get pronunciation right. - Mentally rehearsing how to say something before speaking. - Talking with others in the Target Language (TL). - Imitating a teacher or a native speaker. - Talking aloud to oneself. - Talking silently to oneself.
	Formally Practicing with Sounds *Analysing the Sound System*	- Practicing a difficult word over and over. - Repeating aloud after a native speaker or teacher. - Practicing saying words slowly at first and then faster. Practicing sounds first in isolation and then in context. -Reading aloud. - Forming and using hypotheses about pronunciation rules. - Noticing contrast between L_1 and TL pronunciation
Compensation	*Using proximal articulations*	No specific examples of this strategy were documented in the literature review.

Indirect Language learning strategies (LLS)

Oxford's Strategy Model (1990)	Pronunciation Learning Strategies	Peterson's Strategy Model (2000)

Metacognitive	*Finding out about target language pronunciation*	- **Acquiring a general knowledge of phonetics.** - **Reading reference materials about TL rules.**
	Setting goals and objectives	- **Deciding to focus one's listening on particular sounds.** - **Deciding to memorise the sounds (or the alphabet) right away.**
	Planning for a language task	- **Preparing for an oral presentation by writing difficult-to pronounce words very large in one's notes.**
	Self evaluating	- **Recording one self to listen to one's pronunciation.**
Affective	*Using humour to lower anxiety*	- **having a sense of humour about mispronunciations**
Social	*Asking for help*	- **asking someone else to correct one's pronunciation** - **asking someone else to pronounce something.**
	Cooperating with peers	- **studying with someone else** - **teaching or tutoring someone else**

Table 2.8. Pronunciation Learning Strategies of Oxford (1990) &

Peterson (2000)

Interestingly, it is only during the last years that researchers have taken an interest in pronunciation strategy research (Peterson, 2000; Vitanova & Miller, 2002; Derwing & Rossiter, 2002; and Osburne, 2003). It is quite amusing that researchers have gathered attention towards language learning strategies since the mid 1970s. Yet, the application of strategies on pronunciation has not been noticed until the early years of the twenty-first Century.

Pronunciation learning strategies, for short PLS seem to be useful in planning an effective teaching of pronunciation. Here is a summary of the main previous academic articles about the number of strategies used when talking about pronunciation instruction.

Author	Pronunciation Learning Strategies
Peterson (2000)	• Representing sounds in memory • Practising naturalistically • Formal practicing with sounds • Analyzing the sound system • Using proximal articulations • Finding out about the target language pronunciation • Setting goals and objectives • Planning for a language task • Self-evaluation • Using humour to lower anxiety • Asking for help • Cooperating with peers • Representing sounds in memory
Vitnova and Miller (2002)	• Self-correction of poor pronunciation • Active listening to native pronunciation
Derwing and Rossiter (2002)	• Self-repetition • Paraphrasing • Increasing or decreasing volume • Writing and/or spelling difficult words • Using a slow rate of speech • Calming down • Using pantomime • Avoiding difficult sounds • Appealing for assistance from native speakers • Using clear speech • Monitoring articulatory gestures
Osburne (2003)	• Focusing on sounds below the syllable-level • Focusing on individual syllables • Focusing on prosodic structures • Monitoring global articulatory gestures • Focusing on paralanguage • Focusing on individual words • Focusing on memory or imitation

Table 2.9. Pronunciation Learning Strategies in Pedagogic Articles

Consequently, the long-term solution to the problem of the neglect of pronunciation instruction is to *train* students accurate articulation, offering them the strategies they may rely on for a better result. In this line of thought, Ellis and Sinclair (1989: 16) states that:

> *Learners' training aims to help learners consider the factors which may affect heir learning and discover the strategies which suit them best so that they may become effective learners and take responsibilities for their own learning.*

Hence, the main aim of pronunciation training is to achieve what Abercrombie (1991:14) calls *"comfortable intelligibility"* which is pronunciation that can be understood with little or no efforts on the part of the listener. It is worth pointing at this level that as a trainer, one needs to consider Oxfords' (1994) principles for L2 training to achieve reliable results:

➢ L2 strategy training should be based clearly on students' attitudes, beliefs, and stated needs.
➢ Strategies should be chosen so that they mesh with and support each other and so that they fit the requirements of the language task, the learners' goals, and the learners' style of learning.

- Training should, if possible, be integrated into regular L2 activities over a long period of time rather than taught as a separate, short intervention.
- Students should have plenty of opportunities for strategy training during language classes.
- Strategy training should include explanations, handouts, activities, brainstorming, and materials for reference and home study.
- Affective issues such as anxiety, motivation, beliefs, and interests, all of which influence strategy choice, should be directly addressed by L2 strategy training.
- Strategy training should be explicit, overt, and relevant and should provide plenty of practice with varied L2 tasks involving authentic materials.
- Strategy training should not be solely tied to the class at hand; it should provide strategies that are transferable to future language tasks beyond a given class.
- Strategy training should be somewhat individualized, as different students prefer or need certain strategies for particular tasks.
- Strategy training should provide students with a mechanism to evaluate their own progress and to evaluate the success of the training and the value of the strategies in multiple tasks.

2.7.7. Pronunciation and the other Skills

Language is conceived as a cognitive skill, which includes productive skills of writing, speaking and receptive skills of reading and listening, in addition to language components, namely vocabulary, structure and phonology (Wongsothorn & Pongsurapipat, 1992).

It is agreed among researchers that to speak, one needs first to listen. If the students' English pronunciation skills are improved, clearly their listening and speaking skills become more refined and vice versa (Dan, 2006). The relationship between pronunciation and the other skills especially listening and speaking has been a focus of attention for many years, and is conceived as being a significant skill for acquiring a foreign language. Gilbert (1987:33) describes in this way   the relationship between pronunciation and listening comprehension as *"speech loop between speaker and listener: instruction in one improves performance in the other"*.

In traditional classrooms, it seems to be very inadequate for offering such an opportunity for students to communicate their thoughts, beliefs and attitudes, and interact with their peers. When speaking, one needs first to understand how a word is pronounced through listening. In this sense, Jones and Fortescue (1991: 78) states that: *"Learning to recognize and distinguish the sounds of a language is a prerequisite both for effective listening comprehension and for good pronunciation"*.

From another stand point, Gilbert (1984) believes that the skills of listening comprehension and pronunciation are interdependent so that if learners cannot hear English well and cannot understand easily, they are cut off from conversation with native speakers. The process of learning English, as with any other language, is inter-connected. Pronunciation and listening comprehension are linked together by a unified system within which individual speech sounds are systematically related.

Students need to be aware of the target system in order to make sense of the separate pieces (Gilbert 1984.). However, Pennington (1996: 218) points out: *"it is doubtful that work on listening comprehension, or even listen-and-repeat lessons performed in a language laboratory, can alone be expected to improve pronunciation"*.

Thus, the present research is primarily based on the assumption that speaking requires *clear articulation of phonemes or sounds*, and listening requires accurate comprehension of phonemes (Celce-Murcia, 1991). Without the skill of phoneme discrimination, students can neither express themselves nor understand others entirely. Even though the specific role of phoneme discrimination in listening and speaking is not clear, phoneme discrimination skill is believed to provide students with increased confidence.

2.8. PRONUNCIATION TRAINING TO DEVELOP LEARNERS' CONFIDENCE AND SPEAKING COMPETENCE

It is vitally important for EFL teachers to agree that explicit pronunciation teaching is an essential part of language courses (Fraser, 1999). At an initial stage, confidence in pronunciation is supposed to allow learners interact with native speakers, which is very essential for all the other aspects of their linguistic development. In this line of thought, Avery *et al* (1992: xiv) point out:

Learners who are out-going, confident, and willing to take risks probably have more opportunities to practice their pronunciation of the second language simply because they are more often involved in interaction with native speakers.

Additionally, Kriedler (1989) states that correct and clear pronunciation are considerably important in language learning; learners should gradually develop some confidence in their own ability to produce sounds and thus, speak assertively. To achieve this, learners need to be extensively and intensively exposed to listening to English so that to develop a "feel" for the sounds of English. In this way, learners are observed to be more confident and motivated to learn the target language, but on the other side, poor pronunciation degrades good language skills and condemns learners' ability to communicate to loss.

As the learners' ability to communicate is severely limited without adequate pronunciation skills, inadequate pronunciation skills may be a factor to weaken learners' self-confidence. Thus, it restricts their classroom interactions and negatively influences estimations of a speaker's credibility and abilities (Morley, 1998).

Avery and Ehrlich (1992) argue the necessity of confidence in articulation, in that when teaching pronunciation, one needs to focus much more on affective variables than simply working through a list of speech sounds. Even if students have learned to produce speech sounds, they are often so self-conscious about their pronunciation that they are

too nervous to probably misuse these speech sounds in front of their teachers and mates.

Hence, it is of great essence for teachers that personality traits may in all probabilities affect pronunciation progress of learners. As a result, a non-threatening and stressing atmosphere needs to be afforded in classroom just in hope to establish a first step towards building learners' self-confidence.

Within language research, it is believed that human muscles do not respond well to nervousness. When speakers get nervous, knees and hands shake as well as the little muscles the speakers use in articulation. With regular training, learners would improve their performance and feel at a large extent confident (Avery & Ehrlich, 1992). It is often assumed that the presence of increased oral productivity or regular training may, in some extent, lessen frustration, anxiety and therefore, increase confidence (Ellis, 1994; Rivers, 2001). The following diagram illustrates that in the nerves cycle, muscles will not respond when speakers feel nervous. So listeners will not understand, and speakers will be more nervous. As explained bellow:
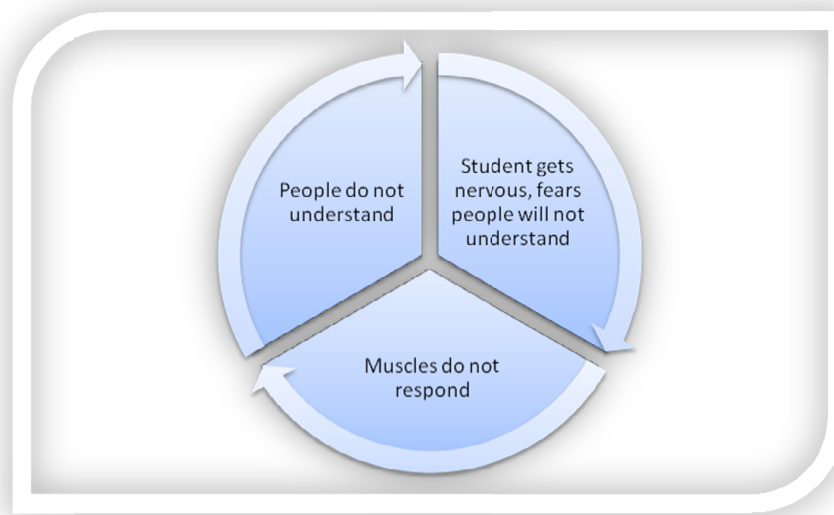
Figure 2.4. Negative Circle; Avery *et. al* (1992: 222)

In contrast, the positive cycle shows that confidence increased when the speakers are understood. Low anxiety and nerves, and perceptions of competence would develop self-confidence (Clémont *et al*, 1994; Noels & Clémont, 1996). The following diagram shows this clearly:
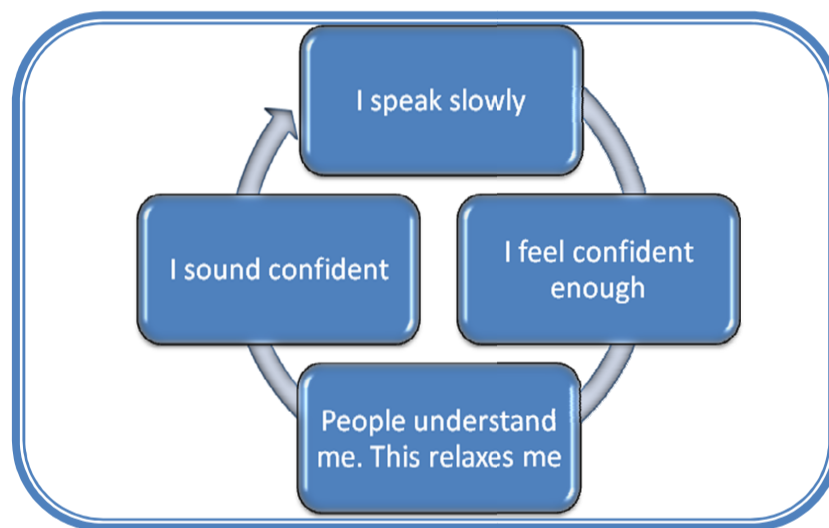
Figure 2.5. Positive Circle Avery *et al* (1992: 226)

Consequently, having confidence in articulation, therefore, may give students room to express themselves freely and assertively in conversation. This is also applied in listening comprehension; students who are very familiar with phonemes or speech sounds should have confidence in discriminating speech sounds.

2.8. CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the focus was, in fact, on the theoretical part of this classroom-oriented research. It tried to critically review the relevant literature and built the foundations needed to examine the research questions set at the beginning of the study. It attempted to shed light on the key-concepts used in this work, and sought to reflect the literature related to self-confidence, speaking skills and pronunciation practice. The focus was also on demonstrating the relationship between pronunciation and the other skills, especially listening and speaking.

Attention was also put on psychological barriers in language learning in general, and speaking in particular. Hence, a whole section was devoted to self-confidence where it was thought to link it with pronunciation and speaking competence. Previous researches demonstrate that lack of confidence is likely to block the learners' efforts to better their pronunciation and thus, diminish their speaking competence. This bulk of literature aims just at building up the stones for the next practical chapter of this work.

CHAPTER THREE

Experiment Design & Method Account

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3.6. CONCLUSION

3.1. INTRODUCTION

Language researchers appear to steadily recognise that studies need to be accomplished in different contexts, and that a variety of different approaches are required to gain a profound understanding of the complexity of the nature of research in language learning.

Therefore, this chapter seeks to suggest a classroom-based experimental framework and groundwork for developing the learners' *pronunciation* practice and *self-confidence* to enhance their *speaking* competence. It is, in fact, the practical aspect of the theoretical framework resulting from the literature review presented in chapter two.

This inquiry starts with a more or less comprehensive account of the ELT situation in the Algerian educational system at different levels, exposing the actual objectives and perspectives of English in Algeria, in the light of the newly adopted reforms. A detailed account on the concerned situation and the so-called adaptation of the LMD system at the university educational sector will be systematically discussed.

Furthermore, this chapter intends to reflect upon classroom-oriented research in foreign language education as a tool which may enhance our understanding of how to put into practice effective ways of improving learners' language skills. Ultimately, it draws the attention towards the research tools engaged in the current classroom-oriented research.

3.2. LANGUAGE POLICY IN ALGERIA

The query of language education policies in Algeria appears to be among the most crucial issues involved in language research. It is believed that Algeria absorbed heavy colonial impact not only in its social life but also in its educational policy. French controlled all aspects of life, namely government, business, economy and education for around 132 years. The French imperialism tried to follow the policy of removing Algerian cultural identity and moulding it along French lines. The results of this colonial policy, which continued to exist even after independence, have perhaps been one of the most evident impacts on the current Algerian educational system.

The Algerian educational system has been influenced, according to Benrabah (2007:225-226), by three main phases as explained in the following table:

Phase One	Phase Two	Phase Three
Characterized by the colonial legacies	The late 1960s to the late 1990s	Began in the early 2000s
A network of schools and an educational system dominated by the French language with Arabic growing steadily in importance.	Corresponded to the socialist-era central planning economy, called the nationalist transition. The Arabic language was gradually imposed in the educational sector.	Corresponding to the transition to the free economic market with less assertive arabisation policies. During this phase, the authorities have encountered hostility to the reform of the schooling system

Table 3.1. The Algerian Educational System

Based on the three phases, it would be reasonable to examine the shift in the Algerian educational system. After independence, in 1962, Algeria has resisted a number of colonial attempts, whether culturally, politically or educationally. This resistance is explained by the power of Islam and Arabic as stated by (Gordon, 1966: 137, in Benrabah (2007:229):*"Islam and the Arabic language were effective forces of resistance against the attempt of the colonial regime to depersonalise Algeria"*.

Ahmed Ben Bella (1916-2012) as a first president of Independent Algeria (1963-1965), instigated "*the policy of linguistic arabisation in primary schools*" Benrabah (2007:229) and later he stated that *"Literary Arabic was to be introduced to the educational system"* (Grandguillaume, 2004: 27). Besides, religious lessons and civics were supplemented on top of this. (Grandguillaume, 2004: 27).

The Second president was Houari Boumediene (1931-1978), during his presidency (1965-1978), arabisation achieved great attention, although it had no clear future, and this is well-explained by the declaration made by his first Minister of Education, Ahmed Taleb Ibrahimi: *"This [arabisation] will not work, but we have to do it..."* (Grandguillaume, (1995: 18). Strangely enough, the arabisation process was gradually narrowed in 1977, when Mostefa Lacheraf was selected as the Minister of Education. He believed that: "*French could serve as a "reference point, a 'stimulant' that would force the Arabic language 'to be on the alert' (Berri, 1973: 16*). In 1979, Mohamed Cherif Kharroubi was appointed as Minister of Primary and Secondary Education. His major achievement was the establishment of French as the first foreign language

in the fourth primary school grade and English as the second foreign language in the eighth middle school grade.

Despite of the fact that French was still considered as a cultural necessity until the late seventies, the Arabic language was steadily imposed in the educational sector. Besides, in spring 2001, a period of riot broke out in the Kabylie area where demands calling for the recognition of Berber culture and of Tamazigh as an official language were renewed. Hence, Tamazigh was officially recognized as a national language and was inserted in the Algerian educational system as well. As clarified by the Permanent Committee of Geographical Names PCGN (2003:6):

> *By way of response, Bouteflika recognised Tamazigh as a national language in a constitutional amendment of February 2002, amending Ordinance N° 35/76 of the 1976 constitution. Tamazigh became an accepted language in Algeria's educational system at all levels, and the Amazigh cultural dimension of all subjects was to be respected.*

From another angle, the socioeconomic situation turned to be opened to more worldwide connections, and thus, French domination was lessened due to the urgent need to use English as a means of communication in a would-be globalised Algeria. In this sense, Mami (2013: 243) believes that: *"disparities in the use of French started to fade away at the cross-roads leaving more space to the teaching of English as a second foreign language"*. And this is a shared belief by Miliani (2000:13*):*

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.

Thus, the major target was to establish an educational system personalized to the needs of Algeria's population. Therefore, in a step towards internationalisation, it was thought by the Algerian government in the late 1980s to introduce English as a subject at the primary level instead of French. As stated by the British Council (2010:13):

It was felt that English as a historically neutral language in the Algerian context would be able to play the modernising role that was hoped for from French but without the colonialist and non-Islamic associations that French had.

Oddly enough, this fundamental suggestion was not really put into practice and the experience was failed to a certain extent. By the mid 2000, Algerian educational system has been subject to a number of reforms and has adopted a series of changes to develop not only the structure of the educational system but also the outcomes. With the advance of Information and Communication Technologies in this globalised age, the introduction of English into schools became more necessary than ever.

3.3. EDUCATION AND ELT IN ALGERIA

Mapping the linguistic situation in Algeria, one would rank Algeria under the heading of "*linguistic plurality* (or *diversity*)" Medjahed (2011:73). Classical Arabic is used as the national language in the media, while Algerian Colloquial Arabic and Berber are spoken in informal daily life situations. Because of historical reasons, French is used as a second language or as a first foreign language. English, on the other hand, is considered as a foreign language or as a second foreign language; unlike French, it is not socially used.

Therefore, notwithstanding all reasons, English imposes itself as an international language which has been widely used for years and for different purposes, and implicitly becoming part of the Algerian sociocultural sphere. Seeing that the value of English is increasing day by day in different forms and in different contexts, awareness of its importance is of great interest, and it is currently taught in Algerian middle, secondary schools and most Algerian universities.

Admittedly, the National Curriculum considers that the ability to communicate in English is regarded as part of the core competences students should acquire in their educational career, in a way to partake in the country's global economy and operate effectively in the social and cultural environment of the 21st century as responsible citizens. The curriculum stipulates that our EFL students are supposed to be taught the four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) in an integrated way, so that they can improve their whole range of skills.

3.3.1. ELT Process Development

As schools of thought have come and gone, the Algerian educational framework has witnessed a slow but deliberate shift and progress regarding its curriculum development and teaching methodologies. A number of reforms have been introduced to prepare students to take part in the economic growth of the country, in the light of intensive modern research and on-going globalization process. Language teaching profession has responded to these challenging changes with methods which reflect the current situation, adopting a newly approach, namely the Competency-Based Education (CBE).

In 2005, EFL teaching methodology swung to using the Competency-Based Approach (CBA) answering the 21st century requirements and coping with this global age. This approach aims at providing students with the knowledge and skills which enable them recognize and solve complex problems in their fields. It is a specialized and systemic method of organizing skill-specific instructions. In this respect, *(Louznadji 2003, quoted from Medjahed 2011:74)* defines competency as:

> *A know-how-to-act process which integrates and mobilises a set of capacities and skills and an account of knowledge that will be used effectively in various problem-solving situations or circumstances that have never occurred before, i.e., a competency continues throughout and beyond the school curriculum.*

Besides, competence is a lively objective feature which is strongly rooted in experience and situational practice. Throughout activities, within a variety of circumstances, a learner constructs competency. Consequently, competency is a realization of a need for self-development.

In an attempt to explain competency development, Schneckenberg and Wildt (2006) provide a ladder process to achieve competency. The process starts with perception of information from the teacher which leads, then, to collecting knowledge by learners to apply it in certain contexts, enhancing the learners' ability. Ability is coupled with specific attitudes which normally prompt action performance through activities. If, at the fifth step, the selected activity is suitable to the target aim, competence may be achieved. Competence therefore, is highly related to the degree of responsibility for the 'product', which will result to professionalism. Through time, learners will experience different situations to finally achieve competency. The ladder process is represented as follows:
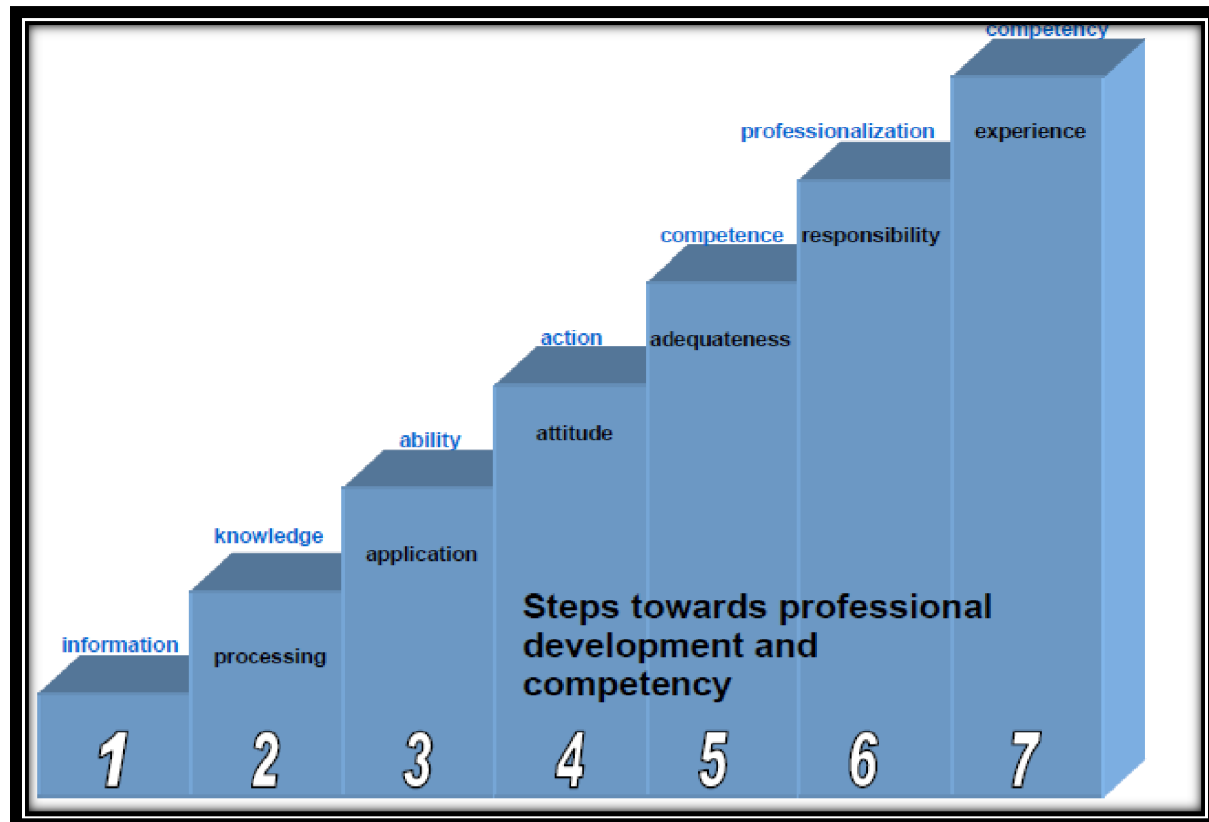
Figure 3.1. Competency Development Model (Schneckenberg and Wildt, 2006)

Surprisingly, these principles and aims represent theoretical ends; whereas, in practice, there are a set of shortages and negative aspects regarding its implementation. This implies either that the theoretical suggestions are not applied in the right way or they are inappropriately adapted to the Algerian context. In this vein, Miliani (2010:71) conceives that:

This new development at school level has generated uneasiness of teachers who are supposed to teach through it but know nearly nothing about it. Furthermore, the textbooks that have been designed along CBA characteristics are posing problems to the teachers who return systematically to their old ways and practices.

This is a common point of view by Tardif (2006; qtd. In Blais & Nguen (2007:224), « *dans la plupart des programmes de formation axés sur le développement de compétences et pour la majorité des compétences ciblées, il n'existe aucun modèle cognitif de l'apprentissage* », i.e., in most teaching programmes under CBA, and for the majority of competences, there exist no cognitive model of learning. (Translation from French to English made by the current author).

Miliani (2010) further narrows down his point of view by asserting that this approach was used for political purposes *"Algeria uses here another 'fad' to turn upside down an education system that needs stability"*. He (ibid) also views that even the results of the baccalaureate examination are doubtful, he posits in this context:

Teachers who have not been really introduced to CBA have acknowledged the fact that pupils' level is at a record low, and without the ministry's handling of the baccalaureate examination, the results would have been catastrophic. That is why the Minister of National Education has been accused of developing 'un bac politique' to hide the extremely worrying level to which CBA has been of no contribution.

3.3.1.1. ELT at Middle School Level

The beginning of the academic year 2002/2003 has witnessed the implementation of the newly educational reform and the adaptation of newly designed textbooks for all levels.

Year of Study	Textbook	N of hours/week
1st year : première année Moyenne 1°A.M	Spotlight on English	3hours
2nd year : deuxième année Moyenne 2°A.M:	The Second English Coursebook	3hours
3rd year : troisième année Moyenne 3°A.M:	Spotlight on English	3hours
4th year : quatrième année Moyenne 4°A.M:	On the Move	3hours

Table 3.2. English Coursebooks at Middle School

During the four years of instruction, the Ministry of National Education in its revised version of the syllabus states that learners must receive the basic knowledge required to acquire a reasonable command of the basic structure of English. Evidently, the curriculum is based on CBA. It is meant to develop language awareness and skills; in addition to this, it is defined so as to develop learners' team work and collaboration through projects where learners are supposed to work together, discussing and solving language problems. This will lead them to use and enhance their

speaking capacities and strategies. The programme also is rich in terms of amusing activities and units.

The ministry of education put forward three broad objectives to the newly adopted teaching methodology, namely linguistic, methodological and cultural. They are put as follows:

Linguistic	Methodological	Cultural
The syllabus aims at consolidating and developing: • *Grammar:* **the learners will be trained in discovering the rules of English.** •*Phonetics*: **improving the pronunciation and intonation.** •*Vocabulary*: **increasing the learner's stock of lexical words.** • *The four skills*: **more training in listening, speaking, reading and writing aiming at communication and interaction in a free and creative way.**	Promoting the pupils' learning strategies aiming at autonomy. •Making the pupils acquire methods for working and thinking. •Getting pupils acquire strategies of self-evaluation. • Getting pupils to be able to exploit various documents and feel interested in subjects that are not dealt with in class	Making the pupil open up his mind through discovering the context of English civilization and culture. Thus, there is a necessity to: • Identify the pupils' real needs. • Regard English as a real tool of communication. •Develop oral communication (listening and speaking) and written Communication (reading and writing) • Set up situations of real communication. • Choose topics according to pupils' age and interests. • Focus on the pupil (pupil-centred teaching). • Use suitable teaching aids.

Table 3.3. Middle School Curriculum Objectives

Adapted from "Guidlines for Teachers of English in Charge of 3rd AM Classes"

3.3.1.2. ELT at Secondary School Level

After completing four years of English in the middle school, learners are supposed to be familiar with a basic knowledge of English. At the secondary level, learners are introduced to the four skills, grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, language functions and forms in addition to phonology. The programme is believed to offer activities to stimulate and develop learners' competencies. One of the major goals of this newly-adopted system is to make both the teacher and the learner come to a fruitful interaction. The following table illustrate the textbooks within the three years of instruction:

Year of Study	Textbook	N of hours/week
Secondary Education Year1: 1°A.S:	*At the Crossroads*	3hours
Secondary Education Year2: 2°A.S:	*Getting Through*	3hours
Secondary Education Year3: 3°A.S:	*New Prospects*	3hours

Table 3.4. English Coursebooks at Secondary School

The new curriculum uses different teaching material and interactive activities, like proverbs and sayings, jokes and games, portfolios and self-assessment, accompanied with pictures and illustrations. As far as speaking is concerned, the course books pay considerable attention to the oral skills. This includes a set of activities and integrative tasks which are intended to foster in the learners a number of abilities such as listening for details, for gist, developing awareness to specific features in English pronunciation, paying attention to discourse markers/sequencers when

listening to a lecture, a report etc... These accuracy tasks and activities are usually performed individually, in pairs or in small groups. (Teachers' Book: "*Getting Through*").

Some Teaching/Learning Difficulties

"Today, if you took an X-ray of the educational dynamics in Algeria one would think straightaway of the word anarchy or unprofessionalism"
Miliani (2010:73)

In order to empower the aforementioned view points, and despite the fact that CBA reflects rich opportunities for learners and teachers alike, a range of shortages have been detected by teachers and educationalists. For instance, Bouabdesselam (2001: 103) believes that:

> *The English syllabus in secondary education in Algeria is narrowly defined and restricted to a collection of functions that are randomly selected... however; the major lack of harmony between the various official documents is over the degree of specificity of overall objectives: instructions in the English syllabus are not in harmony with those in New lines and in pedagogical instruction.*

The quality of the resulting design material, as stated by experts was higher in process-oriented worked examples rather than product-oriented worked examples. Amongst these difficulties the following:

- *Overcrowded Classrooms*: The Algerian school classroom is generally made up of 30 to 45 pupils sitting in four rows. In

this vein, Guerid (1998:14) states: *"Because of the number, teachers are in situations which prevent them from doing their work; the consequence is that the level—inevitably poor—of the receptors, establishes itself to the teacher as the compulsory level of emission"*. Besides, in this situation, problems of discipline will be posed and individualization of language teaching will be difficult if not impossible. The teacher cannot, in all probabilities, manage and control the classroom, as questioned by Krieger (2005: 9): "*What options does a teacher have when his or her high school class consists of H 50 students?"*Teachers' efforts to organize them and control them always will doom to failure and de-motivation as put by Harmer (1991: 5): " *Classrooms that are badly lit and overcrowded can be excessively de-motivating"*

- *Individual's Learning Styles and Differences:* Learners learn differently according to their styles and personalities.

- *Teacher Training*: in our educational setting, each teacher relies on his own experience in deciding about the techniques strategies to be applied. Most of them teach the way they have been taught with limited innovation and change.

- *Teaching Materials*: teaching materials are restricted to traditional ones such as the board, the chalk, and the textbook; almost a total absence of audio-visual aids, laboratories and technological tools which may facilitate the learning process and motivate learners.

3.3.1.3. ELT at University Level

As a result of its importance, English is taught in all Algerian universities and, there is nearly no faculty free from English either in English departments or as ESP teaching in other departments. Like the other educational settings, reforms have been introduced to cope with the current global age, at the university level; the LMD system has been applied.

3.3.1.3.1. LMD Implementation: Towards a New Teaching

Outlook

After independence, the Algerian universities went through a long journey. Its dramatic changes were meant to meet the needs of the Algerian society, and have been marked by various reforms. Since then, the contribution of the University to national development has become more than crucial.

The higher educational system in Algeria is observed to be gradually shifting through different stages punctuated by a series of reforms which attempt to update the educational system according to the socioeconomic, environmental and technological needs of the country. Faced with considerable pressure, it was of great necessity and urgent need to change the Algerian educational system to cope with the expectations of the new directions and global trends of higher education.

Like many countries all over the world, Algeria has experienced the policy and principles of the *Bologna Process*, which was launched in **1999** by the Ministers of Education and university leaders of 29 **European** countries. Its **aim is to create a coherent and cohesive European Higher Education Area (EHEA),** its broad target is put by the European University Association (2004): ***"The Bologna Process does not aim to harmonise national educational systems but rather to provide tools to connect them"***. Participation in the Bologna Process is a **voluntary decision** taken by each country and its higher education community to support the principles underlined in the European Higher Education Area. (European University Association, 2004).

The result of joining this process is the adoption of the LMD principles in the Algerian higher educational system. It is worth stating at this level that all participating countries have agreed on a **three cycle degree system** for undergraduates (Bachelor degrees) and graduates (Master and PhD degrees). (European University Association, 2004).

The application of the LMD system in Algeria is regarded as a move towards the ongoing globalisation process since *"this Anglo-Saxon programme has proved its success and it has, more or less, been adopted by most European countries"* Miliani (2010:71). Without doubt, the Algerian educational system has become *'obsolete in a world that moves, goes fast and with the everlasting innovations and the necessary changes induced by the digital revolution'* (Haraoubia, Minister of Higher Education (2007), stated in Miliani 2010).

This reform is believed to offer further possibilities and opportunities for students and teachers so that both become involved in training process. The teacher has the opportunity to present training courses based on an active pedagogical panel and the student, on the other hand, has the opportunity to contribute vigorously in his training. Therefore, extra teaching hours are supplemented to the training outside university throughout projects and activities.

If one reflects upon this system in the Algerian educational system, one may find that the Algerian ministry of Higher Education *"had to rely on the innovative methods of the linguistic competence. In order to render the LMD architecture more beneficial, a number of measures have to be adopted at the level of curriculum design and integration"* Mami (2013:246). Within this process, achievement may rely on the following perspectives:

- Planning and evaluation of the students' needs as well as those liaised to the socioeconomic market,
- Developing multimedia at the level of oral expression and vocabulary,
- Encouraging student enhancement with mobility,
- Creating cooperation between universities who share the same objectives and interests.
- Create listening cells and audits in order to register students' propositions.
- Prepare students for vocational education through the choice of English.

Mami (2013:246).

At another layer of analysis, The LMD system attempts to attain the following objectives set by the Ministry of Higher Education (2003). These essential principles underline the vision of the task, and they can be summarised as follows:

➢ Ensure a high teaching quality according to the social demand; in terms of access to higher education;
➢ Achieve a harmony with the socio-economic development in all possible interactions between the university and the world.
➢ Be more open to the global developments, particularly in science and technology;
➢ Encourage international cooperation and diversity.
➢ Lay the foundations of good governance based on participation and consultation.

In contrast, a number of educationalists (Megnounif, 2009; Miliani, 2010; Mami, 2013) consider that this reform is not suitable in the Algerian context. For instance, Miliani (2010:70) believes that: *"So much has been said by the ill-intentioned adversaries, the poorly-informed public, and the badly-trained supporters. So between the rock and the hard place, this reform cannot develop harmoniously"*. Within the same line of thought, Megnounif (2009) assumes that despite the settled ideal objectives, a number of limits are diagnosed:

● Educational programs no longer meet the new socio-economical data.

- Training mono disciplinary in classical approach where concept of general culture is completely absent.
- A significant failure rate due primarily to uncertainty about the future among students.
- Lack of motivation among teachers and students.
- Centralized management of the university.

Paradoxically, in an attempt to respond to such claims, Haraoubia (2013), Minister of Higher Education, states: *"those stating that the LMD system has failed, did not understand the real content of this system until today!"*

3.3.1.3.2. LMD Features and Objectives

It seems appropriate to go through the objectives of this newly adopted system and introduce the three constituent elements of the system. The LMD system is composed of the Licence degree, the equivalence of the BA (Bachelor Degree), with 6 semesters (three years o study) and then a Master degree for two years (4 semesters) and finally, the Doctorate degree for three years of research (6 semesters) as it is shown below:
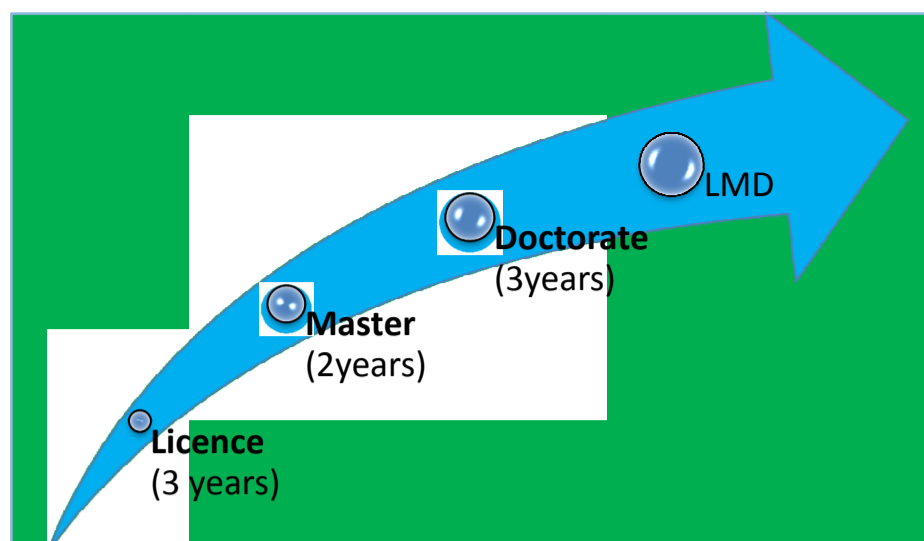
Figure 3.2. LMD Structure

In the "Licence" degree, students are expected to attend 400 hours within six semesters. New modular courses have been added in this stage to allow students have as much choices as possible when moving to the second phase of the system (i.e., the Master Degree).

This system is based on "Teaching Units" which students should accumulate at the end of each semester. Furthermore, "Credits" are elements which mean that if students do not get the needed credits for the first semester, they may pass to the second semester with the credits got in the first. Nonetheless, they remain indebted even if they pass to the second year, thus, they should gather these lacking credits at the end. From another angle, this system is based on a number of novel elements as put in this adopted table:

Element	Aim
Semestrialisation	For a better organisation and more flexibility in the system, the division is based on semesters rather than years of formation.

Three Teaching Units	*The teaching process is based on units:* *Fundamental* Unit: where the basic subjects are grouped; *Methodological* Unit: which is primarily destined to prepare learners to acquire skills in methodology, *Discovery* Unit: where students can get acquainted to new subjects in new fields.
Credits	Each Teaching Unit corresponds to a number of credits that can be capitalized and transferred.
Domains	They cover many coherent disciplines including other subjects that lead to other specialties and particular options proposed to the students.
Tutoring	This is a new pedagogical activity for the teacher introduced in the LMD system. This element permits a direct relation between the teacher and the student outside the academic sessions, i.e., the teacher-learner interaction becomes easier and closer.

Table 3.5. LMD System Features and Objectives (adopted from « Guide d'Information sur le Système LMD, 2005»

As abovementioned, the aim behind changing the system of teaching in our educational system at university level is to create an overall innovation within the Algerian universities and to permit learners follow the flow of technological growth to keep pace with the world's educational system. As far as language-teaching is concerned, it is supposed to be one of the building block of the global enterprise of higher educational programmes in the future.

3.3.1.3.3. Foreign Languages Department: *A Brief Overview*

The department of foreign languages is located at the University of Abu Bekr Belkaid- Tlemcen, faculty of Letters and Foreign Languages. The National Institute of Foreign Languages and Letters was founded in 1988, and in 1995, the Institute of Foreign Languages became autonomous comprising two sections: French & English. In 1998, an endeavour was

held to adopt faculties, thus, the faculty of Letters and Human and Social Sciences was established.

However, in 2010, a decision was made to split the Faculty of Letters and Human and Social Sciences into two sub-faculties, namely, the faculty of Human and Social Sciences and the faculty of Letters and Languages where the department of Foreign Languages belong. The department of foreign languages consists of four sub-sections, notably English, French, Spanish and Translation. As far as the application of the LMD system in the department of foreign languages, it was till 2007, that "LMD des affaires" in the French section was introduced. Besides, in 2008 it was the turn of the English section to launch it.

Enrolled students come from different parts of the country, being Baccalaureate holders from three different streams; Life and Natural Sciences, Mathematics, Humanities and foreign Languages. The task of the English section is to prepare students for the *'Licence degree'*, equivalent to the 'B.A' in the Anglo-Saxon system of education. The time spent for this purpose in the LMD system is three years, during which the learners are presented with the necessary knowledge needed, consolidating their linguistic knowledge already acquired before.

During the three years, students are intended to complete courses of Grammar, Written Production (TPE), Oral Production (TPO), Phonetics/Phonology and other subjects such as Linguistics, Literature, Anglo-Saxon Civilization, ICTs, TEFL, Research Methodology, Discourse Comprehension and Psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics as compulsory

modules. The following table provides the modules taught during the three years of instruction, i.e., six semesters:

Throughout the third year, students are required to choose between two options; either language studies or literature and civilisation. Besides, they are expected to write an extended essay *'memoir'* or undergo teacher training sessions which are complemented by a pedagogical training report. The *Licence* degree opens door for students to move to the degree of *'Master'* within two years and *'Doctorate'* within three years.

Concerning the curriculum, each teacher is provided with specific pedagogical guidelines for each module, and it is up to him to sketch out the content of the modular course according to his students' needs and difficulties encountered. First-year English syllabus seems mostly to be based on a fundamental skill-based programme, i.e., the focus is on the language skills. As far as the teaching of oral production is concerned, it holds an important place in the teaching syllabus. However, it enjoys being taught for just three hours per week until the second- year of instruction. Surprisingly, it is not integrated neither during the third year nor in first year of the Master degree.

Regarding pronunciation, it is one of the most conspicuous features of a person's speech. Nevertheless, pronunciation is rarely taught as a separate module beyond the initial introduction to the language's sound system in the early stages of instruction, mainly; in oral production and phonetics. Nonetheless, the objectives of the phonetic module are generally stated in the official documents of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research as:

- To teach EFL students elementary concepts in phonetics and phonology,
- Application through exercises and pronunciation.

Hence, it focuses on preparing students develop a certain level of fluency to speak and understand English. The following section will be concerned with a description of the target population under investigation.

3.4. SAMPLE MANAGEMENT

One of the most challenging tasks a researcher faces in conducting a study is recruiting an appropriate sample. Any investigation should be supported by subjects on which the experiment is built. A sample may be defined as a *subset* of a population; in this line of thought Dörnyei (2007:96) establishes the difference between sample and population as: "*the sample is the group of participants whom the researcher actually examines in an empirical investigation and the population is the group of people whom the study is about*".

Researchers need to take sampling decisions during the early stages of planning any research work, as stated by Cohen *et al.* (2005: 92): "*Questions of sampling arise directly out of the issue of defining the population on which the research will focus. Researchers must take sampling decisions early in the overall planning of a piece of research*". Conversely, it is very difficult for researchers to assess how representative the sample they have drawn must be (Morrison 1993).

It is worth pointing out that questions related to sampling start mainly from the issue of defining and recruiting the population on which the research will focus. Thus, a number of influencing *"factors such as expense, time and accessibility frequently prevent researchers from gaining information from the whole population"*, Cohen *et al.* (2005 :92).

It seems crucial to conceive that sampling differs greatly according to the way of approaching research, whether qualitatively or quantitatively. In quantitative studies, the main aim is *"straightforward: we need a sizeable sample to be able to iron out idiosyncratic individual differences. Qualitative research, on the other hand, focuses on describing, understanding, and clarifying a human experience"*. Dörnyei (2005:126).

Above and beyond, a frequently posed issue which often propounds itself in dealing with a piece of research is how large their samples for the research should be. It seems that there is no clear-cut answer, for the correct sample size depending on the *purpose* of the study and the *nature* of the population under question. In this sense, Cohen *et al.* (2005:92) point out that to accurately decide on the sampling strategy to be used, a researcher needs to consider the following key factors:

➢ The sample size;
➢ The representativeness and parameters of the sample;
➢ Access to the sample;
➢ The sampling

Within a new state-of-the-art perspective, and in their text directed at educational research, Fraenkel and Wallen (2003) provide the following minimum sample numbers as a suggested guideline: 100 for *descriptive studies*, 50 for *correlational studies*, and 15 to 30 per group in *experimental studies* depending on how strongly controlled they are. Dörnyei (2012:82) currently adds: *"In the survey research literature a range of between 1% and 10% of the population is usually mentioned as the "magic" sampling fraction, depending on how careful the selection has been"*. In the present research, this view was adopted to decide on the suitable sample, i.e., 10% of the population was selected.

Another vital variable is *generalizability*, for instance, if a researcher tries to get generalizable results, then it is all his responsibility to make an argument about the *representativeness* of his sample. Likewise, it is significant to consider the setting too, i.e., a study conducted at a university setting may not be generalizable to a private language school setting and vice versa.

There are many strategies used to achieve a representative sample. Because the manner in which a sample is chosen is of great importance, researchers should be careful about how the samples were selected. Therefore, sampling strategies are strongly required in various fields of research, in this sense; one should be familiar with the possible methods of sampling to be followed. Cohen and Holliday (1979, 1982, 1996); Schofield (1996) propose that there are two main methods of sampling; a *probability* sample (also known as a random sample) or a *non-probability* sample (also known as a purposive sample), and it is up to the researcher to decide on which sample to opt for in his research.

The main difference between them is that, in a probability sample the possibilities of the selected population are known; whereas, in a non-probability sample, the opportunities of the selected members of the wider population are unknown Cohen (2005: 99). In the former, every member of the target population has an equal chance of being selected, i.e., *'inclusion or exclusion from the sample is a matter of chance and nothing else'* Cohen *et al* (2005: 99), i.e., a number of informants will be excluded and others included depending on the purpose and need of research.

There are several types of probability samples: simple random samples; systematic samples; stratified samples; cluster samples; stage samples, and multi-phase samples. They all have a measure of randomness built into them and therefore have a degree of generalizability. As for non-probability sample, there are many types as well: convenience sampling, quota sampling, dimensional sampling, purposive sampling and snowball sampling Cohen *et al.* (2005). Unlike probability samples, each type of sample seeks only to *"represent itself or instances of itself in a similar population, rather than attempting to represent the whole, undifferentiated population"*. Cohen *et al.* (2005:102).

Therefore, the researcher needs to consider the extent to which the sample represents the whole population in question. As mentioned before, a sample must be *representative* of the population in order for the results to be *generalizable* to some extent. Yet, if it is not representative, the findings have limited usefulness. Any researcher should be mindful in his selection of the sampling strategies to be adopted; his decision will be

taken according to the *purposes* of the research, the *time scales* and *constraints on the research, the methods of data collection,* and *the methodology of the research,* (Cohen, *et al.* 2005). If *validity* is to be considered, the sampling chosen must be appropriate for all of these factors.

Given the impression that it appears impractical or impossible to test every member of a population, in the present study, the target population is teachers and LMD students at Abu Bekr Belkaid University –Tlemcen, the selected sample are thirty (30)first-year LMD students and seven English teachers at the department of foreign languages, section of English.

3.4.1. Biodata Collection

It is also of great necessity, for any researcher involved in any field of research and classroom investigation, to identify his sample' profile needs and interests for the sake of constructing systematically the basic knowledge needed for a better research experience. Therefore, the researcher, in this section, strives to describe the sample selected.

3.4.1.1. Students' Biodata

This study is concerned with first-year LMD students from Tlemcen University, English Department. Thirty 30 of them were randomly chosen. The students involved in this classroom-investigation are in the age group of 17 to 20 years old, they are Baccalaureate holders from different streams (Life and Natural Sciences, Humanities, letters and philosophy and foreign Languages). As they come from government schools, they

share roughly the same educational background. Each student had completed 7 years of English study prior to entering university, but they had very few opportunities to practice and speak English outside the four walls of the classroom.

Arabic is their mother tongue, French is their first foreign language and English is their second foreign language. First-year LMD students are exposed to basic knowledge about English as a consolidation to the knowledge already acquired at the *Lycée*. Along these lines, they are concerned with: Grammar, Oral Production, Written Production, Phonetics, Linguistics, Discourse Comprehension, Research Methodology, Anglo Saxon Civilization, Literature and ICTs. It is worth pointing out, at this level, that the participants had acquired some basic knowledge in phonetics before in the middle and secondary school. The following table shows the distribution of hours and credits over the modules during the first semester:

Unité d'Enseignement	Teaching Unit	Course	TD	Coef.	Credit
Grammaire	**Grammar**	3	3	5	5
Phonétique	**Phonetics**	1h30	1h30	3	3
Initiation à la Linguistique	**Linguistics**	1h30		3	3
Techniques de Production Orale TPO	**Oral Expression**	1h30	1h30	5	5
Techniques de Production Ecrite TPE	**Written Expression**	1h30	1h30	5	5

Compréhension du Discours : Ecrit/Parlé	**Discourse Comprehension**	1h30	1h30	3	3
Initiation aux études littéraires	**Literature**	1h30		2	2
Culture et civilisation anglo-saxonnes	**Civilisation**	1h30		1	1
Méthodologie de recherché	**Research Method**		1h30	1	1
T.I.C.E. (Informatique)	**ICTs**		1h30	1	1
Culture Generale	**GC**	1h30		1	1
Total Semester ½		15	12	30	30

Table 3.7. First Year LMD Modular Courses

The need for and usefulness of authentic materials have been increasingly acknowledged by educationalists (Macdonald, Badger &White, 2000). Empirical studies (Lee, 1995; Baird, 2004; Miller, 2003) have confirmed positive results obtained by learners who are given opportunities to interact with authentic materials. The English section in the department owns two phonetic laboratories which are necessary for the teaching of speaking and pronunciation. Audio-visual aids selected by the teacher display a great opportunity to motivate learners and create a relaxing, technological environment which help learners contribute and progress.

3.4.1.2. Students' Needs Account

An increasing number of linguists and language educators emphasize the importance of understanding the learners' needs to be able to establish a suitable selection of courses according to their requirements (Brindley, 1984). In this sense, Dörnyei (2001a: 13) states that: *"So much is going on in a classroom... Therefore, in order to understand why students behave as they do, we need a detailed and most likely eclectic construct that represents multiple perspectives"*. Thus, before starting any intervention in a research, it is crucial to have a close look on the learners' needs and levels.

For instance, Omaggio (1993) and Rogers *et al.* (1988) state that if students are to develop a functional proficiency in language and use it communicatively in the real world, they need to encounter the language of that world in the classroom. That is, they need ample opportunities to see and hear the language used by the speakers of the language they are learning. What is more, they need opportunities to practise using the language to cope with everyday situations they might come across outside the classroom.

Teachers are required to bring massive amounts of authentic materials into the classroom and make them consistently accessible to their students (Meyer, 1984; Rogers & Medley, 1988) to meet their needs. Recognizing students' needs is of great essence to design a relevant curriculum and appropriate materials. Concerning the learners' needs in pronunciation instruction, authentic materials are believed to better the

learning process, moreover, teachers are supposed to explore a variety of methods according to their interests, learning styles and preferences to help learners comprehend and be aware of pronunciation features.

As for a speaking course, identification of learners' current level is crucial, i.e., teachers need to be aware of their learners' proficiency. In this vein, Richards and Bihlke (2011:5) state that:

The initial stages of a beginning-level speaking course, for example, may focus on mastering greetings, introductions, and small talk in English, while the contents of an intermediate speaking course will usually include functions such as giving opinions and expressing agreement or disagreement, as well as taking part in discussions and interviews.

Besides, learners need opportunities to take part in various contexts using language in a meaningful way. In addition to this, learners expect a creative supportive speaking course which motivates them to speak and progress within a general relaxing atmosphere.

3.4.2. Teachers' Biodata

The informants are seven teachers from the English Department of Abu-Bekr Belkaid University, two doctors and five holding their magister

degree and reading for their *'Doctorate'*, the equivalent of 'PhD' in the Anglo-Saxon system. Their teaching experience varies from three to seventeen years, and they are in charge of the following modules: Linguistics, Research Methodology, Oral Production, Phonetics and Phonology, TEFL, Sociolinguistics and General Psychology.

3.5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY: *Design & Rationale*

In the last decades, attention has grown in research in second and foreign language learning and teaching. The increased professional activity is strongly reflected in the growing number of books, journals and conferences devoted to issues of research. Our experiment is based on a classroom-oriented research, which combines different approaches. For instance, a classroom experiment may be accompanied by rich descriptions of the different instructional interventions or by analysis of classroom discourse twinned with qualitative and quantitative analysis of students' achievements. Combination of these approaches may afford comprehensive results and effective conclusions. As believed by Allwright and Bailey (1991:68): *"increasingly it appears, second language classroom researchers are calling for judicious selection and combined approaches rather than rigid adherence to one approach over another"*.

3.5.1. Classroom-Oriented Research in Foreign Language Education

Our investigation is based on the classroom-oriented research approach which may be defined by Allwright (1983:191) as:

Classroom-centered research is just that—research centered on the classroom, as distinct from, for example, research that concentrates on the inputs to the classroom (the syllabus, the teaching materials) or the outputs from the classroom (learner achievement scores). It does not ignore in any way or try to devalue the importance of such inputs and outputs. It simply tries to investigate what happens inside the classroom when learners and teachers come together.

It was also described by Johnson (1993:1) as being: *"Research conducted in classrooms, research that deals with learning and teaching in institutional contexts, and other research that is highly relevant to language teaching and learning".*

From another angle, researchers often claim that the topics of this kind of research may include how to conduct an experiment on language loss, pragmatics across cultures, learning strategies, affective factors, language proficiency and testing, computer-enhanced learning, content-based learning, and discourse analysis (Johnson 1993). In a word, any subject which deals with classroom, teaching and learning can become the subject of classroom-oriented research. The classroom-oriented research conducted in this research, for example, is devoted to a deep analysis of self-confidence effects on learners' speaking achievements.

Within a classroom-oriented setting, a number of researchers point out the necessity of a particular methodology which needs to be adopted when conducting this kind of research. In this respect, Johnson (1993)

tackles six approaches in which she maintains that they are not *mutually exclusive*, but rather interacting with one another in experimentation. These six categories are: *correlational approaches, case studies, survey research, ethnographic research, discourse analysis,* and *experimental research.*

- ❖ *Correlational Approaches*: refer not to "*how one collects data, but the types of research questions that are asked*" Johnson (1993:4). It is frequently quantitative in nature. This type of methodology may explore topics which range from language testing to language-learning strategies. For example, Ely (1986) examines participation in the classroom and its prediction for learning outcomes.
- ❖ *Case Studies*: refer to "*an examination of a case in its context*" Johnson (1993:7). Case studies are used to explore issues including child literacy, adult language learning, teaching strategies and programme evaluation.
- ❖ *Survey research:* may offer valuable information about classroom practice and teaching methods, providing the "*status of the profession and about the political, demographic, and programmatic contexts in which teachers teach and students learn languages*" Johnson (1993:9).
- ❖ *Ethnographic Research:* looks at the study of cultural and social phenomena as they affect the classroom. "*Ethnographically-oriented research ….refers to work that involves the holistic study of social and cultural phenomena-including communication*" Johnson (1993:11). This approach may be used to collect data of individual instances of speech acts, or ways of language socialization across cultures.

❖ *Experimental Research:* the researcher's goal in this approach is to establish a *"cause-and-effect relationship between two different phenomena, to establish that a specific set of actions or conditions (the independent variable) causes changes in some outcome (the dependent variable)"* (Johnson 1993: 13). This approach randomly selects participants into the experimental and control groups, and experiments are generally conducted in labs.

❖ *Discourse Analysis: "the study of a language beyond the sentence".* This approach looks at written texts and oral interchanges and analyzes them in an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary fashion. Among its uses, it studies teacher-student interaction, student-student interaction politeness strategies, and classroom discourse...

Success to these six methodologies, according to Johnson (1993: 8), is dependent on:

➢ the development of a flexible, working research design that involves productive refocusing;
➢ the use of multiple data-collection procedures
➢ the collection of adequate amounts of information over time
➢ the validity or credibility of the information
➢ the data analysis procedures; and
➢ the typicality and range of examples

In general, then, it is clearly advantageous to fuse several of these methodologies in order to build a comprehensive answer to a problematics. This research work is, then, an attempt to investigate how learners' self-confidence enhancement through pronunciation practice

may influence their speaking achievements. It relies, therefore, for the most part, on an experimental methodology, while integrating some correlational and survey techniques as well.

3.5.2. Research Objectives and Motives

Considering Arnold's (2000) view point about speaking as the most anxiety provoking skill, and his belief that this anxiety comes from learners' lack of self-confidence, the present research is based on a "cause and effect" dimension. It attempts at looking on how may pronunciation practice enhances learners' self-confidence and therefore, develop their speaking competence. (see chapter one for more details).

Variables of the Study:

The variables of this study are:

- Self-confidence as an independent variable and it has three dimensions; *global self-confidence, situational confidence and task self-confidence.*
- Speaking achievement in English and pronunciation as dependent variables.

❖ To measure correlation between learners' pronunciation, self-confidence and speaking competence.

❖ To highlight factors in the teaching process influencing learners' speaking performance based on learners' and teachers' perceptions.

❖ To compare some high- and low-confidence learner groups in terms of their learning goals and the quality of their learning experiences in order to find out if it might be possible to enhance students' speaking competence by modifying certain parameters of our instructional contexts.

3.6. RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

It is often believed that the "*The backbone of any survey study is the instrument used for collecting data*" (Dörnyei, 2011). Thus, based on a *multimethod* approach, which requires a multiple sources of data collection, the researcher has designed the present study. It includes the use of *questionnaires* for both our EFL teachers and learners at the onset of the study; an *interview* to check their speaking difficulties and reasons behind their reluctance to take part in classroom discussion. Speaking *tests* are also used to check learners' progress, in addition to diaries distributed to students to state their feelings about themselves after every speaking course. This was done to achieve triangulation to cross-check the validity of the results and to collect data which help the researcher handle the problem from different angles.

In the sense of triangulation, Elliott (1977) gave triangulation a definition that was different in emphasis from some of the other

researchers. He states that triangulation involves *synthesizing* a tripartite series of views from three separate angles of a particular teaching situation; those of the teacher, the student and a particular observer, i.e., "*who gathers the account, how they are elicited and who compares them depend largely on the context*" Elliott (1977:10 Qtd. In McKernan 1991:185). Each point in the triangle is justifiable since each of the triangulations points occupies a unique sphere of knowledge with regard to accessing the relevant data in a particular teaching situation. This may be put as follows:
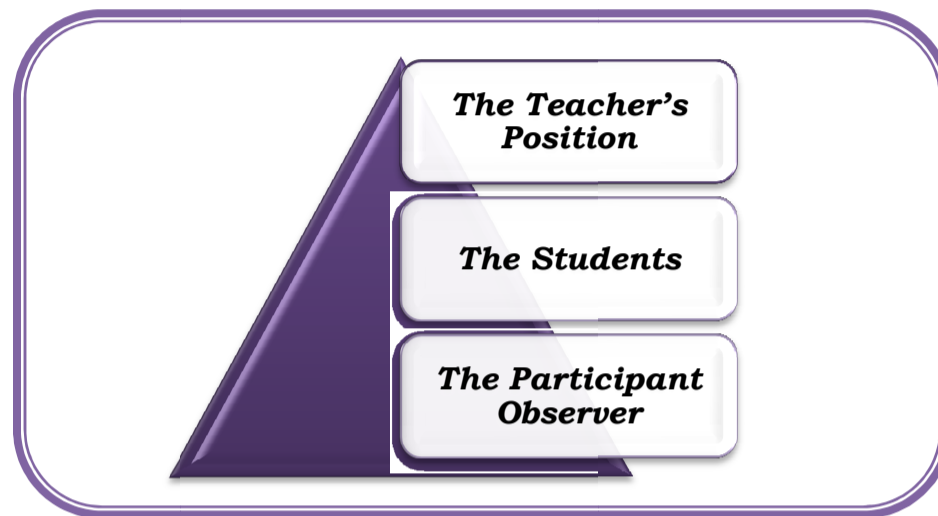
Figure 3.3. Triangulation (Elliott 1977)

- *The Teacher's Position* provides the best access to gauge the students' intentions via introspections of the situation,
- *The Students* are the ones best positioned to describe how their responses to a situation are influenced by a teacher's actions.
- *The Participant Observer* is best poised to collect pertinent data about the observable features of the intervention. In this way, a person occupying one point on the triangle can compare their one

account with the two others, and then further test and revise it after encountering more relevant data (Elliot, 1977:10).

Referring to my research project, I used triangulation to strengthen my analysis by a variety of data sources such as questionnaires, diaries, speaking assessment test, and semi-structured interview: these meet the criteria of triangulation by looking at something from more than one perspective. Triangulation ensures that researchers are seeing all sides of a situation, and it also provides greater depth and dimension, thereby enhancing accuracy and credibility. In this way, *triangulation* is assumed to be a powerful way of demonstrating concurrent validity, since exclusive reliance on one single method may in all probabilities bias or, to some extent, distort the researcher's picture of the particular area of research s/he is investigating.

3.6.1. Questionnaires

One of the most common methods in collecting data in foreign language research is to use questionnaires of various kinds, since the essence of any scientific research is the attempt made to find out answers to questions in a systematic manner. Therefore, *questionnaires* have gained considerable attention in the social sciences. In this line of thought, Dörnyei (2003:3) states: "*questionnaires are certainly the most often employed data collection devices in statistical work, with the most well-known questionnaire type - the census - being the flagship of every national statistical office*" . On his part, Brown (2001:6) reports a definition of the questionnaire as being: "*Any written instrument that presents*

respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react either by writing out their answers or selecting from among existing answers".

As with any research tool, there are pros and cons regarding its application. Questionnaires cannot be the perfect research instruments, they have some serious limitations, and some of these have led several researchers to claim that questionnaire data are not really reliable or valid. As a researcher, one should be aware of the advantages and disadvantages underlying questionnaire application as put by Dörnyei (2003:9) in the following table:

Advantages	Disadvantages
Collect a huge amount of information in less time. Not time consuming.	It is very easy to produce unreliable and invalid data by means of ill-constructed questionnaires.
Data collection can be fast and relatively straightforward.	Simplicity and superficiality of answers by participants.
Cost-effectiveness.	Unreliable and unmotivated respondents.
They can be successfully used with a variety of people in a variety of situations targeting a variety of topics.	Respondent literacy problems (especially in social research)

Table 3.8. Advantages and Disadvantages of Questionnaires

In the present research work, questionnaires were chosen for eliciting data from the informants to investigate the research questions and hypotheses. Two questionnaires were designed for both students and teachers; a *self-confidence questionnaire* (see appendix 'A') was administered to learners, it was divided into three separate sections for eliciting information about their confidence level. Besides, another questionnaire was directed to teachers (see appendix 'C') for the sake of getting data about their beliefs about their students' proficiency level, especially in oral production courses.

3.6.1.1. Questionnaires' Layout

After a number of preliminary considerations, the researcher has finally arrived at the current questionnaire design. Three types of questions were used in the teachers' questionnaire: Closed, open and mixed. Moreover, Likert scale was used to check learners' self-confidence degree in speaking.

- ❖ *Closed / Closed-Ended Questions:* the respondent is provided with *ready-made* response options to choose from, generally by surrounding or ticking one of the options or by putting an 'X' in the appropriate box. According to Wilson and McLean, (1994:21): *"Closed questions prescribe the range of responses from which the respondent may choose. In general closed questions are quick to complete and straightforward to code and do not discriminate unduly on the basis of how articulate the respondents are", i.e.,*

they request the informant to opt for one of the proposed possibilities without commenting or adding a remark.

E.g. Have you ever paid your students' attention towards their self-confidence when speaking?

☐ Always

☐ Sometimes

☐ Rarely

☐ Never

- *Mixed Questions:* ask the informant to choose one of the proposed possibilities, then justify his answer.

e.g. Do you think that learners' high feeling of self-confidence effect their speaking performance?

☐ Yes   ☐   No

   If yes, how?

………………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………

- *Open Questions:* invite the informants to express freely their point of view in their own terms. They "*include items where the actual question is not followed by response options for the respondent to choose from but rather by some blank space (e. g., dotted lines) for the respondent to fill*". Dörnyei (2003: 47)

e.g. What kinds of situations and language classroom activities have you found to be anxiety- provoking and confidence lowering for the students?

…………………………………………………………………………………………

(The examples are taken from the teachers' questionnaire, see appendix "C")

- *Ratings scales:* in recent research, they appear to be the most popular items in research questionnaires. They involve the respondent to make an evaluative judgement of the target by marking one of a series of categories organized into a *scale.* In the present study, *Likert scales* were used.

- *Likert Scale:* it is the most commonly used scale, its name refers to its inventor Rensis Likert in 1932. Its popularity due to the fact that it is simple, versatile and reliable (Dörnyei 2003). Likert scales are made up of a series of statements all of which are linked to a particular target. In this line of thought, McIver and Carmines (1981: 22-23) describe the Likert scale as follows:

A set of items, composed of approximately an equal number of favorable and unfavorable statements concerning the attitude object, is given to a group of subjects. They are asked to respond to each statement in terms of their own degree of agreement or disagreement…. The specific responses to the items are combined so that individuals with the most favorable attitudes will have the highest scores while individuals with the least favorable (or unfavorable) attitudes will have the lowest scores.

The statements on Likert scales should be according to Dörnyei (2003:37) *"characteristic that is expressing either a positive/favorable or a negative/unfavorable attitude towards the object of interest"*. In a similar vein, participants are asked to indicate the extent to which they *agree* or *disagree* with these items by marking one of the responses ranging from *'strongly agree'* to *'strongly disagree'*. Following the scale administration, each response option is given a number for scoring purposes. For example:

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel that people often consider what I say as unimportant.	5	4	3	2	1

3.6.1.2. Piloting the Questionnaires

Prior to the administration of the full-designed questionnaire, it seemed wiser to pilot the questionnaires at the onset of the academic year 2011/2012 in order to collect feedback on the functionality of this research instrument. In this fashion, Dörnyei (2003: 63) considers that: *"an integral part of questionnaire construction is **'field testing'**, that is, **piloting** the questionnaire at various stages of its development on a sample of people who are similar to the target sample the instrument has been designed for"*. These trials were done as a feedback collection in order to assess the validity of the questions used and whether they fulfil the aim they were designed for as put by Cohen *et al.* (2005:260): *"The wording of*

questionnaires is of paramount importance and that pretesting is crucial to its success. A pilot has several functions, principally to increase the reliability, validity and practicability of the questionnaire".

Therefore, based on this information, the researcher made some modifications and fine-tuning in the final version of the teachers and learners' questionnaire. Some of the questions were reformulated and others were completely omitted and replaced as a result of being misunderstood (especially by learners). In this sense, Oppenheim (1992:48) remarks: *"everything about the questionnaire should be piloted; nothing should be excluded, not even the type face or the quality of the paper!"* Dörnyei (2003: 64) considers that piloting is vital because the pilot test can highlight questions:

- Whose wording may be ambiguous;
- Which are too difficult for the respondent to reply to;
- Which may, or should be, eliminated because, contrary to the initial expectations, they do not provide any unique information or because they turn out to measure something irrelevant;
- Which - in the case of open-ended questions - are problematic to code into a small set of meaningful categories.

3.6.1.3. One-to-One Administration

It is very crucial to acknowledge the fact that the method of administering questionnaires represents a serious debate among researchers. For instance, in social research, questionnaires may be administered *by mail.* In educational research, on the other side of the

coin, it is different in this respect because administration is non-postal, i.e., *by hand.* Hence, two different subtypes might be distinguished, *one-to-one administration (self-Administered)* and *group administration.* According to Dörnyei (2003:81), *"One-to-one administration refers to a situation when someone delivers the questionnaire by hand to the designated person and arranges the completed form to be picked up later (e. g., handing out questionnaires to colleagues at work)".* In the present research, *one-to-one administration* method was followed so that the contact with the respondents may help explain the purpose of the enquiry and also encourage cooperation. Furthermore, the availability of the administrator while learners complete the questionnaire seems fundamental when help is needed.

3.6.1.4. Teachers' One-to-one Questionnaire Administration

The questionnaire was divided into three rubrics, the first category of questions aimed at eliciting data from the informants (i.e., teachers) about their teaching experience, their post graduate option and the modules they are in charge of.

In the second category of questions, the researcher attempts to draw teachers' attention towards self-confidence, as a psychological variable that may prohibit the learning process from taking place. Questions intend to specifically get an idea about the relationship between self-confidence and speaking performance. The researcher endeavoured at this level to bring forth the teacher's opinion about their role in raising learners' awareness about their psychological health and also their

teaching efforts as far as learners' psychology is concerned. Additionally, in an attempt to find a fine relationship between the two variables, teachers were required to provide their feelings about the learners' self-confidence when speaking, reflecting upon signs of high and low self-confidence. Finally, teachers are asked about their beliefs about learners' reluctance to participate in the classroom and reasons for active learners' participation, besides, they are requested to reveal situations and language classroom activities they found anxiety provoking, to end up with opening the door for them to suggest their efforts to help learners cope with their psychological problems in the classroom.

Eventually, the last rubric strives to establish possible relationships between pronunciation and self-confidence, opening the door for teachers to raise learner's awareness towards these two variables and how may the two play cause and effect roles.

3.6.1.5. Self-Confidence Questionnaire

This questionnaire aims at finding out ideas and impressions about the learners' self-confidence, gathering data on how they value themselves in learning English. The Likert scale was used in view of its simplicity, flexibility and reliability. The researcher draws the participants' attention towards the fact that there are no right or wrong answers, and that their responses will be dealt with confidentially, and used only for research purposes. The participants are asked to indicate the extent to which they *agree* or *disagree* with a number of items by marking one of the responses ranging from '*strongly agree*' to '*strongly disagree*'.

The scale consists of a 48 item in which statements refer to personal qualities and feelings about themselves where the participants were asked to state to what degree they agree with the statements via a 5-point Likert scale (see Appendix 'A'). Prior to its administration, it was piloted as mentioned above; ten first-year EFL students were randomly selected, for the purpose of trial of the soundness of the questions. It was also practical to translate the questionnaire into Arabic to ensure better understanding of its items (see Appendix 'B').

Research in foreign language education has always been calling for reliability and validity of data; therefore, any research instrument needs opportunities for consistency and validation. A great number of researchers (Anderson, 1985; Dörnyei, 2003) believe that a questionnaire may have "*appropriate and well-documented reliability in at least one aspect: **internal consistency**. This attribute refers to the homogeneity of the items making up the various multi-item scales within the questionnaire. If your instrument has it, you can feel fairly safe*". Dörnyei (2003:69). Hence, to settle on the internal consistency of the questionnaire, the *Correlation Coefficient* and Chronbach's Alpha for every section of the whole questionnaire were computed as explained in Appendix 'H'. Results show that the Internal Consistency was found to be .85 which is reliable enough for the study (see appendix 'H').

The above results denote the homogeneity of the questionnaire items. Another way to examine the questionnaire validity is *Time Allocation of the questionnaire,* when piloting the questionnaire, some students handed in the completed questionnaire papers after thirty-five

minutes; others delivered it after forty-five minutes. The average time, was computed as follows:

$$\frac{45 \quad 35}{2} \quad 40$$

After piloting the questionnaire, the final copy was ready for administration; it was conducted during the second term of the academic year 2011-2012.

The questionnaire was divided into three sections (see Appendix 'A'), namely test confidence (global), classroom performance (situational) and speaking confidence (task). However, when administered to learners, the researcher avoids separating the different sections so that participants will not be influenced by titles.

The first section, test confidence contains fifteen items: two positive statements and thirteen negative statements about the learners' overall confidence. It attempts at gathering information on the way learners feel about themselves and cope with unexpected situations. As for the second section, *classroom performance,* it has four positive statements and fifteen negative statements about the learners' English level and how they consider their capacities. Finally, the third section was about *speaking confidence,* englobing four positive statements and fourteen negative ones. It attempts at collecting information on how learners see their speaking level and competence and how they conceive pronunciation training and self-confidence.

3.6.2. Learners' Interview

Regarding an interview, it provides in-depth information about a particular research issue. It was put by Kvale (1996: 14) as being an *interview*, i.e., *"an interchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest"* he also includes that (1996:6):

An interview is a conversation that has a structure and a purpose. It goes beyond the spontaneous exchange of view as in everyday conversation and become a careful questioning and listening approach with the purpose of obtaining thoroughly tested knowledge.

Interviews are also regarded as being *"a flexible tool for data collection, enabling multi-sensory channels to be used: verbal, non-verbal, spoken and heard"* Cohen, Lawrence and Morrison (2007:349). From another stand point, it is to be mentioned that throughout the manifold approaches to language research, different types of interview are proposed. For example, LeCompte and Preissle (1993) put forward six types: *standardized interviews*; *in-depth interviews; ethnographic interviews; elite interviews; life history interviews; focus groups.* Bogdan and Biklen (1992) introduce, from their part, *semi-structured interviews; group interviews.* Lincoln and Guba (1985) further add: *structured interviews.* Patton (1980: 206) outlines four categories: *informal conversational interviews; interview guide approaches; standardized open-ended interviews;* and *closed quantitative interviews.* The following table summarises the strengths and weaknesses of each type:

Type of interview	Characteristics	Strengths	Weaknesses
Informal Conversational Interview	Questions emerge from the immediate context and are asked in the natural course of things; there is no emerge predetermination of question topics or wording.	Increases the salience and relevance of questions; interviews are built on and emerge from observations; the interview can be matched to individuals and circumstances.	- Different information collected from different people with different questions. -Less systematic and comprehensive if certain questions do not arise 'naturally'. -Data organization and analysis can be quite difficult.
Interview Guide Approach	Topics and issues to be covered are specified in advance, in outline form; interviewer decides sequence and working of questions in the course of the interview.	-The outline increases the comprehensiveness of the data and makes data collection somewhat systematic for each respondent. -Logical gaps in data can be anticipated and closed. Interviews remain fairly conversational and situational.	-Important and salient topics may be inadvertently omitted. – Interviewer flexibility in sequencing and wording questions can result in substantially different responses, thus, reducing the comparability of responses.
Standardized Open-ended Interviews	The exact wording and sequence of questions are determined in advance. All interviewees are asked the same basic questions in the same order.	Respondents answer the same questions, thus increasing comparability of responses; data are complete for each person on the topics addressed in the interview. Reduces Interviewer effects and bias when several interviewers are used. Permits decision	-Little flexibility in relating the interview to particular individuals and circumstances; standardized wording of questions may constrain and limit naturalness and relevance of questions and answers.

		makers to see and review the instrumentation used in the valuation. -Facilitates organization and analysis of the data.	
Closed *Quantitative* *Interviews*	Questions and response categories are determined in advance. Responses are fixed; respondent chooses from among these fixed responses.	Data analysis is simple; responses can be directly compared and easily aggregated; many short questions can be asked in a short time.	Respondents must fit their experiences and feelings into the researcher's categories; may be perceived as impersonal, irrelevant, and mechanistic. Can distort what respondents really mean or experienced by so completely limiting their response choices.

Table 3.9. Strengths and Weaknesses of Different Types of Interviews
(Patton 1980:206)

In the current research, one face-to-face *semi-structured interview,* or what is known as "*Standardized open-ended interview*" to use Platton's (1980:206) words, was used being more "*non-interventionist*". The researcher in this type asks the same sort of questions as in the structured interview, but the style is "free-flowing" rather than rigid, i.e., it is more conversational. This is because unlike the structured interview where the interviewer does not deviate from the list or inject any extra remarks into the interview process, the researcher, instead, may regulate the questions according to how the interviewee is responding. Therefore, this type requires much more skill and efforts. The interviewer attempts to be as objective as possible and do not try to influence the interviewer's statements and share her own beliefs and opinions.

As it was explained earlier, the present study strives to examine the relationship between learners' speaking competence, their self-confidence and their pronunciation. Therefore, the semi-structured interview (see appendix 'D') was administered to the same sample used for questionnaire, tests and diaries to cross-check their responses and obtain a more detailed and richer data. The pool of interviewees consists of 30 students, each interview lasts about 15/20 minutes with each student to give them the opportunity to reflect on their own performance, and the medium of interviewing was most of the time conducted in English to check their speaking abilities.

The researcher drew the participants' attention that the interview is not a "test" *per se,* as there are no correct or incorrect answers. Rather, it is a conversational setting designed for research purposes to give the entrants the optimum opportunity to express themselves in a wide variety of ways. Considering the participants' anxious state, the interviewer attempted to establish a casual relaxing atmosphere. The interview was used to elicit some useful information from learners concentrating on their degree of self-confidence when speaking, attempting at the same time to determine the kind of pronunciation strategies students make use of when speaking to create their own confidence.

The interviewer started with a warm-up to create a relaxing atmosphere and lower their anxiety. The students' answers were recorded by the researcher in note forms to be analysed latter. The first class of questions was about their speaking skills, it aims at extracting the new entrants' feeling about themselves as far as speaking is concerned.

Afterwards, and in an attempt to check the learners' use of pronunciation strategies, learners were asked about their actions in certain situations, such as their feelings when they are not confident about their pronunciation. Learners' attention was provoked and attracted towards encouragement from their teachers to see its effect on their outcome.

3.6.3. Learners' Personal Diaries

Within the field of education and research, the process of language learning can be approached from different angles and perspectives and can be analyzed by using different methods (Larsen-Freeman and Long 1992). Basically, one of the practical methods for collecting or generating data about learners' achievement and progress is keeping a diary, or journal (these terms will be used interchangeably). Diary studies have been used to investigate both aspects of language teaching and learning alike, they have been used as both research tools in their own right and as parts of larger research projects. A diary in language learning may be defined by Bailey and Ochsner (1983:189) as:

An account of a second language experience as recorded in a first-person journal. The diarist may be a language teacher or a language learner—but the central characteristic of the diary studies is that they are introspective: The diarist investigates his own teaching or learning. Thus he can report on affective factors, language learning strategies, and his own perceptions—

facets of the language learning experience which are normally hidden or largely inaccessible to an external observer.

Besides, Mcdonough (1997: 124) describes diary studies as being *"rich both qualitatively and quantitatively … being self evidently subjective and introspective and… being retrospective and reflective".*

Fundamentally, all learners may jot down journals and describe whatever they feel about the class. Bailey (1990) states two crucial facets of diary studies, the first one when the diarists themselves did the analyses, the process may be referred to as *"primary"* or *"direct"* or *"introspective."* On the other side of the coin, when the analyses were done by someone other than the diarists, the process may be referred to as *"secondary"* or *"indirect"* or *"non-introspective."* In the present research work, the diarists are first-year EFL learners; hence, the analysis will be done by the researcher adopting a secondary way of proceeding.

One of the most important motives to use diary studies is that they offer insights into processes which appear to be hard to access, and they also may provide useful information to language teachers and researchers. Diaries are based on data generated through personal written records, and those data consist of detailed notes on events, actions, emotions, and thoughts. This is one reason behind the fact that researchers focus on keeping diaries with learners when dealing with researches based on learners' self, beliefs and feelings. For instance, Bailey (1983) used diaries to analyze language learners' anxiety. Diary

studies can be incorporated by both teachers and learners in several ways such as:

- To document language learning experiences
- As a part of the growing trend in Teacher Education for 'reflection' or self- evaluation by teachers documenting teaching or learning experiences.
- As a part of 'Action Research' or 'classroom research'; keeping a log of some classroom 'innovation'.
- In the form of 'academic journals' to 'document students' reactions to academic courses.
- On management courses and other training courses.

Lindsay *et al.* (2006)

Methodologically speaking, the diary studies may be classified according to Long (1980) as belonging to an *anthropological research tradition.* However, according to Bailey (1983:71), for language diarists, "*the research questions are not predefined, and open-ended note taking is the typical data collection procedure*". Moreover, she (ibid) considers diary research as an introspective method, since the learners reflect upon their own learning experiences.

3.6.3.1. Merits and Demerits of Diary Studies

Nunan (1992) mentions diary studies as a research tool and defines its merits and demerits. The following table summarizes the pros and cons of diary study:

Merits	Demerits
-It provides rich insights into some of the psychological, social, cultural factors implicated in language development. **-Learners' journals help a teacher notices learners' own impressions about their learning experiences** **-Notice learners' interpretations of whole classroom** **-Understand the contents of the lesson from learners' daily life**	-Diary studies are usually conducted on a small number of research subjects. Therefore, its conclusion cannot be generalisable enough to be applied to the whole population (Nunan 1992). -Time consuming and efforts demanding. - the diarists' limited language proficiency will not allow them to express their thoughts confidently and fluently, the journal writing can become a burden. (Bailey 1996)

Table 3.10. Merits and Demerits of Diary Studies

3.6.3.2. Learners' Diaries: *Getting Started*

Once the researcher decides to incorporate this research tool in this research work, she adopts Bailey's (1983:72) process of doing a diary study which entails five vital steps put as follows:

The diarist provides an account of his personal language learning history.

the diarist/learner/researcher systematically records events, details and feelings about the current language learning experience in a confidential and candid diary.

the journal entries are revised for public persual, names are changed and information damaging to others or extremely embarassing to the learner is deleted.

the researcher studies the journal entries as data looking for "significant" tends

the factors identified as important to the language-learning experience are discussed, either with or without illustrative data.

Figure 3.4. Diary Process

Based on these preliminary considerations, this section will describe how the researcher will use diaries with learners.

During the second half of the first term of the academic year 2011-2012, the researcher distributed papers to the concerned sample; there were no regulations or questions given to learners. During TPO course, learners are given 10 to 15 minutes to jot down their feelings about how they feel about the speaking course, their progress, their teacher, or friends. At the end of the week, journals of learners were collected. Considering language as being a possible burden as stated by Bailey (1996), the learners were asked to use Arabic, French or English to write their diaries. Diary distribution lasts 16 weeks.

Learners' attention was driven to the fact that their responses will be treated with confidence and for research purposes only. They are asked to write their comments and feelings in as much details as possible, honestly and openly, as if they were keeping their own personal journals. The researcher asks learners to record their everyday class about their learning strategies used on various tasks (speaking) experience, progress, feelings about their achievements. Besides, an attempt was made the first session to give instructions about how to use the diary (see Appendix 'E').

3.6.4. Speaking Test

It is agreed among educationalists that language teaching is tied to a larger extent with testing, since learners need to be assessed in their linguistic ability, their progress and their achievements. Tests are very useful since they may be used according to Selinger and Shohamy (1989: 167) to:

> *...collect data about the subject ability and knowledge of the language in area such as vocabulary, grammar, reading metalinguistic awareness and general proficiency.*

In the present study, a speaking test was implemented to measure the learners' speaking achievement, pronunciation level and their self-confidence. According to Brown (1994: 385), *"Oral production tests can be*

tests of overall conversational fluency or pronunciation of a particular subset of phonology, and take the form of imitation, structured responses".

Like any test, satisfactory tests of speaking have to fulfil three criteria, as explained below:

- *Reliability:* A good test gives 'consistent results', i.e., reliability is boosted by providing absolute clear instructions, with a limit in the area of testing to get variety of answers and ensure that test conditions remain constant. in this fashion, Nation and Newton (2009:166) defines reliable test as: *"one whose results are not greatly affected by a change in the conditions under which it is given and marked".*

- *Validity:* A test may be valid if it tests what is supposed to test, for example, a test seems to be invalid if it goes beyond the learners' background knowledge, but if the tested knowledge is shared by students before being tested, then it will be valid.

- *Practicality: "Tests have to be used in the real world where there are limitations of time, money, facilities and equipment, and willing helpers".* Nation and Newton (2009:168).

Pronunciation, on the other hand may be assessed in relation to both production of speech sounds and control of prosodic features, to determine the learners' abilities, strengths and weaknesses.

The researcher selected classroom talk activity to check both their speaking capacities, their degree of self-confidence when facing the public and their pronunciation proficiency, too. At this level, it is worth mentioning that within learners' diaries, the researcher found that learners feel more comfortable if the teacher provides topics for them, and they just prepare and present. Thus, learners are asked to speak about one of the thirteen suggested topics (see appendix 'F') in 15mn, emphasising on their pronunciation, intonation and their confidence to speak in front of their peers.   The researcher just observes with no interference their growth as far as their confidence and speaking competence are concerned. In order to measure learners' progress, a number of criteria are proposed:

Category	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor
Content	Shows a full understanding of the topic	Shows a good understanding of the topic	Shows a good understanding of part the topic	Does not seem to understand the topic very well.
Speaks clearly	Speaks clearly and distinctly all the time(100-95%),and mispronounces no words	Speaks clearly and distinctly all the time(100-95%),but mispronounces one word.	Speaks clearly and distinctly all the time(95-85%),but mispronounces 2or three word	Often mumble or cannot be understood),OR mispronounces a lot of words
Stays on topic	Stays on topic all the time	Stays on topic most of the time	Stays on topic some of the time	It was hard to express the topic.
Posture, confidence and eye contact	Stands up straight, looking relaxed and confident, establishes eye contact with everyone in the room.	Stands up straight, establishes eye contact with everyone in the room.	Sometimes stands up straight, establishes eye contact.	Slouches and does not look at people during the presentation
Vocabula	Uses appropriate vocabulary for	Uses appropriate vocabulary for	Uses appropriate vocabulary for	Uses several (5and more) words or

ry	the audience, extends audience vocabulary by defining new words.	the audience, includes 1-2 new words but without defining them.	the audience, but does not include any new word.	phrases which are not understood.
Time-limit	Presentation is 15 minutes long	Presentation is 20 minutes long	Presentation is 5 minutes long	Presentation is less than 5 minutes long, or MORE than 15 minutes
Volume	Loud enough to be heard by all audience (100%)	Loud enough to be heard by all audience (90%)	Loud enough to be heard by all audience (80%)	Too soft to be heard by all audience

Table 3.11. Suggested Evaluation Criteria

Besides, another grid of evaluation is proposed when speaking is to be measured:

Criteria	Description
Grammar	How accurate learners' grammar is and, check whether learners make use of complex as well as simple structures.
Vocabulary	How wide a range of vocabulary learners are able to use and how appropriate it is vis-à-vis the topic.
Discourse Management	If learners can develop their ideas. if they can give more than just very short answers and that they can speak coherently and without too much hesitation.
Pronunciation	How clear learners' pronunciation is, i.e., intelligibility.
Interactive communication	Check if learners are able to begin a conversation and able to listen to what their

friends say and respond in an appropriate way. Check that they don't hesitate too much, and at the same time measuring their self-confidence.

Table 3.12. Speaking Grid of Evaluation

In sum, the following diagram outlines the different stages that have been carried out in this classroom-based research.
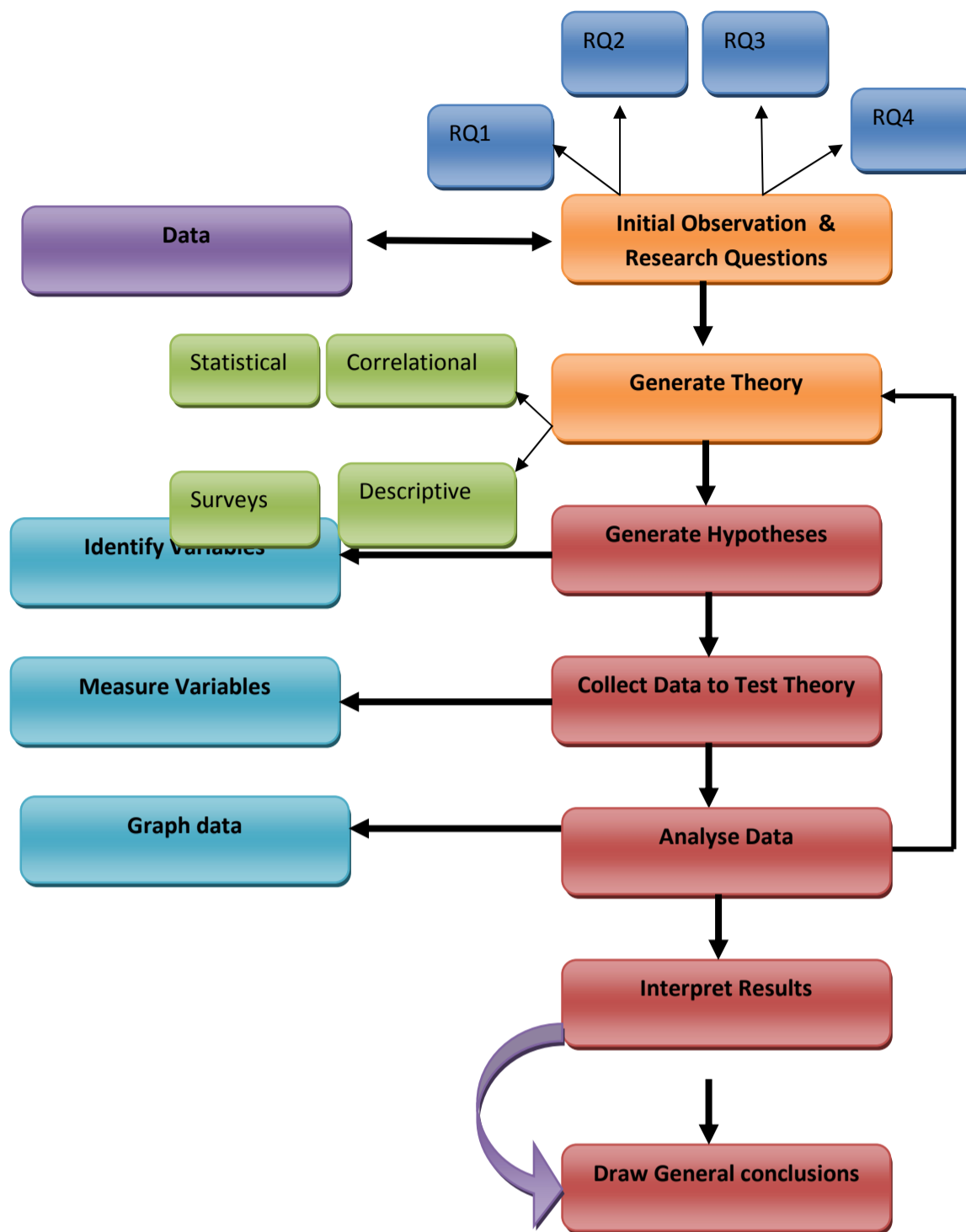
Diagram 3.1. Research Procedure

3.7. CONCLUSION

Notwithstanding the challenging needs in this digital world, it is widely observed and regretted that adults who learn foreign languages rarely acquire an authentic pronunciation and still have speaking difficulties. Hence, it was thought that through driving attention to pronunciation may enhance learners' confidence to speak competently. Therefore, in this chapter, the researcher has adopted a descriptive approach to carry out an in-depth and systematic analysis of ELT in the Algerian educational system in general, with a special attention on ELT at Tlemcen University with the adoption of LMD.

It also describes the research methodology, the instruments employed and the sample used to find out satisfactory answers to the research questions, and thus confirm or disprove the hypotheses set at the onset of this classroom-oriented research. The next chapter will analyse the data collected.

CHAPTER FOUR

Data Coding and Exploratory Analysis

4.1. INTRODUTION

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4.2.1. Quantitative Data Analysis Method

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4.3. DATA CODING AND EXPLORATORY ANALYSIS

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4.3.2.1. Speaking Test Results

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4.4. DATA ELUCIDATION AND SUMMARY OF THE MAIN FINDINGS

4.5. CONCLUSION

4.1. INTRODUCTION

The methodological process of data analysis was comprehensively discussed in the preceding chapter, and the results and analysis will subsequently be reported in this chapter where the researcher tries to analyse and interpret the results obtained from the learners' and teachers' questionnaires, the learners' interview and test, in addition to the learners' personal diaries. Each step will be analysed separately to assess the learners' speaking performance with regard to their self-confidence and pronunciation practice. It summarizes, thus, the main results and discusses the research questions settled at the onset of this investigation. The researcher stresses the idea of how subjects behaved or performed on speaking tasks, displaying the learners' achievements either through descriptive statistics of the performances or graphic representations which indicate the dispersion of the scores which might be useful to understand how data can be visually represented.

The present study aimed at examining the correlation between general self-confidence, pronunciation abilities and speaking performance. Five research instruments were selected to investigate four research questions, they were divided as follows:

Research Question	Research Instrument
What might be the relationship between self-confidence and EFL learners' speaking competence?	Learners' Confidence Scale
What factors (in the perceptions of the	Learner's Diaries

learners) influence their speaking ability (and their speaking scores)?	Learners' Speaking Test
What factors (in the perceptions of the teachers) influence learners' speaking ability and speaking scores?	Teachers' Questionnaire
What relationships might exist between pronunciation achievement and EFL learners' self-confidence?	Learners' Interview Teachers' Questionnaire Learners' Diaries Learners' Speaking Test

Table 4.1. Investigation Process

Hence, the researcher will study each research question separately in hope to draw clear conclusions.

4.2. DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURE

As it was demonstrated, the researcher opts for a classroom-experimental study to find out fine relationships between pronunciation ability in oral production course, students' self-confidence and speaking proficiency. Towards making sense of the research results which may have potential impact on the classroom, one needs to be conversant with the language and procedures of statistical research so that foreign language teaching and learning can be made more understandable and reasonable to classroom practitioners; this is to critically interpret the amount of statistical data gathered. Therefore, as stated by Woods, Fletcher, and Hughes (1986:8):

When a linguistic study is carried out, the investigator will be faced with the prospect of understanding, and then explaining to others, the meaning of the data which have been collected. An essential first step in this process is to look for ways of summarizing the results which bring out their most obvious features.

In other words, raw data are not informative unless they are organized and described. Descriptive statistics, embracing frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviations, were applied for a better understanding of the scores obtained from the study research instruments.

Descriptive statistics, however, are only specific to the target sample and do not allow the drawing of any general conclusion that would go beyond the sample. Thus, inferential statistics, on the other hand, may complement descriptive statistics since the computer will test *"whether the results observed in our sample (e.g., mean differences or correlations) are powerful enough to generalize to the whole population. If they are, we can say that our results are statistically "significant," and we can then draw some more general lessons from the study"*. (Dörnyei, 2011). To put it in a simpler picture, given the impossibility of gathering data from all members of the population, inferential statistics can allow researchers to generalize findings to other similar language learners making inferences.

From another layer of analysis, one needs to consider the fact that the selection of a specific data analysis technique according to Seliger & Shohamy (1989) depends fundamentally on:

- the nature of the research problematics,
- the design chosen to investigate it,
- and the type of data collected.

Once the research data have been collected, data analysis is often a research procedure that refers to sifting, organising, summarising and synthesising those data so as to arrive at the results and conclusions of the research. As it is widely acknowledged, data analysis may help looking at and summarizing different <u>results</u> obtained throughout the research process with the intention to extract some useful <u>information</u> that may answer the researcher's problematic and help drawing conclusions. In this sense, data analysis refers to the *"process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of the collected data"* De Vos (2002:339).

Concerning the process that was employed in measuring and analysing data, the researcher relied on both qualitative and quantitative dimensions in an attempt to control the different sets of data. In this vein, Newman and Benz (1998) believe that *"a combination of qualitative and quantitative constructs ... are often regarded as a matter of continuum rather than a clear-cut dichotomy" (quoted in Davies 2004: 488).* This combination of approaches is generally set as a basis to carry out research within an analytic-deductive design.

4.2.1. Quantitative Data Analysis Method

Quantitative data analysis has no greater or lesser importance than qualitative analysis, it is a powerful research form often associated with large scale research, but can also serve smaller scale investigations, with case studies, action research, correlational research and experiments. Its aim is to explain phenomena by collecting numerical data which are

analysed using mathematically-based methods. In this fashion, Dörnyei (2001c:192) aptly defines quantitative research as follows:

[Quantitative research] employs categories, viewpoints and models as precisely defined by the researcher in advance as possible, and numerical or directly quantifiable data are collected to determine the relationship between these categories, to test research hypotheses and to enhance the aggregation of knowledge.

The specificity of quantitative research lies in the *numerical data* which are closely connected to analysis *using mathematically-based methods*. Besides, this type of analysis seems to be statistically trusted and the results may be "*generalisable*" to a larger population (Selinger & Shohamy, 1989). In quantitative research one classifies results, counts them, and even constructs more complex statistical models in an attempt to explain what is observed.

Above and beyond, it should be mentioned that quantitative research can be, according to McKay (2005), conceptually divided into two types: *associational* and *experimental* sharing the idea of determining the relationship between or within variables. She states (2005:137):

The goal of associational research is to determine whether a relationship exists between variables and, if so, the strength of that relationship. This is often tested statistically through correlations, which allow a researcher to determine how closely two variables are related in a given population.....Many types of experimental research involve a comparison of pretreatment and post-treatment performance.

Quantitative data analysis relies on numerical analysis, which can be performed using software such as the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), which is a statistical analysis software package. Assuming that SPSS is probably the most common statistical data analysis software package used in educational research and it is also quite user-friendly (Muijs, 2004), in the present research work, the statistical SPSS software, version 17.0, will be used to calculate statistical tests.

Moreover, correlation analysis and A*nalysis of variance* (ANOVA for short) were used to test the relationship between the variables (see appendix 'H'). It is a method which allows us to compare the mean score of a variable between a number of groups (Muijs, 2004). In this fashion, ANOVA is defined by Millsap & Everson (1993:202) as:

> *a family of statistical procedures that evaluates whether the difference two or more mean scores on a dependent variable occurred by chance or was indeed influenced by the experimenter's manipulation of the independent variable (s).*

4.2.2. Qualitative Data Analysis Method

Qualitative methods are originally traced back to the methodologies applied by anthropologists and sociologists in investigating human behaviour within the context in which that behaviour would take place naturally and in which the role of the researcher would not influence the

regular behaviour of the informants. These procedures and methods associated with qualitative research have been more and more implemented into second/foreign language research. Cohen *et al.* (2005:461) believe that:

Qualitative data analysis involves organizing, accounting for and explaining the data; in short, making sense of data in terms of the participants' definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities.

The ultimate goal for the use of qualitative research here is to discover and describe phenomena such as patterns of foreign language behaviour not previously described and to understand those phenomena from the perspective of participants in the activity. Results from this type of research are usually said to be of an "explanatory" nature, it is usually referred to as *'interpretative'* or *'heuristic'* searching a full understanding of the participants. (Byram, 2013). Within qualitative analysis, data may take the form of interview, written responses to open-ended questions or observations (Weir& Robert 1994).

This method is used in this research to analyse the results of the teachers' questionnaire and students' interviews in addition to learners' diaries. A qualitative analysis will allow us, thus, to closely study individual performance.

However, the main disadvantage of qualitative approaches in analysis is that their findings cannot be extended to wider populations with the same degree of certainty that quantitative analyses may have,

i.e., they are "*less generalisable*" (Selinger & Shohamy 1989). This is because the findings of the research are not tested to discover whether they are statistically significant or due to chance.

In this study, the quantitative method is used to analyse both teachers' questionnaire, confidence scale and some questions of the interview. After coding the qualitative data, the researcher purposefully focused on establishing links between the different data results, in order to find out reliable results to the research questions, i.e., the quantitative data gathered will be reported in relation to the qualitative results obtained as well. This combination serves to build up a sound mixture between the qualitative and quantitative data within the overall framework of the problematic raised. In this sense, Leininger (1992) argues that qualitative methods are often only accepted as an exploratory approach prior to validation by quantitative methods.

From another facet, and in order to clarify the research procedure, the following table summarises the timeline of this investigation:

Procedure	Date
Learners Confidence Scale	The onset of the study
Teachers' Questionnaire	The end of the first term
Learners' Interview	The onset of the second term
Learners' Speaking Test	The end of the second term
Learners' Diaries	Throughout all the study

Table 4.2. Research Procedure

4.3. DATA CODING AND EXPLORATORY ANALYSIS

Having designed, administered, and collected the questionnaires to the target sample, is '*half the battle*' according to Dörnyei (2003), the

second half of the battle is data coding and processing. It is often recognized that the majority data analysis software handles data in a numerical rather than in an alphabetic form, therefore, data processing generally starts with switching the respondents' answers into numbers by means of *coding procedures.*

As already stated in the previous chapter (2.4.1.1.), the self-confidence questionnaire contains different statements (see Appendix 'H'). In data coding, each item is given a number as identification, in doing so, based on Dörnyei's assumption (2003:98), during the coding phase, the researcher needs first to compile: *"(a) a **coding frame** that specifies the meaning of the scores for each item and (b) a **codebook** that contains an organized summary of all the coding frames".* This might be put as follows:

Coding Frame	Codebook
Offers a numerical score for every possible answer to an item, e.g. yes =1, no =2, 'strongly disagree' = 1, 'disagree' = 2, 'neutral' = 3, 'agree' = 4, 'strongly agree' = 5).	This is intended to provide a comprehensive and comprehensible description of the dataset that is accessible to anyone who would like to use it.

Table 4.3. The Coding Process

4.3.1. Onset Phase Coding and Analysis

Once these theoretically-sound-specific considerations have been drawn up and controlled, it becomes possible to start analyzing the administered questionnaires of this investigation. This phase, then,

includes learners' confidence questionnaire and teachers' questionnaire analysis.

4.3.1.1. Learners' Confidence Scale Results

After the administration of the scale, each response option was assigned a number for scoring purposes as explained before (see appendix 'H'). Furthermore, each participant was given a number that s/he will memorize to compare and cross-check data gathered through different research tools. The preliminary results will be discussed in this section.

- *Test General Confidence*

The first fifteen items were about test general confidence (TGC), designed to gather information about learners' general beliefs about themselves in certain unexpected situations within the classroom setting. The following table summarizes the results achieved:

Item	Statement	Mean
1	It is difficult for me to do what I want without the help of others.	3.5
2	I avoid the leadership role in my life.	2.46
3	I blame myself a lot when I make a mistake.	2.26
4	When I discuss with others, I cannot insist on my opinion even though I believe it is right.	3.5
5	I hesitate to participate in a discussion, even though I know a lot about the discussed topic.	3.36
6	I often agree with others' opinions even though I am not convinced	3.7
7	I believe others' comments on me are criticism.	1.66
8	I avoid any situations where others observe me.	3
9	I speak confidently when I am sure of what I am saying.	1.53
10	I feel unsatisfied with my abilities no matter what efforts I exert.	3.36
11	I feel that people often consider what I say as unimportant.	3.43
12	I don't like to be the first to answer even though I know the right answer.	3.33

13	Others' criticism makes me withdraw from meeting them.	4.5
14	When I compare myself to my peers, I feel they are better than me.	3.5
15	I can help my friends when we are assigned a group work.	1.9

Table 4.4. The Mean of Learners' Score in TC

In a visual picture, the following bar-graph demonstrates this:
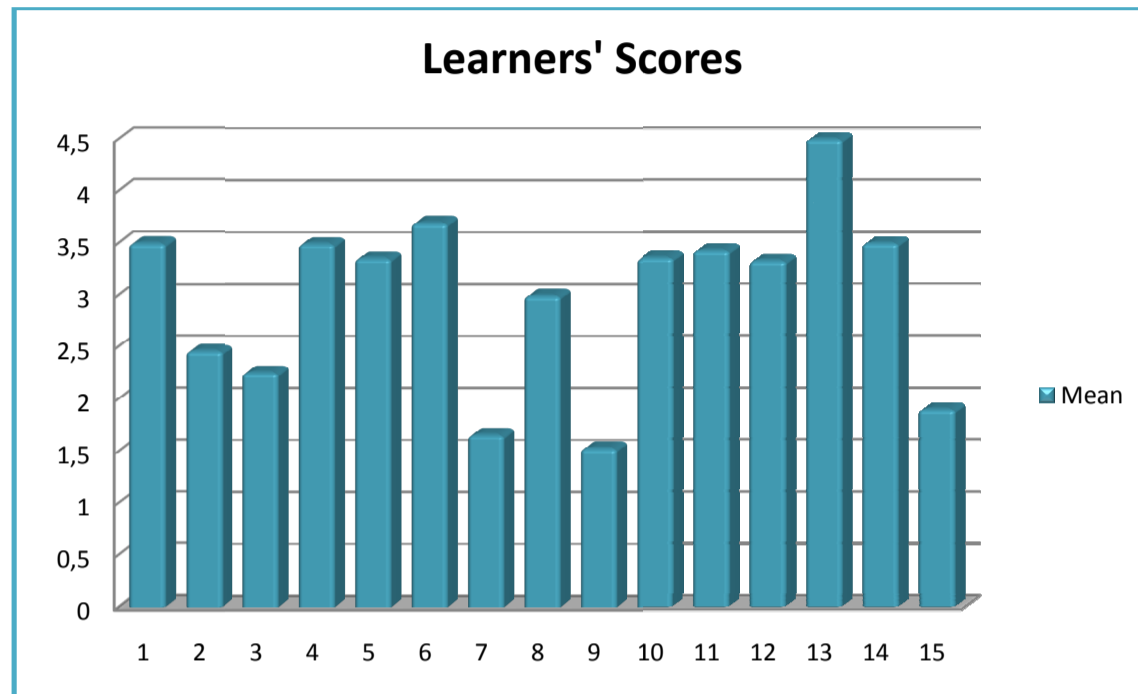
Bar-Graph 4.1. Distributing Learners' Scores in TC

The mean of the total students' scores is 2.99, and the standard deviation is .84 as shown below:

Confidence	Mean	SD
TGC	2.99	.84

Table 4.5. TC Mean

This shows that the learners' general self-confidence is below the average.

- *Classroom Performance*

The second nineteen questions were about classroom performance (CP), the results are shown in this table:

Item	Statement	Mean
1	I cannot speak in English	4.43
2	I feel my ideas in English are meaningless	4.16
3	I do not dare to say my thoughts in English.	3.5
4	I feel uneasy in the English speaking lessons.	4.06
5	I do not feel shy of reading aloud during English classes.	2.5
6	I can speak English in front of my classmates.	2.4
7	I dislike competing in English lessons because I fear failure.	3.53
8	I feel embarrassed when I discuss anything in English.	3.2
9	I feel embarrassed when my English teacher asks me to repeat my answer.	3
10	I feel I am ineffective in English tasks.	3.93
11	I like group discussions in English classes.	2
12	I can speak English with my teacher only in private, but not in front of others in the classroom.	3.33

13	I do not work hard on my English tasks because I doubt that I will do them successfully.	4.03
14	I feel unconfident that I did the right thing in English tasks unless others tell me so.	3.56
15	I make mistakes in English without being shy.	2.8
16	I do not feel nervous on oral tests in English.	3.13
17	My participation in the English class adds nothing to the class.	3.73
18	I believe my abilities in speaking English are the worst in the class.	4.13
19	I do not feel confused when it is my turn to answer in English.	2.8

Table 4.6. The Mean of Learners' Score in CP

These results may be represented as follows:
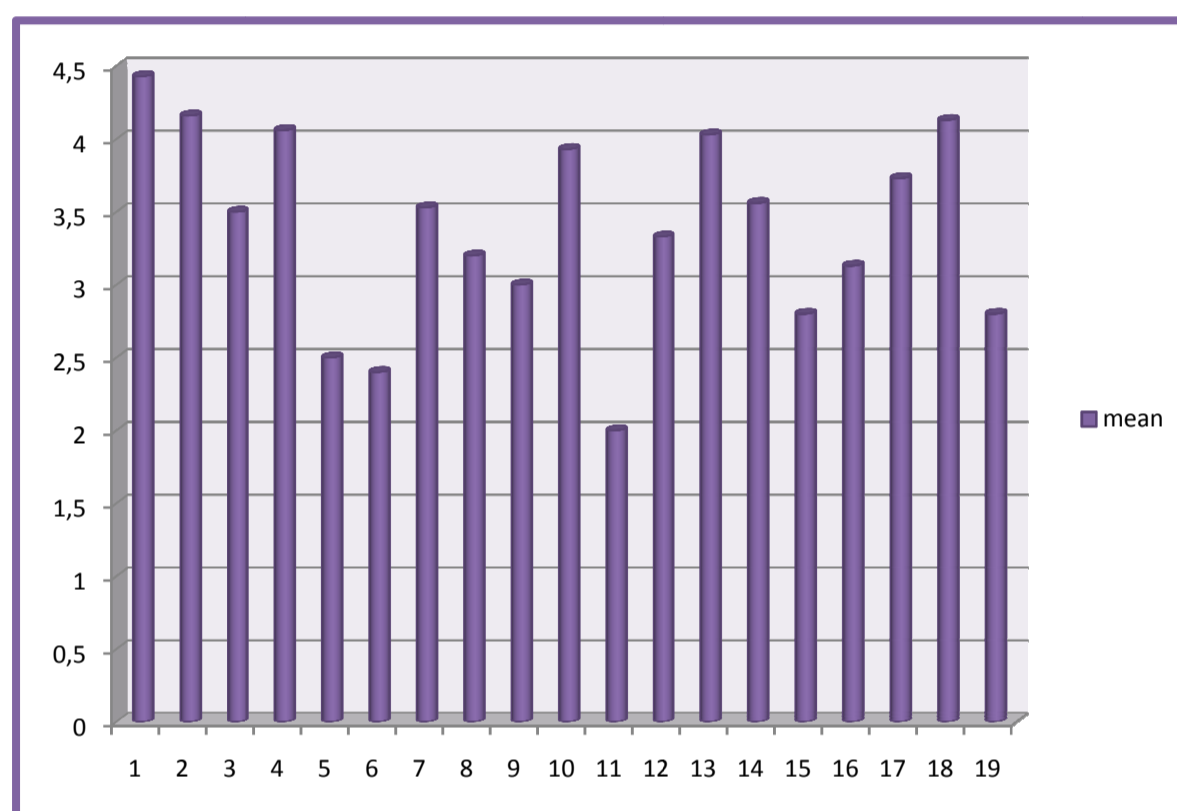
Bar-Graph 4.2. Distributing Learners' Scores in CP

Therefore, the mean of the total students' scores is 3.38, and the standard deviation is .67 as displayed in this table:

Confidence	Mean	SD
CP	3.38	.67

Table 4.7. CP Mean

This demonstrates that when it comes to learners' classroom performance, i.e., situational self-confidence, results are below the average.

- *Speaking Confidence*

Eventually, the last fourteen questions were about task self-confidence. The task represents speaking performance and the results are presented here:

Item	Statement	Mean
1	I do not like speaking in English because I will be evaluated.	*3.63*
2	I feel worried when the teacher asks me to speak.	*2.93*
3	I feel confident when taking English speaking tests.	*2.93*
4	I prefer to keep silence than making mistakes.	*3.23*
5	I do not speak unless I am sure of what am saying.	*2.5*
6	I feel that speaking in English is not within my abilities.	*3.5*
7	I am not satisfied with my speaking performance in English no matter what I do.	*3.56*
8	If the teacher asks us to present our Classroom talks, I do not like to be the first to do that.	*2.63*
9	I feel shy when I present my talk in front of my classmates.	*2.96*
10	I have good ideas but I am afraid of presenting them incorrectly.	*2.96*

11	I feel my oral performance is not always as good as my classmates.	3.53
12	Being aware of the English sound System help me be confident	2.06
13	Knowing how to pronounce correctly, develop my speaking level	1.7
14	A word of encouragement from the teacher can be a motive to speak.	1.76

Table 4.8. The Mean of Learners' Score in SC

This graph illustrates the distribution of scores over the learners' SC:
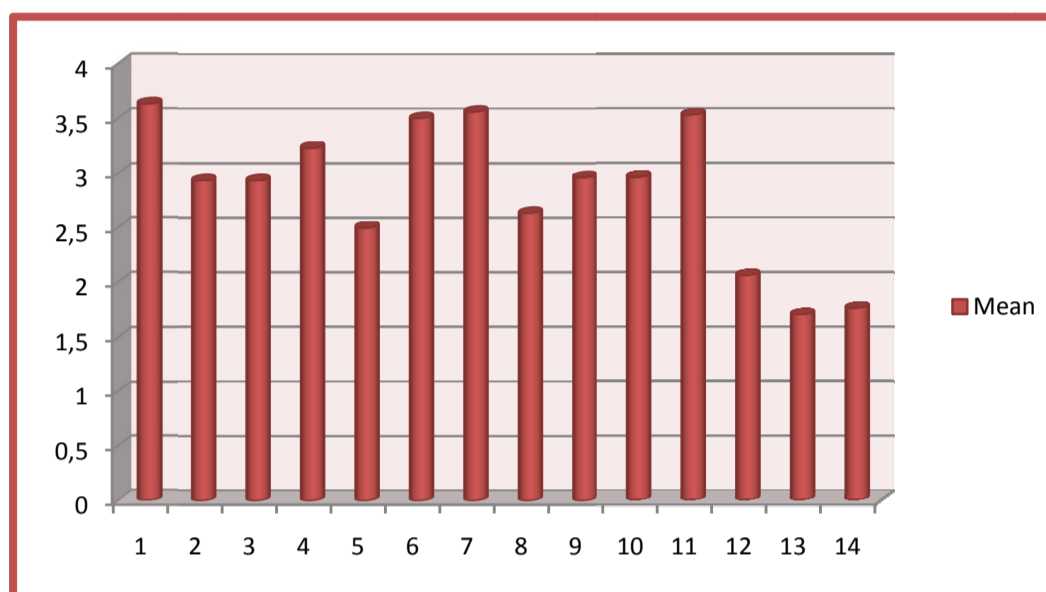
Bar-Graph 4.3. Distributing Learners' Scores in SC

As far as speaking confidence is concerned, the mean represents 2.84. This result corresponds to the learners' below average level regarding their confidence when speaking. This might be illustrated in the following table: (for more details, see Appendix 'H').

Confidence	Mean	SD
SC	2.84	.64

Table 4.9. Learners' Speaking Confidence Mean

Therefore, the overall confidence mean is: 3.07 which correspond to a below confidence level. To sum up the findings, and in a visual fashion, the following pie-chart shows the learners' mean of test general confidence, classroom performance and speaking confidence.
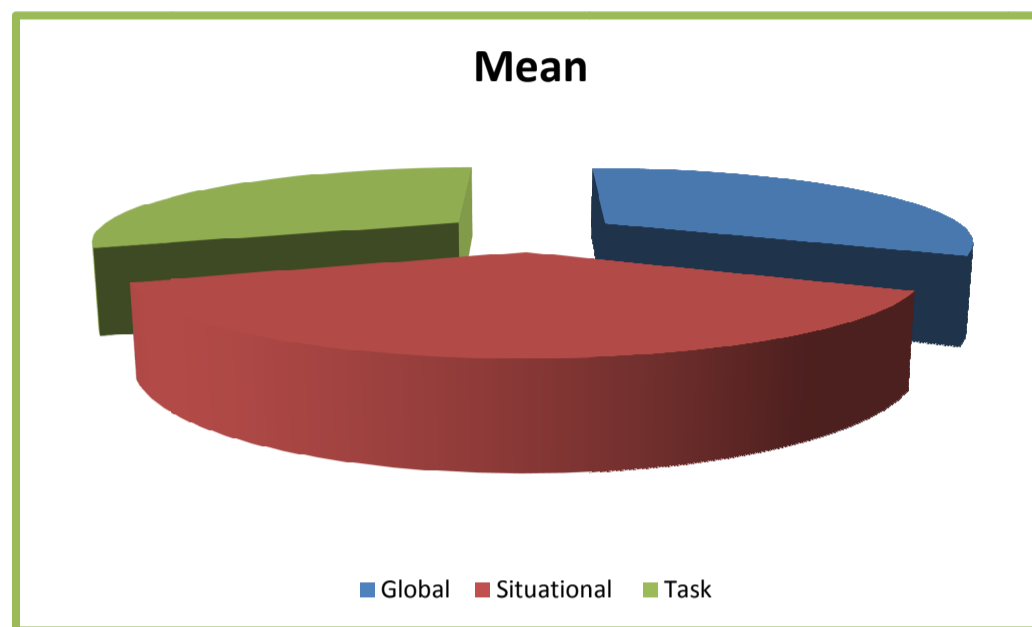
Pie-Chart 4.1. Learners' Mean of Test General Confidence, Classroom Performance and Speaking Confidence.

To put it in a nutshell, one may conclude that learners' self confidence be it overall, situational or task is crucial. The statistics above demonstrate that learners' general beliefs about themselves is below the average, the majority of the learners avoid leadership because they are not sure of their capacities, they quickly agree with others even if they are not

convinced. They avoid all situations where they felt they are being noticed and they have a constant belief that they are incompetent learners no matter what they do.

The present findings seem to be consistent with other research carried out by (Molberg, 2010; Gregersen& Horwitz 2002; Brown, 1994) about readiness for classroom communication activities, where it was demonstrated that lack of self- confidence is thought to be the most dangerous barrier for effective communication and success in language learning. Conversely, high self-confidence may develop the learners' desire to engage and communicate and help improve their language proficiency in general and generate their communication readiness in particular.

As for their classroom performance, a low mean was scored. Learners' English abilities seem to be low. The second lowest level of self-confidence among first-year LMD students was in task self-confidence (speaking). The mean of students' scores was 2.84 which indicates below average task self-confidence. A possible explanation for this might be due to their low level of speaking achievement or the other way round, i.e., their low level of speaking achievement could be an interpretation of their low task self-confidence. Similarly, it was also found that the correlation between a specific performance and self-esteem is interchangeable (Huang, 1992; Brown, 2000 and Lee,2001).

For the sake of establishing correlation between self-confidence and speaking performance, the researcher carried out a Pearson co-relational analysis and analysis of variance (AVOVA) (see appendix 'H')) to reach a statistical explanation to the research question settled. Thus, an ANOVA

with the three groups, including sums of squares, degrees of freedom, mean squares, and F and p-values, was conducted as displayed in the following table:

	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between:	2.617	2	1.309	2.529	0.091
Within:	23.283	45	0.517		
Total:	25.901	47			

Table 4.10. ANOVA

It was found that the Sig. value p= 0.09. This denotes that there exist a statistical correlation between general self confidence, speaking performance and thus, speaking confidence. Furthermore, the following table shows the correlation existing between general confidence and classroom speaking performance:

Variable	Pearson Correlation
General Confidence **Classroom Speaking Performance**	.697

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

Table 4.11. Variables Pearson Correlation

The findings above indicate that a positive correlation exist between the participants' scores on the general self-confidence questionnaire and

the classroom speaking performance scores. It appeared that general self-confidence could affect the quality of our learners' speaking competence.

4.3.1.2. Teachers' Questionnaire Analysis

Another questionnaire was administered to teachers in order to elicit some required data in this study (see appendix 'C'). It was employed to further investigate the research questions and hypotheses and to gather significant data about the teachers' methodology which will, hopefully, help the researcher find likely relationships among the three studied variables. It focused mainly on unveiling the respondents' assumption and beliefs about their efforts as far as our EFL learners' psychological health, their speaking performance and their pronunciation instruction.

The first rubric was about self-confidence and speaking performance. The first question reveals teachers' role in raising learners' attention towards their self-confidence when speaking. The following table sums up the findings:

	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Resuts	0%	57.17	28.57	14,27

Table 4.12. Teachers' Roles

This shows that the majority of teachers sometimes draw learners' attention towards the importance of their psychological status in

speaking. However, one teacher never considers this in his teaching. The results might be put in a bar-graph as follows:
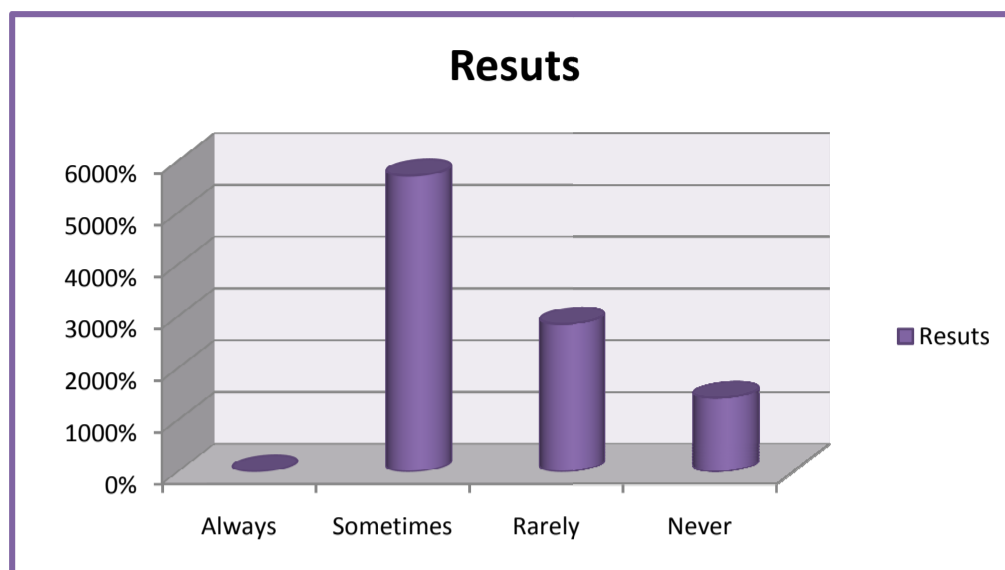
Bar-Graph 4.4. Teachers' Roles

The second question revealed that all teachers focus more on developing the learners' linguistic competence. Only one teacher pays attention towards learners' psychological status. 42.85% stress the selection of teaching method and 14.28% focus on appropriate material. One teacher adds classroom management, classroom tasks and activities, and the appropriate learning atmosphere. The result is clearly visualized in the following pie-chart:
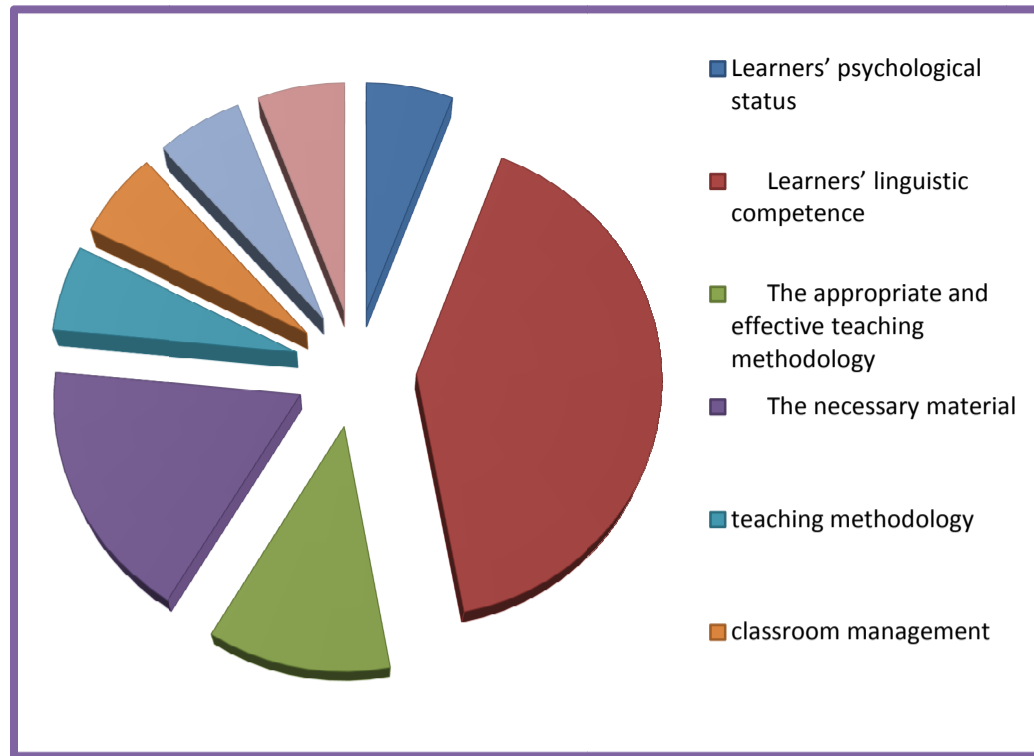
Pie-chart 4.2. Teachers' Focus

The following question demonstrates that teachers believe that the majority of learners feel anxious, de-motivated and afraid, only very few learners have a high level of confidence when performing a speaking task. The next pie-chart illustrates this:
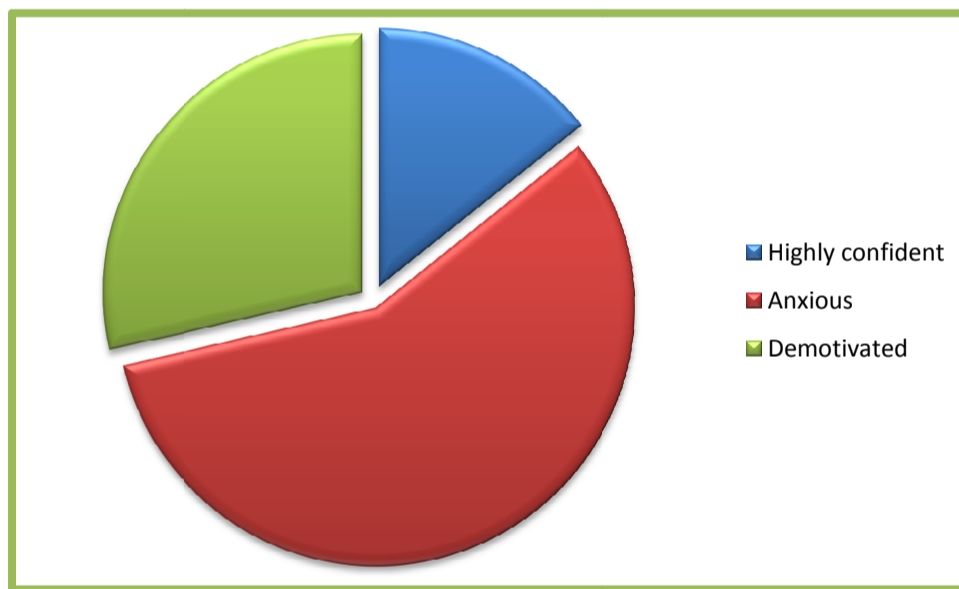
Pie-Chart 4.3. Learners' Psychological Status

Moving to possible relationships between the two variables, it was found that all teachers assume that learners with high self-confidence achieve good speaking results, they made this point clear by stating that since learners' confidence level is high, they take the risk of talking and they make mistakes without being afraid or reluctant, it is a *cause and effect* relationship.

Moreover, teachers link low level of self-confidence to reluctance of participation in the classroom, lack of interest and motivation, neglecting the classroom tasks and activities. Other agreed reasons among teachers are listed below:

- Breaks and pauses when speaking,
- Misconstruction and lack of understanding,
- Little or no enthusiasm in the classroom,
- Lack of the necessary linguistic and general knowledge,
- Afraid from making mistakes and being corrected,
- Losing their image and importance in the classroom,
- Prior learning experience.

On the other hand, according to teachers, high self-confidence leads learners to participate, take the risk of talking and making mistakes without being shy or afraid, and also they are more or less fluent when speaking. Teachers also assume that learners reflect their self-confidence when always ready to answer questions, and add and comment after the teacher' explanation.

In an attempt to find out explanation to learners' reluctance to participate, the following question reveals that all teachers select all the proposed suggestions, i.e., learners do not participate because:

- Speaking is a difficult skill,
- students' low self-confidence,
- lack of vocabulary,
- afraid of negative evaluation,
- afraid of making mistakes,
- lack of linguistic knowledge,

Adding the following proposals:

- Lack of practice outside the classroom,
- inappropriate classroom environment (threatening and not relaxing),
- no enthusiasm in the speaking course,
- fear of losing face,
- negative past experiences,
- a character trait since childhood (not talkative persons),
- lack of motivation,
- reluctant to take risks,
- teachers' character in the classroom.

They, furthermore, all attribute participation in class to:

- The teacher's character,
- the importance of the subject (personal interest),

- the student's character,
- previous knowledge ,
- the teaching material,
- the mode of communication (visual, audio),
- teachers' skills and responsibilities,
- teachers' encouragement and support,
- supportive classroom environment.

The ninth question reveals that the types of activities and tasks selected also play an important role in enhancing learners' self-confidence. Here are some of the proposed kind of activities they might be anxiety provoking and confidence lowering:

- Short talks (anxiety- provoking only),
- negative direct remarks from the teacher or the students,
- probably bad grades,
- teachers' behaviour (contempt or neglect) towards learners,
- talking in unfamiliar topics (lack of information),
- direct questions to students without introductions,
- classroom tasks beyond learners' level.

To help learners cope with such psychological hurdles, all teachers seem to be aware of the fact that it is their role to help learners be more confident and ready to take risks. They suggest the following considerations:

- Avoiding negative direct evaluation,

- encouraging learners to empathize (put themselves in the shoes of others) with each other,
- providing positive evaluation like praising learners,
- setting realistic goals(especially for first year learners who are encouraged to speak with the simple and few words they have),
- smiling to them,
- choosing interesting tasks,
- using authentic materials to motivate them,
- using audio and video materials,
- raising their awareness about their psychological health and its importance in their successes and achievement,
- helping them believe in what they are,
- encouraging the small efforts they do.

The last rubric revolves around learners' pronunciation abilities and their self-confidence. All teachers agree that being aware of the English sound system and pronunciation will in all probabilities enhance their self-confidence to speak. When a student masters the pronunciation rules, his abilities to speak confidently will be automatically raised and vice versa. If learners feel a kind of satisfaction about his pronunciation, he will engage more and more in speaking and taking risks. (see chapter II)

Teachers believe that high pronunciation level correlate to high self-confidence, each one affects the other. Learners with good pronunciation level will have the confidence to speak, and learners with high self-confidence will have the ability and willingness to speak even if their pronunciation is not good.

4.3.1.3. Learner' Diary Analysis: Looking *on* and *through* Diaries at both Stages

The learners' diaries were read several times and then isolated ideas and patterns were picked out, in order to avoid additional useless data. The entries were then grouped into sub-categories as follows to ease data analysis (see appendix 'I'):

- Motivation and affective factors (confidence, anxiety…),
- classroom interaction (learner-learner, teacher-learner),
- teaching methods.
- student reflection on their classroom experiences
- need for success and positive reinforcement
- pronunciation practice and progress.

After classifying the learners' diaries, the researcher at this level will analyze the diaries chronologically according to weeks, i.e., learners wrote their diary entries and submitted their entries per week to the researcher. This is to check the progress and development of learners' feelings about themselves through the whole study. Diary distribution lasts 16 weeks. It is worth noting here that all learners wrote in English, no one used French or Arabic, and the extracts used in this section are kept in their original form with the exception of spelling correction (see Appendix 'I').

During the first two weeks, an examination of the diaries showed that the student-diarists were highly anxious about the speaking course;

they express weaknesses in their beliefs about their oral capacities. Certain individuals appeared to have been influenced by affective factors, such as lack of self-confidence, shyness, anxiety and nervousness, interest or the lack of interest afraid of losing face and motivation, which affect their learning process. For instance, in his diaries, Student '1' wrote:

> *Actually, I don't have trouble in grammar, I'm just having some problems in speaking English...., I feel shy and when I start speaking, I feel all looking at me, my face becomes red and this always upsets me.....sometimes I just hate the activity so I can't speak.*

What is more, a considerable note was recorded among a great number of learners is that though they know that they have great capacities, they cannot show who they are in front of public, they prefer to learn 'silently' with no attention driven towards them, for instance, it was found in the diaries:

> *I always enter into the classroom, I sit in my corner, don't wana be noticed by anyone, I just wana watch the classroom events.... I prefer to stay unnoticed, I take notes, observe, ... I hate when called to talk or participate... (Student '4')*

Within the bulk of literature, researchers (Tsui, 1996; Liu & Littlewood, 1997; Cheng, 2000; Jackson, 2002) endorse this idea by exposing the fact that the classroom encloses infinite number of learning styles; some prefer much attention from both teachers and their peers, and some prefer to be free far from them.

In learners' diaries, many students admitted that they avoided participation in class for a number of reasons. Many of the students prefer being passive in class instead of taking the risk of talking. Learners may feel intimidated by certain teachers who seem very picky about pronunciation, grammar errors and speaking fluency. These teachers prohibit unwillingly students to speak and participate, because learners feel embarrassed and anxious from being corrected or criticized. One of the student entries tried to explain the many possible dimensions of the problem.

> *I personally like participating in class because I believe it is the best way to practice my English in front of people... many friends wants to participate, but they can't do so because they are afraid from making mistakes in front of the teacher. Others feel afraid and shy. Many of the students are afraid from the teachers, she is always nervous, and never pleased... sometimes I prefer to keep silent rather than see her nervous face or hear from her bad words about my level.... (Student 5)*

Other learners share the same belief about the teacher's behaviour in class and his role in participation. Researchers stress on the idea of creating a comfortable, relaxing, unthreatening atmosphere to help learners feel secured and take risks in the classroom as Breen (2001: 112) claims,

> *Overt participation may appear relatively scarce or constrained in many teacher-fronted classrooms and it may need certain*

kinds of interaction to 'push' it to the surface, but most learners in these circumstances are continually participating.

One of the most interesting outcomes, at this level, seems to be the importance of motivational and affective factors. It was revealed that learners' motivation towards a task raises their interest and willingness to participate, for example, a student states:

Today….the teacher selects a nice activity, it helps me to speak I could participate for the first time in this year. I think if she uses these activities I will speak more for sure….When I stay with my mates we never spoke English … they feel shy to speak English especially when making some mistakes, they laugh at each other. (Student '25')

After the first two weeks, learners seemed still anxious throughout their writings; they still express their reluctance to participate. An example of a diary says:

Situation in class really disturbs me… Today I was frightened in TPO, the teacher asks about my opinion suddenly without any introduction! … All learners were looking at me, waiting me to answer….I was afraid to express what I think… I simply said: 'I agree with you' and that answer didn't make me happy. The problem is that I know the answer but I can't say it! (student '30').

The fear of public speaking and failure from the other's humiliation may result from comparing learners with others creating an idealized image about the other's capacities. In fact, the journal entry of the fourth week shows that learners have realized important factors. For instance, one student starts to convince herself that she is just like the other students and that she can improve her speaking by changing her negative beliefs about herself, she puts:

I decided today to speak whatever happens... why the others speak even if they make mistakes? I speak better than them... I will give it a try and see, I need to compete with the others... am sure I can do it. ... (Student '5')

This journal entry shows that self-image and competition may also be an enhancement of self-confidence to take the risk of talking. It is noticed that affective factors seem to overlap with other categories like language development. For instance, anxiety, competitiveness, mood, self-image, self-confidence and motivation are mentioned time and again in learners' diaries; as a concrete example, one diarist states that competition is behind her success:

I feel now I'm more confident than before. I was too shy before. I think the reason is my friend challenged me. She is the quietest in the class and I thought my English was better than hers. Then we take a challenge who speaks more in class,... I felt very motivated... and I really developed my speaking and participation. I became more confident. (Student '11')

Strangely enough, it was reported that learners feel unsecured by other students whom they believed to be better speakers than themselves, they displayed a feeling of inferiority regarding the rest of the class, they compare their abilities and this apparently lowers their confidence. In fact, this is another component of foreign language anxiety, which was further explained by Bailey (1983), who found a relationship between foreign language anxiety and competitiveness among students. A student best portrays this by saying;

> *I feel less than the rest of the class... Sometimes I see myself the last in class, even if this is not true, but my friends speaking affects my development...I don't wana feel they are better than me, no one is perfect and complete. (Student '29').*

Another student roughly shares the same idea by asking the teacher to stop those who speak in class and let silent student speak. She states:

> *I wish if the teacher asks my friends to stop talking very much and give the chance to others.... I know I will speak if I have the chance. Student '14'*

Besides, being sure and confident about what to say plays a great role in speaking achievements, for instance, a student states in his diary:

I try to speak and share my ideas when I feel sure since I know what I want to say", (Student '23') and another learner claims: *'I didn't participate today at all, because I don't have much knowledge and am not sure of my ideas. Many times I push myself to participate but..., I have no ideas I can't'.* (student '6')

The researcher also found that disappointment and frustration appear to dominate learners' diaries. For instance, it was realized that the students write much about their dissatisfaction and worries concerning their outcome of assessments rather than their success. As an example, a diarist describes his status the day of his oral presentation:

..I do my presentation tomorrow. I'm not satisfied with my presentation because my English is too bad and I'm nervous. I am afraid from facing people and speak in front of them...I never thought it's that hard. I am confused... am afraid to withdraw. (student '22')

After his presentation, he was relaxed and at ease because the teacher praises his efforts in speaking. It was demonstrated that teachers' encouraging words can do miracles; a word of praise in class or a good comment on a written work does wonders. This can push them further to improve themselves. For example, he wrote about the day of his presentation:

...Today is the best day in this year since I learn English. The teacher likes my presentation. She admires it and tell so to every one of my friends. I feel so happy and I'm proud. But I feel worried also because I must improve more in the next presentation... (student '22').

It was also revealed that learners fear from negative evaluation which is one of the components of foreign language anxiety according to Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1991:31), they defined it as *'apprehension about others' evaluation, avoidance of evaluative situations, and the expectation that others would evaluate oneself negatively'*. A clear example is the following comment:

I feel a little bit nervous at the moment of participating because first I feel that everybody listen to me and evaluating how I express myself, how I pronounce, my vocabulary... I have realized that I don't feel afraid from the teacher's comment, the real problem is what the other students in the class say and think... (Student H)

Another important unexpected influencing factor detected throughout learners' diaries is the capacity to speak within different contexts. It was found that learners can express themselves easily in the classroom; however, when put in different situations with different students, they lose this capacity.

.... When I meet English students with greater and better level, my confidence just disappear and I avoid talking because I feel that I would say something in the wrong way and they will realize it directly. (student '13')

Above and beyond, diary entries reveal an essential factor which may raise learners' self-confidence, namely team work. It was realized that when working in group, learners feel more comfortable and ready to engage in a risk talking strategy. An illustration of a diarist exposes how she accepts correction from her mate rather than in public in front of all learners:

When working in a group, I was corrected especially my pronunciation. Nothing embarrasses me... I think it is good to learn through my mistakes. At least I develop my pronunciation.... But what I feel ashamed of is when am corrected in front of all my friends,... they are looking at me. I feel like am idiot. (Student '21')

Within the same flow of ideas, it was found that some learners realized that they should speak even if their pronunciation is not good:

I could realize that I was not the only one who has a bad pronunciation. I also understood that sending the message with clear ideas is important than a good pronunciation. (student '21')

During the process of diary writing, the participants made a great progress especially in their wiring and appeared to gain confidence in speaking English in front of their teachers or peers. Diarists by the end of these diaries express how they are able to talk with greater ease and comfort because they were given attention and responsibility when asked to write the diaries. This unexpected conclusion increases learners' self-confidence and raises their willingness to participate and interact with their peers. Let us consider this entry from a diarist as an example:

I know it is a great responsibility to be chosen to write these notes (diaries)…. I feel the teacher cares about us, about our success; I need to be at the level of this trust….I feel good by expressing my feelings, I feel more comfortable and want to succeed. (Student '9')

On the whole, these journal entries divulge that motivational and affective factors need to be considered in foreign language instruction; this appears in second language acquisition theoretical models such as (Clément, 1980; Gardner, 1985; Krashen, 1981; Spolsky, 1989) and research studies like (Baker, 1992; Larsen-Freeman and Long, 1992; Valencia and Cenoz, 1992). Although the diarists in these studies are fascinated in learning and evaluating teaching techniques, methods and strategies, a great number of entries on feelings about one's self and emotions outweigh all others.

Eventually, in order to fine tune the results obtained, the following table attempts to visualize some revealed factors influencing classroom speaking progress:

Inhibiting Factors	Confidence Raising Factors
• Fear of negative evaluation • Lack of knowledge and vocabulary • Teachers' attitudes • Low self-confidence • Anxiety • lack of Motivation • Tasks selection • Threatening atmosphere	• Teacher's encouragements and support • Relaxed classroom atmosphere • Positive self-image • Motivating and interesting tasks • Learning in groups • Pronunciation abilities

Table 4.13. Influencing Factors Mentioned in Learners' Diaries

In order to manage and control the results of the present study, learners' outcome was assessed by using an interview and a speaking test at the end of the investigation.

4.3.2. Final Phase Coding and Analysis

During the final phase of this research, it was thought to carry out a speaking test and an interview with learners to cross-check the results achieved.

4.3.2.1. Speaking Test Results

At the end of this research, and in order to establish fine relationships between the three studied variables, an attempt was held to test learners' speaking abilities when presenting a prepared talk in 15 min (see appendix 'F'). It is worth mentioning that the researcher based the selected test on TOEIC (Test Of English for International Communication) samples, which provide an authentic measure of English-language proficiency which can help teachers measure their learners' speaking competence. It should be clear that the speaking test includes four different task types. As explained in this adopted table:

Phase	Task	Evaluation Criteria	Time Allowed
1	Introduce the topic	pronunciation intonation and stress	3 minutes
2	Developing the ideas	all of the above, plus grammar, vocabulary cohesion, facial expression, moving.	7 minutes
3	Concluding	all of the above, plus relevance of content completeness of content	2minutes
4	Discussing and Expressing opinions	all of the above+ interaction	3 minutes

Table 4.14. TOEIC Speaking Sample Test

Besides, the researcher used an adopted model for evaluation criteria as mentioned in the preceding chapter (see appendix 'G'). The selected topics were given to learners in advance so that they prepare

themselves before being "on stage". The following table demonstrates the scoring procedure:

Category	Content	Clarity	Confidence	Pronunciation	Time	Volume
Score	2	4	4	4	2	4
Category	Excellent		Good	Satisfactory	Poor	
Score	+15		13	+10	-10	

Table 4.15. Speaking Evaluation Methodology

Subsequently, the researcher analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively the achieved results. The following table sums up the results:

Score	Frequency	Percentage
7	1	3.33%
8	2	6.66%
9	2	6.66%
10	7	23.33%
11	3	10%
12	6	20%
13	2	6.66%
14	3	10%
15	3	10%
16	2	6.66%

Table 4.16. Frequencies of the Participants' Scores in the Speaking Achievement Test

It was found that the highest percentage was in the score 10 (23.33%) as it is shown below:
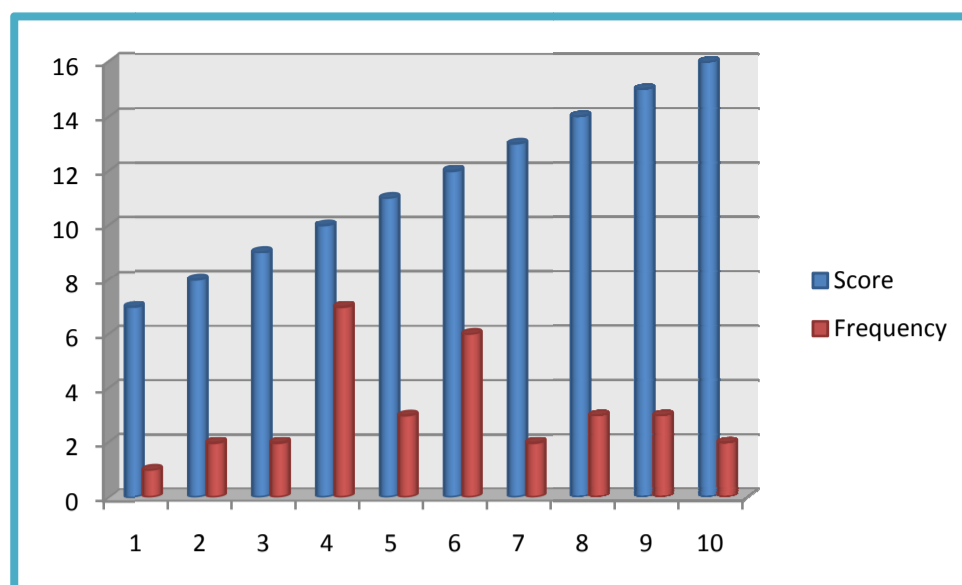
Bar-Graph 4.5. Participants' Scores in the Speaking Achievement Test

Only five students (16.66%) score excellent results, their clarity and confidence in speaking were remarkable, they knew well how to attract the attention of the audience. Good results were scored as far as the other five learners. Besides, the majority of learners 53.33% present satisfactorily, some displayed difficulties in raising their voice; others suffer from pronunciation problems and others show contradiction in their presentations; though they have a good pronunciation, they were unconfident to speak. However, 13.33% were poor presentations, they were anxious throughout all the talk, looking down, forgetting ideas, and these factors lowered their confidence in speaking and presenting. This is summed up in this table:

Category	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor
Score	+15	14- 13	12-10	-10
Score	5	5	16	4
%	16.66	16.66	53.33	13.33

Table 4.17. Speaking Test Results

In order to visualize the picture, the following bar-graph illustrates the results:
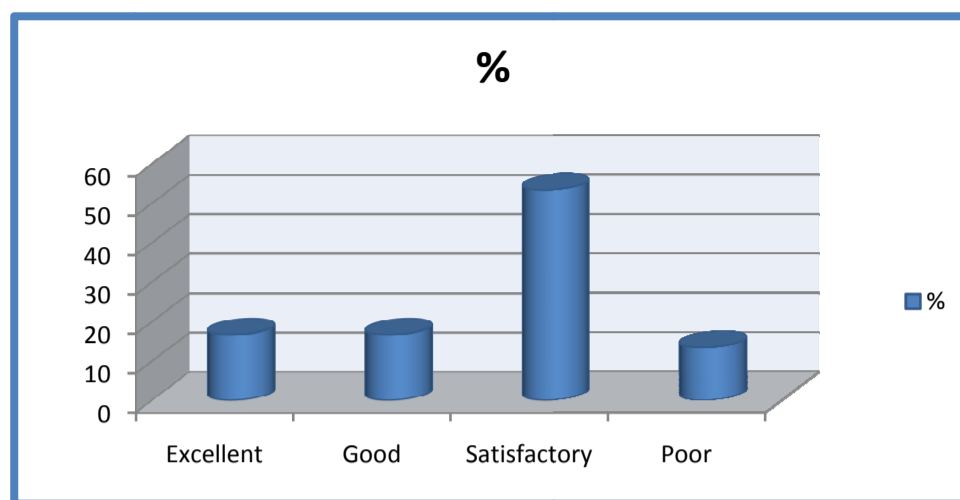
Bar-Graph 4.6. Learners' Speaking Test Results

The lowest score was Min. = 8 and the highest score was Max. =15. The overall mean of students' score was 11.8 which is an average score. In a more detailed picture, the researcher attempts at calculating the mean for each category as shown below:

Category	Content out of 2	Clarity 4	Confidence 4	Pronunciation 4	Time 2	Volume 4
Mean	1.13	2.36	2.3	**1.9**	1.33	2.73

Table 4.18. Mean for Test Categories

This can be represented as follows:
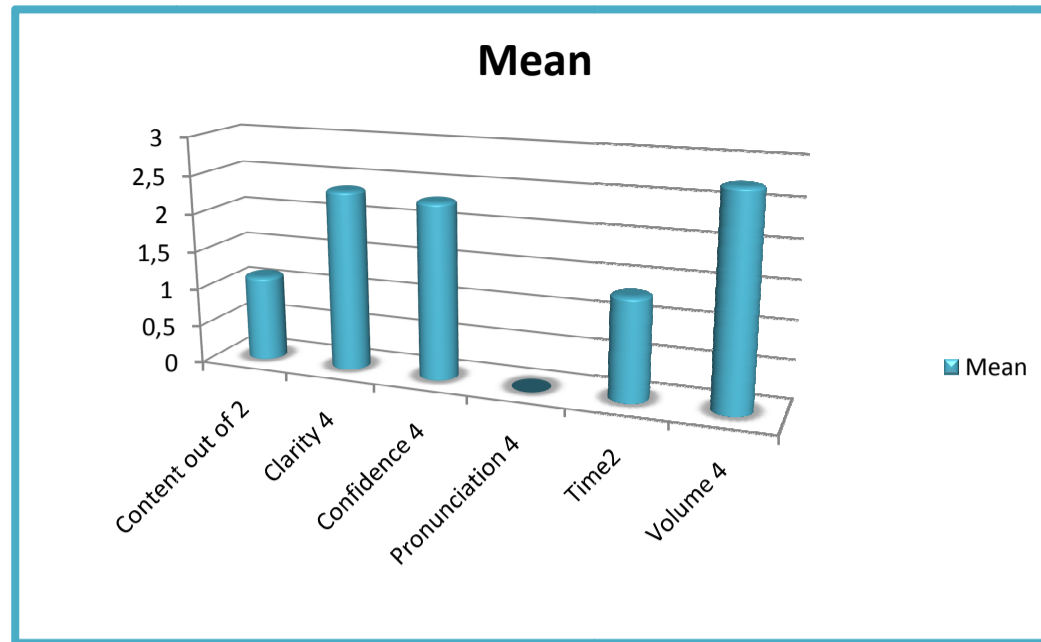
Bar-Graph 4.7. Mean for Test Categories

As noticed, learners scores in pronunciation was below average, this lowers their self-confidence (see appendix 'G'). Whenever learners' pronunciation is weak, their voice decreases, this lowers their confidence and inhibits them from offering a clear speaking presentation. Conversely, it was also found that some learners still have serious difficulties in pronunciation, but they could offer an acceptable confident presentation.

4.3.2.2. Learners' Interview Results

In order to cross-check the results achieved, an interview was conducted to elicit some useful information from learners concentrating on their degree of self-confidence when speaking, attempting at the same time to determine the kind of pronunciation strategies students make use of when speaking to create their own confidence (see appendix 'D'). It was

also thought to ask learners' about their speaking performance in the classroom presentation task.

The interviewer started with a warm-up to create a relaxing atmosphere and lower their anxiety. The students' answers were recorded by the researcher in note forms to be analyzed in the present section.

Asking learners about their opinions about their speaking level, most learners (73.33%) reveal that they have an average level, while 20% believe that they have a low level, and 6.66% believe they have good speaking level.
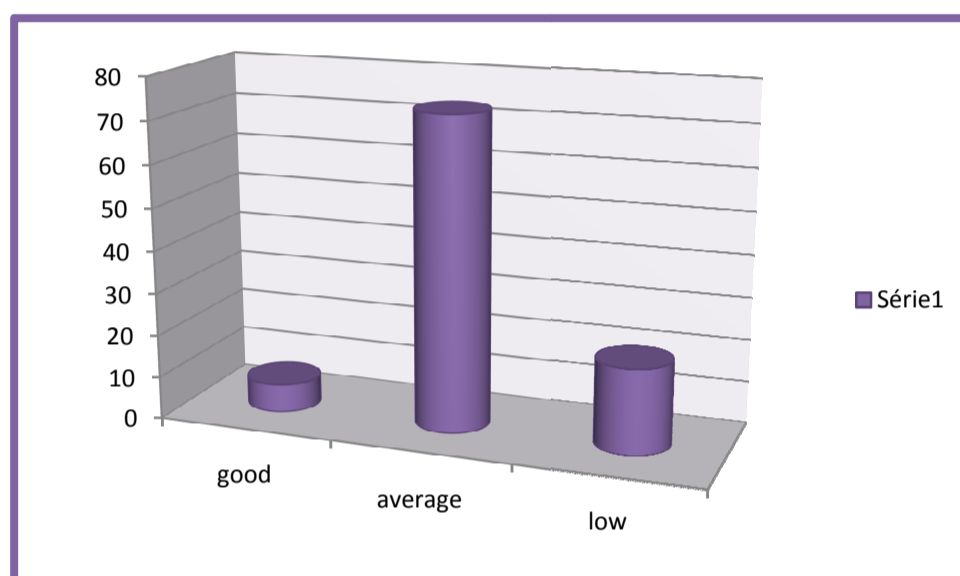
Bar-Graph 4.8. Learners' Speaking Level

The second question gave opinions for learners to reflect upon their feelings. The following table explains the results:

Option	Agree	Disagree
1.It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in our English class**.**	80%	20%
2.I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking English in our English class.	23.33%	76,67%
3.I always feel that the other students speak English better than I do.	50%	50%
4.I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in front of my peers	56.66%	43.33%
5.I am afraid that other students will laugh at me when I speak English	50%	50%

Table 4.19. Learners' Feelings

Graphing the results achieved, the next bar illustrates this:
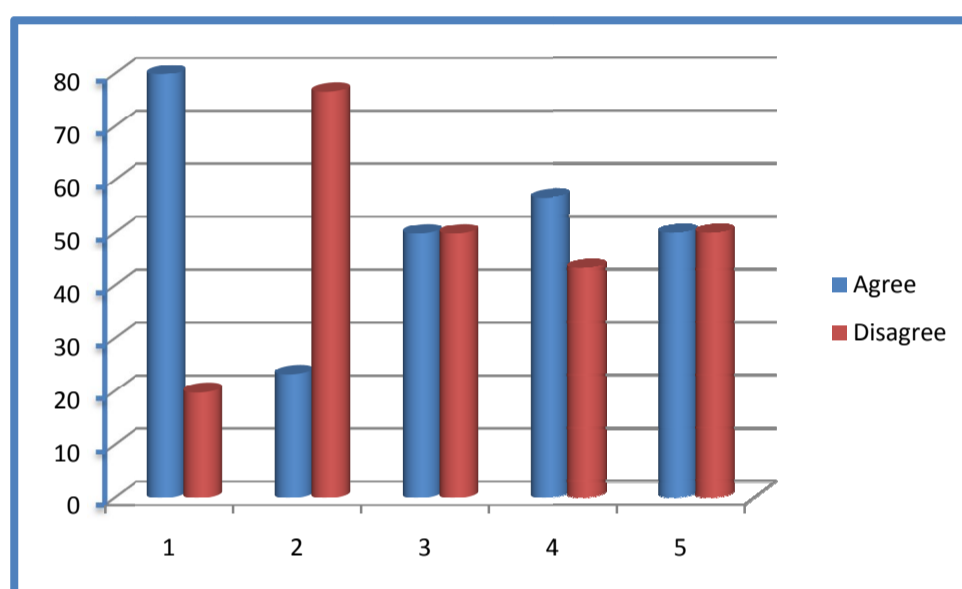
Bar-Graph 4.9. Learners' Feelings

As for their pronunciation strategies used by learners, it was found that 83.33% speak and do not care about their mispronunciation; 16.66% prefer to keep silent and 6.66% use the strategy of finding an alternative

word that they are sure about its correct pronunciation. Though learners were given the opportunity to suggest other strategies they make use of in their speaking performance, no subject proposes other extra strategies. The subsequent bar-graph shows the results:
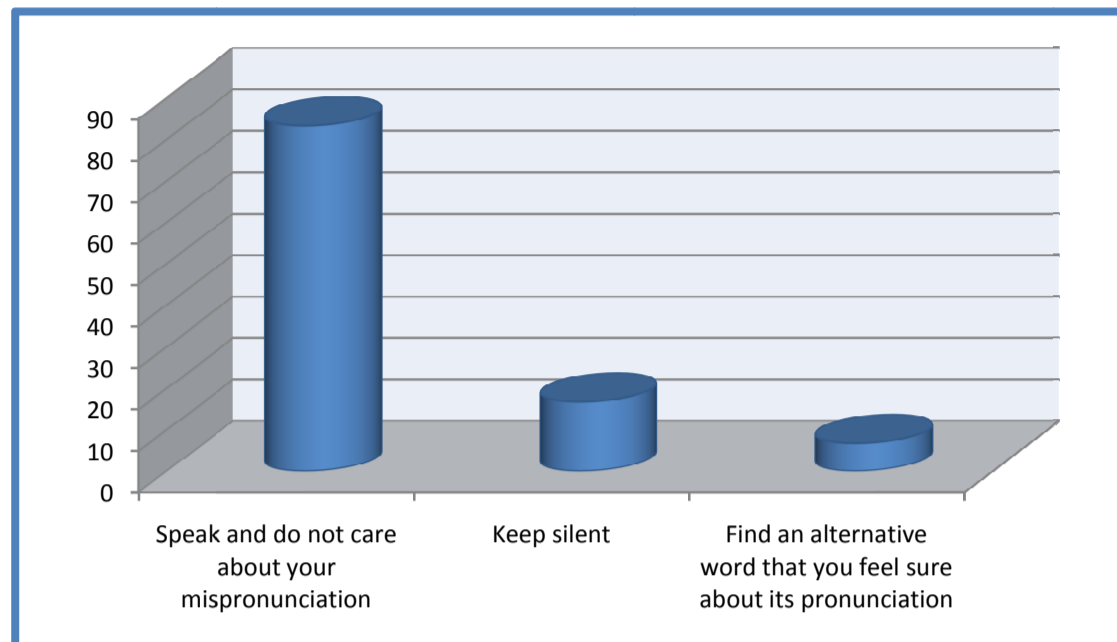
Bar-Graph 4.10. Learners' Pronunciation Strategies

At this level, the door was opened to learners to reflect upon their beliefs freely in open questions. When being asked about how they know they are wrong in their pronunciation, some interesting point of views were obtainable, here are the most significant ones:

- I notice the others' reaction (the teacher),
- Facial expressions,
- I have a personal feeling of mispronunciation,
- Miscomprehension of a message,
- Repetition.

Concerning the next question, it was found that the majority of learners are not aware of any strategies about finding the alternative when being misunderstood. The exception was with few learners who answered that they change the idea using other words, or links the new word with an already known one, repeating the idea slowly, and also having a sense of humour about mispronunciations and miscomprehension.

The sixth questions unveiled that learners' pronunciation is crucial for their psychological health, knowing how to pronounce correctly make learners proud, happy and more confident about their progress. A learner believed that he wanted just to please the teacher with correct and good pronunciation more than himself. Another learner thought that when she pronounced well, her speaking skill will grow and develop, and thus, her self-confidence will be high when speaking.

Finally, the last question displays that all learners prefer an encouraging teacher who praises their progress and who support them; this is a share idea with the importance of establishing a relaxing, non-threatening environment where mistakes are tolerated and encouragement is desirable from the part of teachers.

In a nutshell, the interview served to expose that learners' speaking abilities appears to be affected by a number of psychological factors in addition to learners' pronunciation abilities. Learners are, in fact, trying to believe in their own capacities and take the risk of talking.

4.6. DATA ELUCIDATION AND SUMMARY OF THE MAIN FINDINGS

Considering the achieved results, the following section attempts to summarise and draw conclusions to this investigation. The first research question was intended to explore possible relationships between self-confidence and speaking performance; learners' confidence scale was used for such a reason (see Table 4.1.). In order to examine statistically this correlation, the Pearson correlation coefficient was employed to determine the correlation between the variables. The results display that the correlation between overall self-confidence and speaking performance was $r = .697$. This level of Pearson Coefficient Correlation indicates that the correlation is positive; the correlation between the two variables was significant at the level of *0.01.* It is wiser, here, to mention that the value **r** is represented as: **$-1 \leq r \leq +1$**. The **+** and **−** signs are used for positive correlations and negative correlations, respectively, i.e., in positive correlation, if x and y have a strong positive correlation, r is close to +1. Positive value indicate a relationship between x and y variables. On the other hand, if x and y have a strong negative correlation, r is close to -1 and r value indicates a perfect negative fit.

Therefore, our findings denote that there is a statistical association between the dependent and independent variables, i.e., the more self-confident learners are, the higher their speaking performance will be. Highly confident learners are ready to take the risk to speak in front of others. On the other hand, lack of self-confidence results lack of interest to struggle for high quality of oral performance, besides, less confident learners are not certain about their abilities which lead to low levels of achievement. Hence, when student' self-confidence increases, his/her speaking achievement increases and vice versa. The same result was achieved by Heyde (1977) who found a positive correlation between self-

esteem and learners' oral performance. MacIntyre, Dörnyei, Clement and Noel (1998) suggest on their part, that self-confidence correlate to willingness to communicate in foreign languages. According to them, affective factors including self-confidence underline willingness to communicate.

The achieved results are similar to conclusions drawn by previous studies (Al-Hebaish, 2012; Fook *et al.*,2011; Aryana, 2010; Harris, 2009; Eldred *et al.*, 2004; Lloyd & Sullivan, 2003 ; Lockett *et al.*, 2003; Walter,2003 ; Bankston & Zhou, Brown,1994) that self-confidence had, in particular, an impact on learners' oral performance and speaking competence (see chapter II).

The second research question was examined through learners' diaries, interviews and speaking test. Results reveal that learners' fear of negative evaluation, lack of knowledge and vocabulary, teachers' attitudes towards them, low self-confidence, anxiety, lack of motivation and interest, together create a kind of psychological barriers to learners' confidence to speak.

Looking from the teachers' angle, it was found that learners feel unsecure in the classroom if they notice the carelessness of the teacher. Feeling the care and concern of the teacher may help learners to gradually become more willing to speak and participate. Thus, teachers need to create suitable learning environment and reconsider their teaching methods to come up with more effective approaches in teaching a foreign language. In this vein, Reid (1999) suggests that teachers should try to

create a relaxed supportive learning atmosphere, which can make learners feel safe to speak or express their views. Yet, teachers assume that learning atmosphere is the responsibility of both the teacher and the learner. Besides, it is believed that a relaxed classroom atmosphere will foster pronunciation practice.

It is also important for teachers to avoid negative evaluation in classrooms and comment on students' behaviors with more encouragement. For instance, Kyle *et al.* (2004) advocate EFL teachers to give the most silent students the opportunity to speak and build up their self-confidence in a positive, caring environment by facilitating interactive group activities or calling on students in a non threatening manner.

Anxiety, on the other hand, seems to be the most important factor to consider in the speaking classroom. Teachers need to be aware of the fact that speaking a foreign language is naturally anxiety provoking; therefore, measures should be taken within the classroom setting to minimize its effect on learners' outcome. This was also found by other studies (e.g. Aida, 1994; Pierce, 2004) in which anxiety is considered as situation-specific and has been termed *"communication apprehension"* by Horwitz, and Cope (1986). Communication apprehension in language learning is often regarded as a situation characterized by reluctance to talk or shyness in communicating ideas and is *"a distinct complex of self-perception, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors...arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process"* (Horwitz *et al.* 1986: 128).

It was also uncovered that before speaking, learners encounter psychological and linguistic difficulties and obstacles, i.e., it is not just the outcome which is concerned with lack of confidence and anxiety, but even the very first stages of the speaking task. Surprisingly, it was found also that it is not only psychological factors that affect learners' outcome, there are other factors to consider such as linguistic competence, vocabulary knowledge and love of the subject. For instance, there are learners who are simply more gifted language learners than others, and there are others who are confident language learners in writing but not in speaking.

Further, results showed that learners with high pronunciation level expose high level of confidence and this has led to achieving high level of oral presentation. What is more, learners with low pronunciation level display little self-confidence, and this had an impact on their speaking scores (Heyde,1979; Hassan,1992; Truitt,1995; Shumin,1997; Timothy et al., 2001). In other terms, the learners' confidence level is, indeed, a major sign towards successful oral achievement.

Finally, in an attempt to link the three variables together throughout this study; it was found that there is a *cause and effect* relationship. Having pronunciation abilities leads learners to enhance their self-confidence which will increase their speaking abilities. This seems similar to Heyde's (1977) findings in her pilot study on self-esteem and oral performance. She found that subjects with high self-esteem have higher ratings from both their point of view and their teachers on their oral performance than subjects with low self-esteem.

4.5. CONCLUSION

This chapter exposed the practical phase of this research work, it attempted to answer the research questions using different research methodologies. The findings mentioned above highlighted the importance of self-confidence in speaking a foreign language. Self-confident learners are ready to take the risk of speaking. Conversely, low confident learners feel uncomfortable, afraid and frustrated in the classroom. As a result, they tend to perform with less effectiveness and satisfaction, which is affecting their academic achievement in general and speaking performance in particular.

Therefore, language teachers are called for focusing more and more on building their students' self-confidence through creating a supportive classroom environment that encourages them to speak and participate in oral activities without fear to make mistakes. Our EFL teachers should create situations that encourage students to produce oral language. As Swain (2000:99) proposes, teachers should motivate learners to "*process language more deeply, with more mental effort than … input*". They may help learners identify their fears and help them learn to deal with them. They can support positive thinking and avoid negative views and beliefs. During oral activities, they should maintain a relaxed and humorous atmosphere, design interesting activities and give more time and opportunities for all learners.

Besides, learners' pronunciation also affects their confidence to speak; hence, mere exposure to target language may not be sufficient for

fluency improvement. Teachers should help EFL learners develop their pronunciation level, which will enhance their self-confidence; this in its turn will in all probabilities improve their speaking performance. This chapter paves the way for suggesting some practical ideas and pedagogical implications for teachers who wish to be psychologists in their classroom.

CHAPTER FIVE:

Improving the Quality of Instruction

5.1. INTRODUCTION

5.2. IMPLICATIONS FOR COURSE DEVELOPMENT: *Teachers as Course Developers*

5.3. DESIGNING A SPEAKING LAB-BASED COURSE: *Technology Integration*

5.3.1. Language Laboratory

5.3.2. Using Podcasts to Integrate Listening, Speaking and Pronunciation

5.3.3. Video-based Activities

5.3.4. M-learning

5.3.5. Using Interactive Whiteboard in EFL Speaking Classrooms

5.3.6. Evaluating the Learners' Oral Performance

5.4. NEW DIRECTIONS TO PRONUNCIATION INSTRUCTON

5.4.1. Developing the Learners' Strategic Knowledge

5.4.2. Suggested Material for an EFL Pronunciation Course

5.4.2.1. An Inventory of Techniques

5.5. STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE: *Teachers as Psychologists*

5.5.1. *The Confident Learner*

5.5.2. *Checking Your Learners' Overall Self-Confidence*

5.5.3. *Delivering a Confident Classroom Presentation: Making it Count*

5.5.4. *Using PowerPoint Effectively in a Classroom Presentation*

5.6. CONCLUSION

5.1. INTRODUCTION

In the light of the findings reached in the preceding chapter, a great number of teaching implications spring to mind. Thus, this chapter is designed for EFL teachers who wish to build an enjoyable relaxing classroom environment where both students and teachers are actively involved. With this idea in mind, it attempts to summarize some prefatory comments needed before starting a speaking course. This chapter tries to map out the terrain for constructing a speaking-based lab course for EFL learners, including pronunciation practice, and taking into account some psychological variables within the teaching/learning process.

Teaching pronunciation to EFL learners is considered as being vital because of the increasing realisation that poor pronunciation may cause serious problems for learners, such as communication failure, stress and anxiety. In an attempt to put forward a number of proposals that endorse pronunciation practice and progress, the present chapter takes a step towards achieving a comprehensible outline to pronunciation training for a better communication.

The need for qualified teachers with an overall opinion about the learners' psychological status will be discussed. Indeed, a teacher as a researcher should be enough aware of his learners' needs in general, and pronunciation ones in particular; in this way, he will be able to determine the goals of the target module to develop the convenient material in order to achieve an acceptable performance.

Selected activities are chosen to facilitate the teaching of pronunciation and raise the students' strategic awareness to make the teaching/ learning of English a better experience for both teachers and students.

5.2. IMPLICATIONS FOR COURSE DEVELOPMENT: *Teachers as*

Course Developers

Stage 1
Planning the course

Ongoing
assessment
and
decision making

Stage 4
Reteaching the course

Stage 2
Teaching the course

Stage 3
Modifying/replanning the course

Figure 1   The process of course development for the teacher
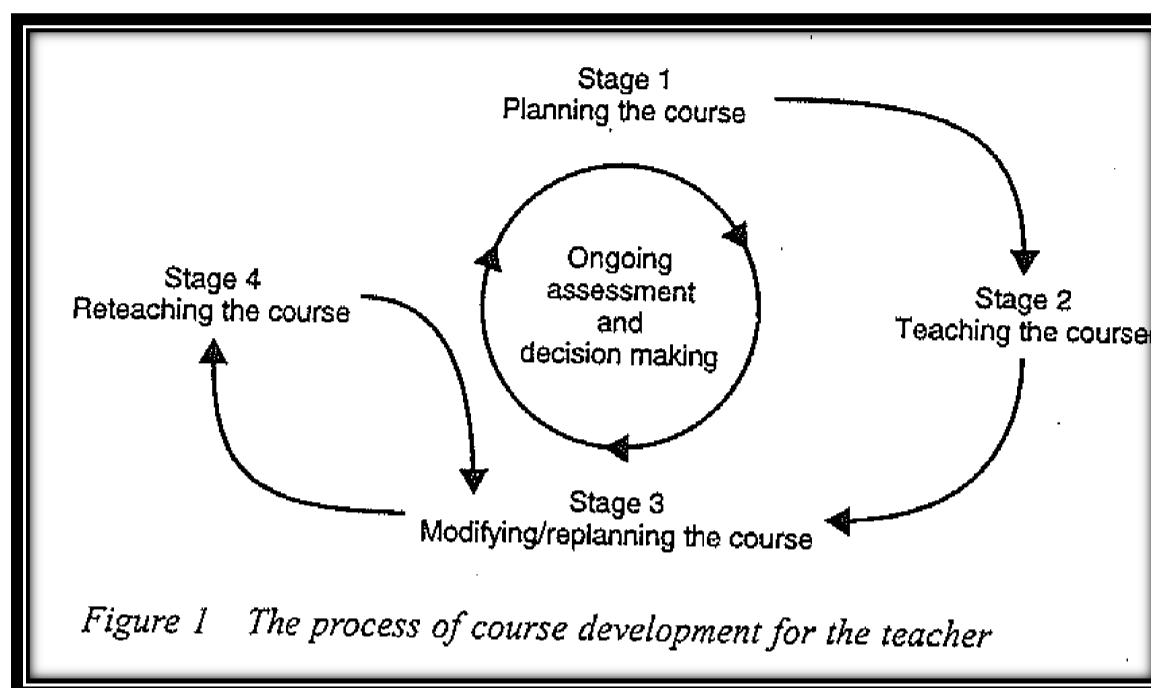
Figure 5.1. Course Development (Graves, 2000:10)

Researchers often assign meanings to course, curriculum and syllabus according to their field of interests. For instance, Nunan (1987) interprets the notion of curriculum into three ways, as a *product* or set of items to be taught, as a *process* for deriving material and *methodology* and as the *planning phase* of the programme. Conversly, *syllabus* can be

defined as the specification and ordering of the context of the course (White, 1988). Furthermore, a *course* is defined by Hutchinson and Waters (1987:65) as *"an integrated series of teaching-learning experiences, whose ultimate aim is to lead the learners to a particular state of knowledge"*. Consequently, syllabus design represents a crucial part of course development.

In general the process of course development is quite similar to the process of curriculum development. As shown in the previous figure, course development includes the planning of the course, teaching it, modifying the plan, and then re-teaching it again to see the impact of changes over the teaching/learning process. Curriculum design specialists (Dubin and Olshtain, 1986; Hutchinson and Waters, 1987; Nunan, 1985; Richards, 1990) believe that before developing any course, teachers need to develop a framework of components as shown in the following table:

Component	Questions to be asked
Needs Assessment	What are my students' needs? How can I assess them so that I can address them?
Determining Goals and Objectives	What are the purposes and intended outcomes of the course? What will my students need to do or learn to achieve these goals?
Conceptualising the Content	What will be the backbone of what I teach? What will I include in my syllabus?
Selecting and Developing Materials and Activities	How and with what will I teach the course? What is my role? What are my students' roles?
Organisation of the content of the course	How will I organize the content and activities? What systems will I develop?

Evaluation	How will I assess what students have learned? How will I assess the effectiveness of the course?
Consideration of Resources and Constraints	What are the givens of my situation?

Table 5.1. Course Development Considerations (Graves, 2001:179)

Bearing this in mind, teachers may become course developers and design their own lessons according to the specific learners they teach. For instance, within the design of a speaking course and after considering the aforementioned course development questions, teachers may conceptualize their syllabus grid. The grid may include the following categories:

Skill	**Description**
Listening	Lab-based listening activities.
Pronunciation	Speech Articulation, Speech Sounds, Stress and intonation.
Speaking	Let's Talk about it (pair work, individual...), discussion points, language function, culture points.
Vocabulary	New words for each unit

Table 5.2. Speaking Syllabus Grid

In view of this, these proposed themes may be used for skills development during the first year.

Proposed Themes:

Unit	Theme	Speaking & Listening	Pronunciation	Language Function& Vovabulary
Unit 1	My First week	Introducing yourself Greetings Formal/ informal conversations Starting a new class University pressure	English Sound System: Vowels	Language used in Formal/ informal conversations
Unit 2	Giving your opinion	Discussing point of views, accepting the other's opinions.	Stress and Intonation	Agreeing and disagreeing
Unit 3	At University	Pressure and stress for new experience Adapting new environments	Voice raising/ falling	Expressions like: Pull an all nighter In the nick of time Be in hot water
Unit 4	Advertising	AD presentation	Persuading intonation	Convincing and persuading expressions
Unit 5	Health	Human Body parts	Formal and scientific speech presentation	Body, Stress management, Illnesses, Giving advice
Unit 6	Education in UK & Algeria	Similarities and differences	American Vs British English	Instructions
Unit 7	Free time	Short stories and novels reading and presentation	Intonation practice	Showing directions

Table 5.3. Speaking Proposed Units

By the end of each unit, learners should develop the necessary speaking skills acquired to express their thought, ideas and feelings in various situations, learners should:

- be able to introduce themselves in both formal and informal situations,
- be able to express their opinion, agreeing and disagreeing with others,
- know what to say in different situations (showing directions, giving instructions, convincing and persuading expressions…),
- attain the capacity to cope with stressful situations, be confident in new environments and know how to behave in such situations,
- be aware of the English sound system,
- put stress in words then in sentences,
- intonate their English utterances.

Considering this proposed framework, the following section will attempt to propose a classroom approach of using these themes within a lab-based perspective for our EFL first-year LMD students.

5.3. DESIGNING A SPEAKING LAB-BASED COURSE: *Technology Integration*

Within this changing time of globalisation where teachers have to deal with digital native learners, it seems crucial for them to be familiar with information and communication technologies to survive in this digital age. Thus, it is wiser to incorporate technology within the teaching/learning process in general, and speaking courses in particular.

As already presented in chapter three, our English department has benefitted from two language laboratories equipped, designed and programmed to teach phonetics and oral production. Therefore, it is hoped that the proposed course is outlined to give our EFL students the opportunity to practise and improve their English language speaking skills. It provides an innovative speech-recognition technology where students receive immediate visual feedback on their speaking performance in a variety of activities.

In order to design this course, attention should be driven on a number of variables and dimensions. Research has thrown considerable light on the complexity of spoken interaction, thus, in designing speaking activities or instructional materials, it is necessary to recognize the very different functions and purposes of speaking skills.

Among the very first important decisions teachers need to take well before designing the speaking course, is considering the fact that carrying out activities which aim at developing speaking skills is inevitably connected with the use of different organizational forms, i.e., each speaking activity is bounded to a certain progress, within which there can be traced stages and areas that can be positively or negatively influenced by the teacher. Besides, activities need to fit the organizational form whether whole-class teaching, group work, individual work or pair work.

In this line of thought, it appears fundamental to go through the organizational form as far as teaching speaking skills is concerned. As for individual work, it is defined by Richards & Lockhart (1999: 147) as a

pattern in which '*each student in the class works individually on a task without interacting with peers or without public interaction with the teacher'*. For instance, asking learners to prepare a talk to be presented individually in front of peers and then discuss it with the whole-class asking questions about it and eliciting comments around the class. Whole-class activities, on the other side of the coin, might be used 'to *encourage more student participation (for example, by stopping from time to time during an activity and asking students to compare a response with a partner"* Richards and Lockhart (1999:148-149).

At another level, in group work, the teacher may separate the class into small sub-groups to work together (usually from four or five students in each group). It is useful for shy, unconfident learners to interact with their peers and the working environment is more relaxing according to Harmer (1991). Ur (1991:7) in his turn, agrees that group work provides learners with more self-confidence and courage, he believes that "*students who are shy of saying something in front of the whole class, or to the teacher, often find it much easier to express themselves in front of a small group of their peers*".

Ultimately, pair work according to Harmer (1992: 224) increases the amount of learners' practice, encourages cooperation and collaboration. It also enhances learners' autonomy and independence, for instance "*they [learners] can face and talk directly to one another, so it is much closer to the way we [people] use language outside the classroom*" (Byrne 1991: 31).

Taking these preliminary considerations into account, teachers as a second step need to organize the flow of the speaking activities. In this vein, three broad stages are worth undertaking, namely pre-activity stage, during-activity stage, and conclusion stage (Vilímec, 2006).

In speaking *pre-activity stage*, teachers may introduce the objectives of the speaking course and the intentions behind tasks' selection in the form of course instruction, so that learners may follow and find themselves within the speaking course. In this sense, Ur (1999:264) states that:

Problems sometimes arise to student uncertainty about what they are supposed to be doing. Instructions, though they take up a very small proportion of lesson time, are crucial. The necessary information needs to be communicated clearly and quickly, courteously but assertively: this is precisely what the task involves, these are possible options, those are not.

After instructing and setting clear goals and engaging learners' attention, the second step in pre-activity stage is grouping learners according to the task (group work or pair work) as aforementioned.

As for *during-activity stage*, two significant points are worth considering; notably teachers' role and feedback provision during the course. In a speaking course, teachers may be categorized as actors; they have to play different roles at different times. The teachers' ultimate goal

at an early stage of instruction would be to make learners speak fluently and express their ideas freely. Teachers need, then, to develop in learners a sense of independency and enhance their self-confidence by encouragement and positive reinforcement.

Secondly, providing feedback is conceived to play crucial role during a speaking course, in the sense that by acknowledging a correct answer, indicating an incorrect answer, praising, expanding or modifying a students' answer, repeating, summarizing, or criticizing learners' speaking may in all probabilities raise learners' self-confidence to try again, until they reach the desired level. When coming to the form, Richards and Lockhart (1999:190) provide different ways for accomplishing feedback on form:

- Asking the student to repeat what he or she said,
- pointing out the error and asking the student to self-correct,
- commanding on an error and explaining why it is wrong, without having the student repeat the correct form,
- asking another student to correct the error,
- using a gesture to indicate that an error has been made.

Finally, the conclusion depends on the teachers' creativity and reflection, teachers may open debates about the course, asking questions, providing positive reinforcement, providing feedback which is seen by Ur (1999:23) as:

What the groups have done must then be displayed and related to in some way by teacher and class: assessed, criticized, admired, argued with, or even simply listened with interest!

Bearing these information in mind, teachers need to think about material used to motivate, engage and enhance learners' self-confidence. The following section will demonstrate a variety of materials suitable to a lab-based speaking course.

5.3.1. Language Laboratory

Language laboratory, or lab for short, can be used in a variety of ways within the teaching/learning process. It acts as a platform for learning, practising and enhancing language skills through interactive lessons and communicative modes of teaching.

Figure 5.2. Panorama of Language Laboratory (2009)

Teachers, who wish to develop their learners' listening and speaking proficiency, may broadcast video or audio materials to all students via video streaming; at the same time, students can watch and listen the teaching material in their screen and earphones. This may add to the experience of listening and repeating the means of self-criticism by recording and playing back. In this way, each student works in a semi-private booth equipped with PCs, headphones and microphones which enhance their autonomy. Their self-confidence and motivation will be raised since they establish a non-threatening individual learning environment. Besides, while using the lab, teachers may control learners' PC remotely, including turning on/off and restarting their computers, and even controlling their learning outcome and progress. In a language lab, the majority of students takes part in the learning process and does not play a passive role. In other terms:

- Students interact with multimedia materials in which native speakers of the target language are talking in an authentic context.
- Students record themselves and listen to themselves speaking the target language – comparing their responses to a model speaker.
- Students converse in the target language with their fellow students in pairs or in groups – giving every student sufficient time to practise their listening and speaking skills.

Whitepaper_Language Labs Demystified (2011:3)

Accordingly, teachers are required to settle clear objectives and functions to work upon; to illustrate this, the subsequent objectives may be considered:

Objectives	Purposes of Teacher's Console
• **Develop pragmatic competence, to understand the grammatical form & function & scale of formality.** • **Enrich the discourse competence, to prepare the learner to be able to produce contextualize written text and speech.** • **Acquire strategic competence to use both spoken & written language to use in a wide range of communication strategies**	• Stay in control- Monitoring the students from the teacher's PC when they are on self learning. • Reinforce learning- Facilitating broadcast and sharing files from Teacher's PC to the other student workstations through audio, video, text and image. • Teaching with software that is approachable- Pairing and grouping the students to facilitate group discussions. Content authoring to create course material, and tests. • Ensure the best learning results

Table 5.4. Language Lab's Objectives (Adopted from Madhavi, 2012)

Designing a lab-based speaking course appears to be a complex task involving a number of considerations. For example, in addition to learners' needs, preferences and interests, teachers should select appropriate teaching material according to their general level. The following suggested lab-based techniques may be processed:

5.3.2. Using Podcasts to Integrate Listening, Speaking and Pronunciation

The first podcast appeared in early 2005, and soon ELT educators join this movement. Podcasts can be considered as following:
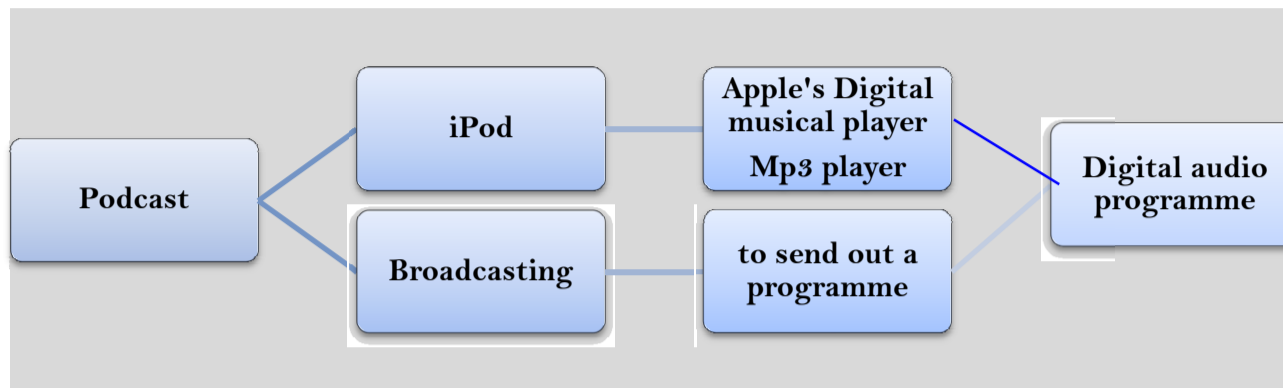
Diagram 5.1. Podcasts

Thus, Podcasts are "*digital audio programmes that can be subscribed to and downloaded by listeners*" Carvalho, 2008. One should be cognizant of the fact that though audio programmes have existed on the Web years ago, what seem to make podcasting unique is its capacity for "*subscription*": through an RSS feed, Really Simple Syndication, which is a way of publishing information on a website so that someone can take it and use it on another website. In this fashion, listeners can "subscribe" to their favorite podcasts, and their computer will then receive "alerts" whenever new episodes have been posted. Using podcasts in language teaching covers a wide range of areas; a brief survey of ELT podcasts will be put in the following table:

Content	Description	Example
Comprehensive	Podcasts that cover a wide range of content types, such as traditional listening comprehension activities, interviews, and vocabulary.	http://www.english teacherjohn.com/p odcast/
Whole lessons	These are whole lessons based on a podcast. The text of the news story is provided, and is accompanied by the audio file. There is then a lesson plan with accompanying worksheet materials. In effect, these are ready-made lessons based on podcasts which teachers can use in the classroom directly.	http://www.breaki ngnewsenglish.com /
Vocabulary, idioms, etc.	— This is a popular type of podcast, probably because it is easy to produce. In this kind of podcast, the host chooses some vocabulary items and explains their usage. The example presents a few idioms in each episode.	http://englishteach erjohn.com/
Conversations with script	These podcasts contain conversations between native speakers. To help less proficient learners, each episode is accompanied by the script, for learners to refer to while listening to the conversation.	http://www.e-poche.net/ conversations/
Jokes	These are podcasts containing jokes. Because they usually play on language, they encourage careful listening by the learner.	http://www.manyt hings.org/jokes/
Songs	These podcasts contain songs for ESL learners. The songs are either traditional children's songs, or authentic popular songs for teenagers. They are also often accompanied by the text of the lyrics.	http://englishpods ong.blogspot.com/
Phonetics, Pronunciation	Podcasts are obviously highly suited for teaching phonetics and pronunciation. These podcasts are lessons which focus on specific	http://phoneticpod cast.com/

	phonemes and pronunciation problems in English.	
Listening Comprehension	These podcasts provide conventional listening comprehension practice.	http://mylcpodcasts.blogspot.com/
Stories	These are usually story read-alouds. They may or may not be followed by listening comprehension questions	http://www.english throughstories.com

Table 5.5. Content of ELT Podcast (adopted from Paul, 2007:118)

As mentioned earlier, speaking usually involves face-to-face interaction, thus, less confident learners may feel threatened when called upon to speak to an audience, even if the audience is a small one. In the podcast context, even less-confident learners will benefit and progress, especially at the pronunciation level, since they will perform 'behind the scenes'.

As for speaking activities, it is possible to take any speaking activity and present it as a podcast. The following is a suggested list of such activities by Paul (2007:123-4):

 Reading aloud,

 students give their thoughts on topic assigned by teacher,

 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,

creating riddles,

 role play,

debates,

 dramatic monologues.

5.3.3. Video-Based Activities

In this era of 'YouTube', as English courses evolve in the 21st century and adapt to new technology, teachers are supposed to stay ahead of the curve and incorporate technological tools at a large extent. Researchers have reported myriad positive effects associated with the use of video in language courses. Students will find videos enjoyable (Levin, 1998), which may help increase students' responsiveness to the target instruction (Marx & Frost, 1998).

There was a time when videos were only used by professionals after a great deal of expense and time; however, with the advent of inexpensive pocket video cameras and simple-to-use editing software, video production has now become easy and highly accessible. With a couple clicks, a video can be shared and viewed by millions of people (Johnson, Levine, & Smith, 2008).

Using videos as an educational tool may increase learners' motivation and willingness to partake in class. It also enhances learners' self-confidence and promotes enthusiasm in classes, assists learners' comprehension, constructs more attractive lessons and reduces absenteeism in classrooms. It is crucial to mention then, that many students prefer short videos rather than long paragraphs written in response to particular questions, this way will fit all learning styles and preferences.

In this vein, the researcher conducted an informal interview with second-year EFL learners; where it was found that in literature course,

the teacher narrates a story and asked them to take notes. This was such a hard, boring task to attain. Nevertheless, during the second session, he brought the video of the story and watched it. Surprisingly, all learners were motivated enough and capable of understanding the story and could summarise the content easily after.

In a speaking course, videos may be helpful if used to display functions of voice quality and intonation, cross cultural communication, and body language. Social media has allowed anyone to become a video producer; therefore, any teacher can straightforwardly produce high-quality teaching videos similar to www.teacherTube.com which offers a variety of videos designed to help teachers in a number of areas, including language teaching. Also www.bbclearningenglish.co.uk is a reference for language teachers.

As an illustrative example, let us consider a video related to British behaviours; it shows the 'dos' and 'don'ts' when being with an English man. Teachers may play the video at the beginning without making pauses, learners watch and consider ideas, and then they discuss the general ideas about the video. A second watch may be offered, but this time, by cutting it into pieces to learn new words, pronunciation, intonation, stress, and body language.

5.3.4. M-learning

"The way to bring a language to life is to be able to converse in it every day" Hanafin (2013). Consequently, in this globalised time in which technology governs every aspect of life, it is vital for teachers to be able to insert technological aids to motivate their learners and keep pace with the

latest technologies. M-learning or Mobile Learning appears to be a newly adopted technique within the teaching and learning of languages.

Traxler (2005: 262) describes that mobile learning as "*any educational provision where the sole or dominant technologies are handheld or palmtop devices*". He assumes that mobile learning may include mobile phones, smart phones, personal digital assistants (PDAs) and their peripherals. On the other hand, mobile learning can also be defined as "*any sort of learning that happens when the learner is not at a fixed, predetermined location, or learning that occurs when the learner takes advantage of the learning opportunities offered by mobile technologies*" (O'Malley *et. al.,* 2003: 6).

Mobiles can be used in teaching language skills at large extent; for instance, texting may raise learners' writing and spelling competence, audio recordings may facilitate the listening process, voice recording may help the learners develop their speaking performance and also camera can be a useful source to audiovisual activities.

Paradoxically, a number of merits and demerits are worth mentioning in the following table:

Advantages	Disadvantages
-It increases student' motivation through the use of familiar technology. -Even unenthusiastic learners are attracted towards this technology. -Increases student' use of the four skills. -Helps students become more competent in English. -Promotes the use of English for	-Activities such as browsing internet, sending messages, making calls will cost money. -Use of noisy phones in the classroom may harm the classroom atmosphere. -Keen observation of the teacher is mandatory otherwise the use of mobile phone may divert the

communication purposes	attention of the students to unnecessary web sites.
-Helps in assessing the language skill of the learners.	

Table5.6. The Advantages and Disadvantages of Mobiles in Classrooms (Jaya, 2012)

In a speaking course, mobiles can be used to make use of the electronic dictionaries applications, voice recording and playing back, using the camera to film the learners' progress over time, and even note taking in its agenda. Pronunciation application may also be found in learners' mobiles.

5.3.5. Using IWB in EFL Speaking Classrooms

Tremendous changes have been observed in education with the incorporation of technological aids in different teaching and learning settings, such as engaging more students in the lesson, using multimedia sources flexibly, and motivating learners easily. Interactive Whiteboard, or IWB for short, can be a useful complementary tool for education, providing ample opportunities to bring in different kinds of multimedia resources into the classroom setting. The British Educational Communications and Technology Agency (2003:1) defines IWBs as follows:

An interactive whiteboard is a large, touch-sensitive board which is connected to a digital projector and a computer. The projector displays the image from the computer screen on the board. The computer can then be controlled by touching the board, either directly or with a special pen. The potential applications are: using web-based resources in whole-class teaching, showing video clips to help explain concepts,

presenting students' work to the rest of the classroom, creating
digital flipcharts, manipulating text and practicing handwriting,
and saving notes on the board for future use.

Therefore, interactive whiteboard systems consist of a computer related to a data projector along with a large touch-sensitive electronic board displaying the projected image which allows direct input through finger or special pen for objects to be easily moved around the board. Interactive whiteboards are believed to provide a number of benefits for students:

- IWBs may increase student motivation and enjoyment (BECTA, 2003a).
- IWBs may enable greater opportunities for participation and collaboration, thus developing students' personal and social skills (Levy, 2002).
- IWBs may eliminate the need for students to take notes, through the capacity to save and print what appears on the board (BECTA, 2003b).
- IWBs may help teachers make clearer and more dynamic presentations and in turn the students can manage to deal with more complex concepts (Smith, 2001).
- IWBs may also allow teachers to accommodate different learning styles and to choose materials according to the particular needs of students (Bell, 2002).
- IWBs seem to enable students to be more creative and self-confident in presentations to their classmates (Levy, 2002).

- IWBs attract the attention of students, and they may be useful not only for visual intelligent students, but also for kinesthetic learners because they allow touching and marking on the board as displayed in the following picture:
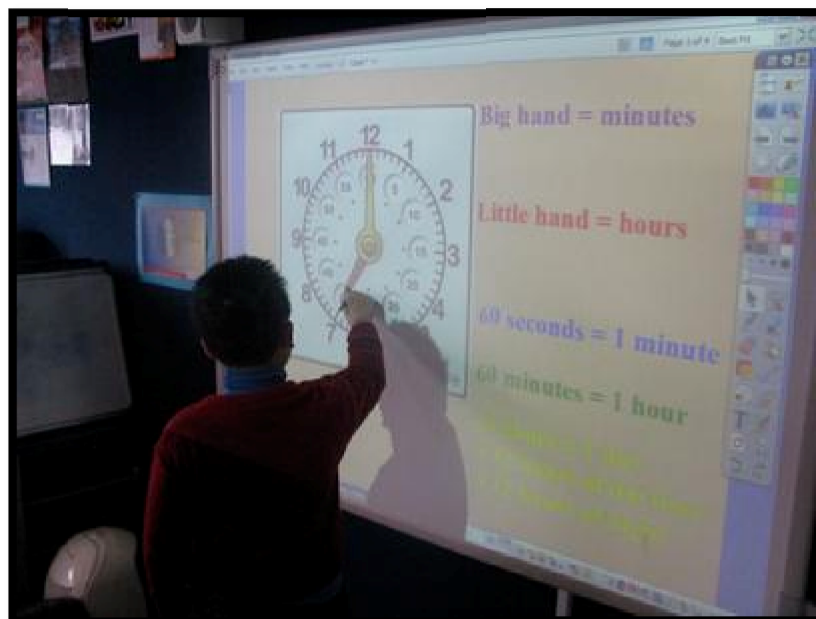
Figure 5.3. Panorama of IWB Use in Classroom

IWBs may be used in the classroom during speaking sessions to enhance learners' motivation degree and self-confidence; also, to build a relaxing atmosphere for learners to participate and engage in active learning process. In addition to this, IWBs can also help learners while their classroom speaking presentations (free talks) where they can manage what they want to say and picture their thoughts on the screen. Besides, teachers can easily create a collaborative learning environment where the majority of learners take part in the lesson process.

5.3.6.   Evaluating the Learners' Oral Performance

It is often agreed among language researchers that oral assessment is a challenging task for language teachers. The evaluation goes beyond the production level of sounds, it also integrate a number of prosodic features; namely stress, intonation, rhythm… and grammatical properties. Therefore, what follows is a suggestion, adopted from Brown (2002), to classify pronunciation evaluation under two layers of analysis: micro- and macroskills of oral production.

Microskills	Macroskills
o Produce differences among English phonemes & allophonic variants. o Produce chunks of language of different lengths. o Produce English stress patterns, word stressed and unstressed positions rhythmic structure and intonation contours. o Produce reduced forms of words and phrases. o Use an adequate number of lexical units (words) to accomplish pragmatic purposes. o Produce fluent speech at different rates of delivery. o Monitor one's own oral production and use various strategic devices- pauses, fillers, self-corrections, backtracking- to enhance the clarity of the message. o Use grammatical word classes (nouns, verbs, etc…), systems (e.g. tense, agreement, pluralization), word order, patterns, rules, and elliptical forms. o Produce speech in natural constituents: in appropriate phrases, pause groups, breath groups, and sentence constituents. o Express a particular meaning in different grammatical forms. o Use cohesive devices in spoken discourse.	o Appropriately accomplish communicative functions according to situations, participants, and goals. o Use appropriate styles, registers, implicative, redundancies, pragmatic conventions, conversation rules, floor-keeping and- yielding, interrupting, and other sociolinguistic features in face-to-face conversations. o Convey links and connections between events and communicate such relations as focal and peripheral ideas, events and feelings, new information and given information, generalization and exemplification. o Convey facial features, kinaesthetic, body language, and other nonverbal cues along with verbal language. o Develop and use a battery of speaking strategies, such as emphasising key words, rephrasing, providing a context for interpreting the meaning of words, appealing for help, and accurately assessing how well your interlocutor is understanding you.

Table 5.7. Oral Performance Evaluation

In a language laboratory, assessment might be more flexible particularly when it concerns listening and speaking skills. Learners' speaking recordings might be accessible many times, and the teacher may have to check and re-check the recording whenever needed. In listening tests, the computer saves learners' answers to be corrected latter. Moreover, teachers can also complete the following evaluation sheet and judge learners' performance from lowest to highest scores:

Name _____   Date _____

Oral Presentation Evaluation Sheet

Topic or Title _____

Presenter or Group _____

Did the presenter or group:	lowest		mid		highest
1. make use of eye contact and facial expressions?	1	2	3	4	5
2. have a good opening?	1	2	3	4	5
3. change the pitch and tone of voice?	1	2	3	4	5
4. use interesting and specific language?	1	2	3	4	5
5. use pauses or emphasis on key words?	1	2	3	4	5
6. support ideas with details and examples?	1	2	3	4	5
7. use gestures or action?	1	2	3	4	5
8. use visuals?	1	2	3	4	5
9. speak clearly?	1	2	3	4	5
10. have a good closing?	1	2	3	4	5
For a Reader's Theater or play					
11. wear costumes or use props?	1	2	3	4	5
12. act so I believed the story?	1	2	3	4	5

Table 5.8. Oral Presentation Sheet (Bailey & Nunan, 2003:154)

5.4. NEW DIRECTIONS TO PRONUNCIATION INSTRUCTON

The second studied variable was pronunciation practice at Tlemcen University. As assumed, learning a foreign language consists mainly of learning and acquiring a set of new habits that are generally different from the learners' mother tongue. In the present section, a number of proposed classroom activities are recommended to help both EFL teachers and learners for better achievements in the classroom. The researcher, then, will try to expand the teachers' repertoires of techniques by introducing new directions in the field of pronunciation instruction.

Recently, the outlook on pronunciation instruction has taken a new orientation towards the importance of suprasegmentals, namely stress and intonation (Derwing, 2008). In fact, this outlook needs to be much more broadened by taking into account other 'general speaking habits' which will fasten learners' speaking abilities and achievements, such as the subsequent proposed habits:

> - *Clarity in speech*, i.e., the way learners speak, did they cover their mouth with their hands? Or is their speech muffled?
> - *Speed*, i.e., the learners' rapidity degree may cause inaccurate articulation which results incomprehensible speech.
> - *Loudness*, i.e., the learners' lack of volume may affect learners' production.
> - *Eye gaze,* i.e., the learners' eye contact when speaking in a conversation.

> ➢ *Fluency:* i.e., the learners speak with either long silences between words or with many 'filled pauses' (expressions like 'uhm' or 'ah').

Grahem& Goodner (1960)

Having these habits in mind, learners may attain intelligibility in their pronunciation and become better understood. In this vein, Gilbert (1994) calls for the incursion of three new significant guidelines in pronunciation training:

- Applying methods rather than mechanical drills,
- Emphasising the musical aspect of pronunciation more than sounds,
- Teaching real speech patterns and giving students practice in efficient ways.

(adopted from Celce-Murcia et al (1996: 290)

The researcher would add to the previous suggested guidelines, technology use in teaching pronunciation as suggested in the previous section.

5.4.2. Developing the Learners' Strategic Knowledge

Throughout the study conducted in this research work, it was brought into light the necessity for teachers to apply an innovative approach in teaching pronunciation, based on "how" to teach EFL learners speak and communicate efficiently and confidently in classroom.

In view of this, pronunciation learning strategies for problem-solving situations need to be practised. In this line of thought, Hamzaoui (2006:261) calls for an urgent *"design and implementation of a curriculum that would enhance the cognitive and metacognitive growth of the learner by integrating learner strategy training besides content/skill teaching"*. However, research in education was surprisingly neglecting pronunciation learning strategies within the huge bulk of literature.

This section strives to provide the application of learning strategies for the teaching of pronunciation and demonstrate how our EFL learners may benefit greatly from explicit explanation of how pronunciation fits into the overall process of communication. For instance, learners may solve their pronunciation problems by applying what they know about familiar speech sounds to unfamiliar ones (Brown *et al.* 1989), i.e., moving from the known to the unknown.

Through effective strategy training, learners will attain in all possibilities a certain level of proficiency in learning. The development of *self-correction* techniques and *self-monitoring* strategies should be included in the teaching/learning process, especially during the early stages of instruction; this latter would lead to learners' self-reliance and consequently, self-confidence.

The ability to self-correct one's pronunciation errors is, in fact, one of the fundamental areas of research that need special attention on the part of the teacher. For instance, developing the learners' ability to decipher a dictionary's pronunciation keys may encourage the learners to self-correct their production by checking the dictionary. Another strategy

worth using when introducing individual speech sounds is to help the learners develop a "feel" of the target part of the mouth involved in the articulation, then critically compare it with the mistaken production.

As for self-monitoring, it has manifold facets which are linked to the pronunciation points aimed at. For instance, learners produce approximately the target speech sound, and then significantly compare it with the sample of speech provided. Monitoring one's production may also be prerequisite when producing the speech sounds in isolation then move to contextualizing it through words or sentence practice.

Accordingly, self-monitoring and self-correcting abilities minimise the learners' dependence on the teacher and, hence, maximize the learners' self-reliance to take risks in their speech which will hopefully enhance their self-confidence. In this stratum, Scarcella and Oxford (1994), attempt to collect a set of strategies and techniques which may be applied in the research-based approach for pronunciation instruction.

Techniques	Content
Self-monitoring	Students can learn to self monitor their pronunciation to improve their intelligibility.
Tutorial Sessions and Self-Study	These begin with a diagnostic analysis of each student's spoken English and an individualized program is designed for each student.
Modeling and Individual Correction	Report the results of analyses of student speech sample individually
Communication Activities	Design activities for the students to practise specific sounds
Written Versions of Oral Presentations	In the more advanced levels, students can be given strategies for analyzing the written versions of their

	oral presentations
Computer-Assisted Language Learning	Teachers can use visual displays of speech patterns to teach intonation, stress, and sounds to individuals and small groups of students
Utilization of Known Sounds	Comparisons with the students' first language may help some students to produce a second language pattern
Incorporation of Novel Elements	Using novel elements with the use of directions
Affective Strategies	number of excellent affective strategies can be taught to help learners lower their anxieties and gain self-confidence
Explanations	Explanations of how to produce sounds or use pronunciation patterns appropriately should be kept to a minimum though directions about what to do with the vocal organs can help some students in some circumstances
Communication Strategies	Students can be taught some useful communication strategies which will help them give the impression that their pronunciation is better than it really is. The communication strategies are retrieval strategies, rehearsal strategies, cover strategies, and "communication" strategies. (Oxford 2000)

Table 5.9. Selected Techniques for Pronunciation Instruction

Scarcella and Oxford (1994)

5.4.3. Suggested Material for an EFL Pronunciation Course

Suggested classroom techniques are proposed in this section for a better pronunciation course development. It is believed that the first step towards success is the classroom management; therefore, teachers should be aware of the appropriate supervision of their classrooms. This section also includes the suggestion of some activities as tongue twisters, humour when mispronouncing sounds and the use of technology.

Among the most primordial perspectives a teacher needs to take into account when deciding on what to teach, is to look at the students and

their problems with English for their future needs. For instance, listening activities have a significant part of the pronunciation course; however, listening seems difficult to constitute the whole lesson.

5.4.3.1. An Inventory of Techniques

The present section reflects upon suggested and adopted activities for teaching individual sounds as well as other aspects of pronunciation such as stress, rhythm, and intonation in a user-friendly way. The following table entails a suggested content based on some guidelines for a more motivating pronunciation-instruction.

Pronunciation	Technique	Description
Individual Sounds	**Identification**	Learners select the words or sentences they hear on a worksheet.
	Information gap	Learners practise target sound(s) by sharing information to complete a task.
	Minimal pairs	Learners identify which word of a pair has been spoken, indicate whether the two words spoken are the same or different, or which word in a list is different.
	Dialogues	Learners create dialogues using words that contain the sounds being practised.
	Sammy diagrams	Demonstrate the position of tongue, teeth, and lips by using diagrams of a cross-section of a head.
	Spelling equivalency	Give examples of different ways of spelling an individual sound (
	Tongue twisters	Use sentences that are difficult to pronounce quickly and correctly to practise target sounds (e.g., *She sells seashells by the seashore*)
	Brainstormi	Choose a topic and ask learners to think of words

	ng	containing the sound(s) to be practised.
Stress and Rhythm	**Changing the meaning**	Read words and phrases using contrastive stress and discuss the meanings (e.g., *green house* and *greenhouse)*
	Exaggeratio n	Encourage learners to exaggerate their production of stress and rhythm.
	Identificatio n 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
	Questionnai res 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 instruction	Learners work in pairs or groups and ask for and give directions and instructions
	Identifying questions, statements, 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.

Contractions, Reduced Expressions, Linking, and Pausing	**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 fill	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 5.10. An Inentory of Techniques (adopted from Brillinger, 2001:40-42)

In addition to the aforementioned techniques, teachers may use classroom language games to teach pronunciation, for instance, Hancock (2007) provides a wealth of suggested pronunciation activities, the following examples may be taken into account:

Find a way from Start to Finish. You may pass a square only if the word in it has the sound /ŋ/. You can move horizontally (↔) or vertically (↕) only.

START					
sing	think	thick	strong	wrong	rung
sign	uncle	unless	drug	strange	comb
thanks	angry	signal	drank	English	finger
anxious	angel	single	monkey	money	young
language	tongue	skiing	skin	came	ink
lounge	danger	band	dream	swim	wing
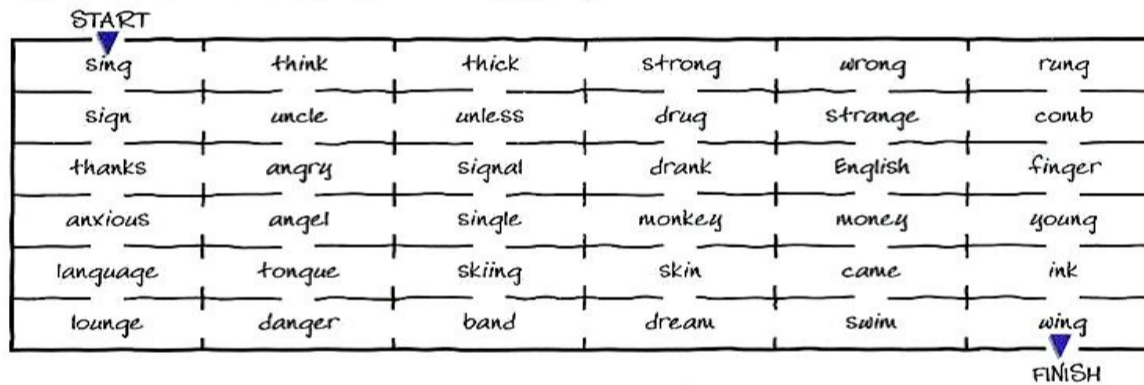
Hancock (2007:35)

Tick (✓)the sentences where *is* is always a separate syllable. Then listen, check and repeat.

EXAMPLE

a Lunch is ready! ✔   b Dinner is ready!

1 a The house is cold.   b The room is cold.
2 a The taxi is here.   b The bus is here.
3 a The beach is crowded.   b The park is crowded.
4 a The steak is good.   b The fish is good.
5 a The meaning is clear.   b The message is clear.
6 a The smell is awful!   b The noise is awful!
7 a Juice is good for you.   b Fruit is good for you.

Hancock (2007:79)

What are the things in the picture? Write them in the correct column according to the rhythm (there are two phrases in each column). Use these words: bowl, bottle, jar, packet, bag, pot, carton, kilo. Then say the phrases aloud.
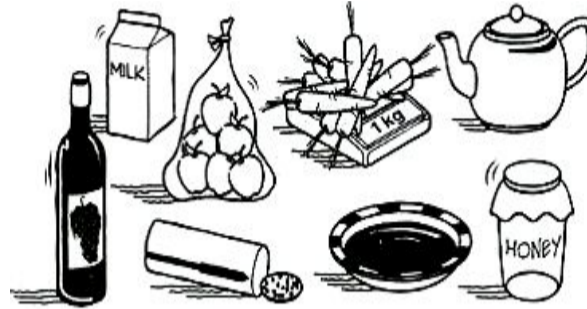
oOoO	oOoOo	oOooO	oOooOo
		A bowl of soup	

Hancock (2007:83)

What two words do you get if you move the consonant from the end of one word to the beginning of the next or vice versa? Complete the table. Remember: think about sound, not spelling!

EXAMPLE

cats eyes   cat ......*size*......

1 .... *able* ⟷ fell table   6 an ocean   ⟷ a ....
2 known you   ⟷ *no* ....   7 *stop* .... ⟷ stopped earning
3 *cooks* .... ⟷ cook steak   8 escaped error ⟷ .... *terror*
4 seen you   ⟷ .... *new*   9 .... *cheer* ⟷ meant year
5 *faced* .... ⟷ face told   10 learn chess ⟷ .... 'yes'

Hancock (2007:85)

In each of the sentences below, one of the words is written wrongly. It is written wrongly because that's what it sounds like in the accent of the speaker. All the accents are different from standard, British English. Listen and guess from the context which word is written wrongly and correct it.

EXAMPLE   She's a ~~rider~~ of romantic novels. ___writer___

1 Read about it in the noose papers. _____
2 She went to hospital 'cause she had art problems. _____
3 We watched TV and den we went to bed. _____
4 I want to tank you for your help. _____
5 They were jailed for robin a bank. _____
6 With a bit of look, we'll win this game. _____
7 Can you old the umbrella while I get my keys out? _____

5.5. STRATEGIES FOR INNOVATION: *Teachers as Psychologists*

In the process of language learning and teaching, there are a lot of paradigms contributing to the variability of contexts such as teaching and learning styles, programme' characteristics and learners' needs. The foreign language teacher faces challenging situations where he is supposed to come with wisely. English phonology experts and language teachers have been facing many challenges over the last years in an attempt to improve the educational practice and design more significant, efficient and enjoyable pronunciation courses for learners and teachers alike. The teacher may act as a coach, as noted by Morley (1991:507), who describes the pronunciation teacher as "coach" in the following terms:

> *The work of a pronunciation/speech coach can be viewed as similar to that done by a debate coach, a drama coach, a voice coach, a music coach, or even a sport coach. A coach characteristically supplies information, gives models from*

time to time, offers cues, suggestions and constructive feedback about performance, sets high standard, provides a wide variety of practice opportunities, and overall [sic] supports and encourages the learner.

As pronunciation instructors, teachers need to make pronunciation a physical as well as a cognitive activity, i.e., helping learners stop thinking about pronunciation in the abstract by focussing their attention on muscles that produce speech sounds, rhythm and articulation. Then, guiding their minds in feeling, observing and being attracted by the power they have in their muscles, and in how the movements of those muscles affect what they say and hear.

Learning to teach pronunciation necessitates more than providing teachers with a "how-to" bag of tricks to be replicated in the classroom, but rather it requires some basic understandings of some affective variables which may be of great help in either empowering learners' pronunciation to become intelligible and acceptable language users, or failing in acquiring pronunciation knowledge and become ineffective learners.

Accordingly, the teacher is called upon to perform a number of tasks in the language learning process. As for the pronunciation session, Morley (1991:511) outlined the following roles:

- First, it is necessary for L2 teachers to possess background in applied English phonetics and phonology.
- Second, an effort to develop "pronunciation/speech activities, tasks, material, methodologies and techniques" coupled with the communicative element.
- Third, we need more evaluative measures and methods to verify learners' intelligibility and communicability improvement.
- Fourth, researchers have to go on investigating the role of instruction on the acquisition of L2 pronunciation.
- Finally, Morley calls for controlled studies that investigate varied aspects of L2 phonology, as well as different theories that try to explain how the acquisition of a L2 phonological system takes place.

Alternatively, the teacher also has a great role to play in creating a relaxed atmosphere to lower the learners' anxiety and feel confident which result progress in language learning. Teachers may reduce classroom anxiety by making the learning context less stressful (Dörnyei, 2001), encouraging learners and keep them wanting to learn more and more. In order to maintain and increase the learners' self-confidence, Dörnyei (2001:130) believes that teachers should:

> *...foster the belief that competence is a changeable aspect of development and can be promoted by providing regular experiences of success. Everyone is more interested in a task if they feel that they make a contribution. A small personal word of encouragement is sufficient.*

All along this work, the researcher strives to find out how teachers may help their learners become confident and efficient. It was found that the way an individual learner pronounces has much to do with his or her personality and psychological or emotional state at any given time. Acton (1984:75) conceives that teachers should prepare students psychologically first to improve their pronunciation. Phonology, he mentions, has both *'inside-out'* and *'outside-in'* dimensions which function in a kind of loop:

> *Not only does personality or emotional state show in pronunciation...but the converse is also true: speakers can control their nerves or inner states by speaking properly. This is the basic tenet of successful programs in voice training and public speaking.*

The next designed strategies are recommended to EFL teachers to maintain their learners' psychological status in the classroom:

❖ **Encourage Moderate Risk Taking:** it is often noticed that many students fear failure and therefore, being afraid to take risks. Good teachers encourage such students to be reasonable risk takers. Such risk taking, however, often produces increased achievement (Clifford, 1991). For instance, students seem to have no chance to improve their pronunciation skills if they refuse to try to speak, fearing that their efforts will be unsuccessful; improvement can occur only after students try to express themselves.

❖ **Highlighting Enhancement over Doing Better Than others:** a strategic teacher needs to put emphasis on his learners' performance in accomplishing their goals. Such an approach calls for a fascinating challenge of the motivation of all students to keep them interested (Ames, 1984; Nicholls, 1989).

❖ **Supporting Cooperative Learning:** is, in fact, a far more challenging task to establish in the classroom. Beyond competition, students may be encouraged to cooperate with one another, with emphasizing constantly positive effects on achievement. It is generally acknowledged that students often learn more when they work together with their peers (Johnson & Johnson, 1975). The most motivating situation is one in which students actually receive rewards based on how well their fellow group members perform, creating great incentive for students to work together to make certain that everyone in the cooperative group is making progress (Fantuzzo, King, & Heller, 1992).

❖ **Making Tasks Interesting:** educational researchers have identified many specific approaches to motivate academic effort and achievement. Learners pay considerable attention to the degree of interest of the content of a task; sometimes adequate material grabs students' attention and help them be active. For instance, listening to a song in an oral expression session is create more fun by having the students learn in an interesting way. This later produce a suitable atmosphere of learning in which students find the experience intriguing rather than boring, and this results their progress.

❖ **Increasing Students' Self-Efficacy:** Self-efficacy has gained increasing prominence as a key mediator of regulatory and motivational processes (Bandura, 1977, 1986), it positively affects self-regulation and cognitive engagement while performing a task and has been linked to improvement and success. Learners with positive self-efficacy believe they can accomplish tasks successfully. High self-efficacy motivates future effort hence; it is important that students believe in their capacities and develop a sense of challenging themselves.

❖ **Adopting A Motivating Classroom Atmosphere:** Effective teachers strive to create a motivating classroom environment. According to Wiley et al. (2003), there are two types of environments; the physical and the psychological one; teachers need to consider both to promote engagement and learning. *Physical Environment;* involves building a comfortable and inviting place for learning, with many educational materials readily accessible for students. For example, in dealing with pronunciation, charts and diagrams, videos, tape recorders and the use of laboratories can support the teaching/ learning process. Additionally, variation in choosing the activities may in all probabilities enhance learners' improvement. For instance, introducing new topics in classroom discussion, changing the shape of the classroom (U-shape), and encourage students be creative. As far as the *Psychological Environment* is concerned, it is based on the assumption that teachers need to promote *community* in their classroom, i.e., the teacher establishes frequent connections to students, motivating, supporting and encouraging them.

❖ **Classroom management:** The classroom management of efficient teaching/learning process is said to be one of the most important components of successful teaching. Classroom instruction is complex and coherent aiming at meeting the needs of the whole class while matching to the abilities and interests of individual students with different learning styles and personalities. Teachers need to be aware of classroom management strategies, instructional strategies, motivational techniques, and a variety of theories of learning which results at its core the development of self-regulated students.

❖ **Teaching Cultural Aspects of Communication:** When being aware of the target culture, learners' self-confidence will raise because effective communication requires not just the mastery of individual sounds and the accompanying aspects of pronunciation such as stress, rhythm, and intonation. It also depends on speaking habits of the target culture such as gestures, posture, and eye contact. EFL learners need to be aware of such cultural aspects of speech. Here, it is compulsory for the teacher to familiarize his learners about the following questions: - What do facial expressions convey? Are they the same in all cultures? Do they matter? - What gestures are used (e.g., to greet, wave goodbye, indicate agreement, non-comprehension, etc.)? How do gestures vary from our culture to the target culture? Should we use gestures to communicate? How often should one gesture in conversation? What happens if we do not use gestures? Do men and women gesture in the same way? Such questions and others make learners develop certain degree of self-confidence when speaking.

Therefore, being aware of how teaching may be successful based on psychological knowledge is crucial for teachers, since teachers do much to motivate their students through supporting words, classroom organization and management, and cooperative learning, i.e., teachers are engaged in a complex orchestration of psychological variables to make the learning process as successful as possible. Bearing the above principles in mind, teachers may in all probabilities attain effective teaching.

5.5.1. The Confident Learner

Self-confidence is the third studied variable in this research; in this section, a range of techniques will be offered to regulate their psychological wellbeing and be more confident. Self-confidence comes from accomplishment when one successfully completed a task at a time he feels confident about his achievement. If learners believe in their own capacities, and would like to develop their self-confidence, the next techniques may be of great help:

1. *Use Self-Assessment to Build Confidence.*

2. *Define Your Goals.*

3. *Think Ahead to a Major or Career.*

4. *Be an Active Learner.*

5. *Know Where to Find Help.*

6. *Inform Yourself.*

7. *Organise your time.*

8. *Become an active reader.*

9. *Talk positively to yourself.*

10. *Get Involved.*

11. *Motivate yourself to learn.*

12. *Assess Your Strengths and Weaknesses.*

13. *Discover and Use Your Learning Style and Adapt to Others' Styles as explained below:*

If your style is:	You learn best by:	Your preferred instructional mode is:	To adapt to other styles you can:
Visual	reading, observing, looking at diagrams and other graphics, watching a demonstration	a PowerPoint presentation or lecture/ discussion supplemented with visual aids or handouts	recite from your notes to add an auditory mode to your review
Auditory	listening to others explain, instruct, or discuss	a live or taped presentation or lecture, class discussion in which you can express your ideas and listen to others	take notes to add both tactile and visual modes to listening
Tactile-kinesthetic	engaging in hands-on or physical/motor activity	any activity that allows you to manipulate things or move around; for example, computer-aided instruction appeals to you, as does working in a group	add a visual mode to studying, make diagrams or charts of information you want to learn

Figure 5.4. Understanding Learning Styles Preferences (Kanar, 2011:33)

14. Develop Critical Thinking and Learning Strategies:

CRITICAL THINKING	TASKS TO DO	LEARNING STRATEGIES NEEDED/USED
Making decisions	Decide when to study. Decide what's important. Select courses. Decide what to study.	Set up a schedule. Read for main idea, details, key terms. Know requirements; use resources. Review notes, old tests, assignments.
Solving problems	Solve math problems. Avoid procrastination. Reduce test anxiety.	Record problems and solutions on note cards. Make and follow a schedule. Practice relaxation techniques.
Reasoning	Write a speech. Follow an author's ideas. Compare theories.	Make an outline. Look for patterns of organization. Make a chart or information map.
Knowing how to learn	Learn from reading. Learn from listening.	Locate, understand, interpret information. Use listening and note-taking skills.
Thinking creatively	Compose an original piece of work. Develop a project.	Keep an "idea" journal. Combine ideas in unique ways.

Figure 5.5. Using Critical Thinking and Learning Strategies (Kanar, 2011:46)

15.   Think Creatively and Critically:
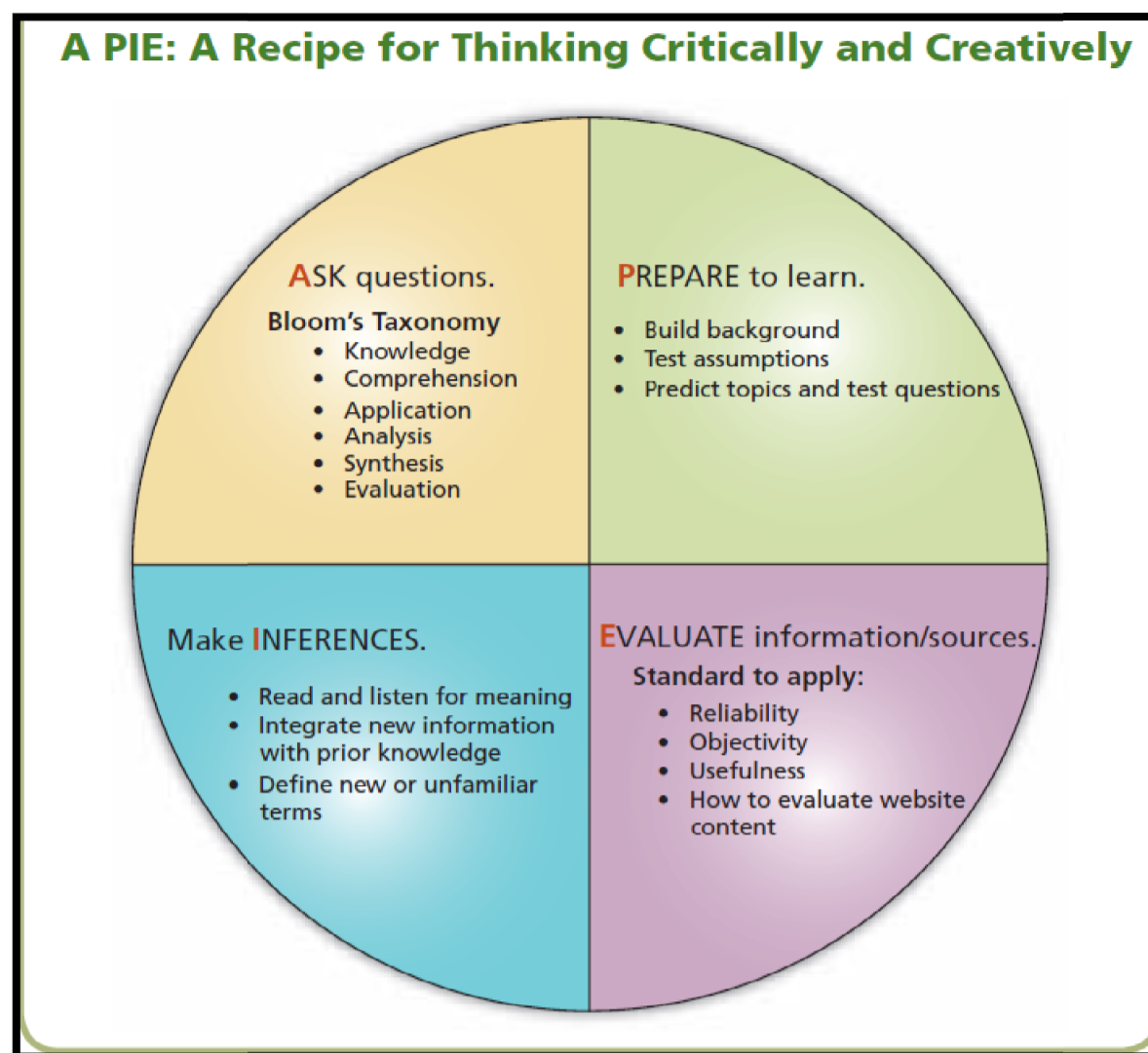
Figure 5.6. A Recipe for Thinking Critically and Creatively (Kanar, 2011: 61)

Adopting these principles, a teacher may check the learners' self-confidence degree. As it is a very complicated task, researchers such as Brown, 2000 and Kanar, 2011 attempt to tackle this issue by considering learners' achievement.

5.5.2. Checking Your Learners' Overall Self-Confidence

Among the challenges of the current study was how to measure the learners' overall self-confidence, hence, an adapted questionnaire by Brown (2002: 25) is urged to help EFL teachers determine their learners' self-confidence. It is conducted as follows: Put (*) in the number that best reflects your feelings about yourself:

1 I strongly disagree

2 I somewhat disagree

3 I somewhat agree

4 I strongly agree

Choice	1	2	3	4
I understand my own personality				
I make good judgements and choices in my life				
I enjoy other people				
I can succeed in goals that I really want to accomplish				
I am optimistic about the future				
I think for myself and defend my own beliefs and values				
I am a happy person most of the time				

Table 5.12. Self-Confidence Measurement

When gathering the data, calculate the scores, and the results will be indicated as follows:

Scores	Interpretation
26- 32	You have a very high level of general self-confidence
20-25	Your general self-confidence is quite strong
14-19	Your general self-confidence is satisfactory, but you might want to improve some aspects of your concept of yourself.
8-13	Your general self-confidence is quite low; you should think seriously about how to improve your view of yourself.

Table 5.13. Interpreting Scores

From this understanding of one's own self-confidence, one may rely on Brown's (2002:27) deduction of strategies for effective achievements:

1. Develop overall self-confidence

- Make a list of your strengths and weaknesses.
- Set goals to overcome your weaknesses.
- Tell yourself that you are smart and you can **do it.**

2. Think positively

- Do not say " I cannot" or "I'll never get it".
- Do not let other classmates' bad attitudes affect you.
- Respect your teacher and your teacher will respect you.

3. Ask for help

- Ask your teacher questions when you need.
- Ask your classmates for help when you need it.
- Practise English as much as possible with your classmates.

5.4.3. Delivering a Confident Classroom Presentation: *Making it Count*

Students' presentations are used increasingly in educational courses to encourage students be more active and involved in their own learning. Many teachers make use of student presentations to assess their understanding, knowledge and progress in a particular modular course, particularly in oral production courses. Offering techniques and strategies for confident classroom presentation will be of great advantage intended for successful talks. Among the benefits of delivering a presentation the suggested points:

16. Student-centred participation in their learning,
17. developing new knowledge and different perspectives on a topic,
18. increasing self-confidence to speak and present in front of an audience,
19. improving marks earned for a module assessment,
20. developing a wide range of communication and presentation skills,
21. preparation for skills needed in the workplace,
22. an exchange of roles and perspectives from audience to presenter.

(Chivers, and Shoolbred, 2007:8)

The question that is worth raising at this level; is what makes an effective presentation? Presentations need to be interesting and useful to the learning situation but they can also be enjoyable, even memorable by both learners and teachers. In order to deliver a good presentation, the following characteristics might be considered:

- Careful planning and preparation,
- good time management,

- relevant and interesting content,
- clear structure,
- good communication skills (visual, verbal and non-verbal communication),
- appropriate use of technologies,
- clear supporting documentation,
- suitable audience participation.

(Chivers and Shoolbred 2007:21)

The presenter, therefore, needs to respect several factors before and after delivery to achieve an adequate classroom presentation:
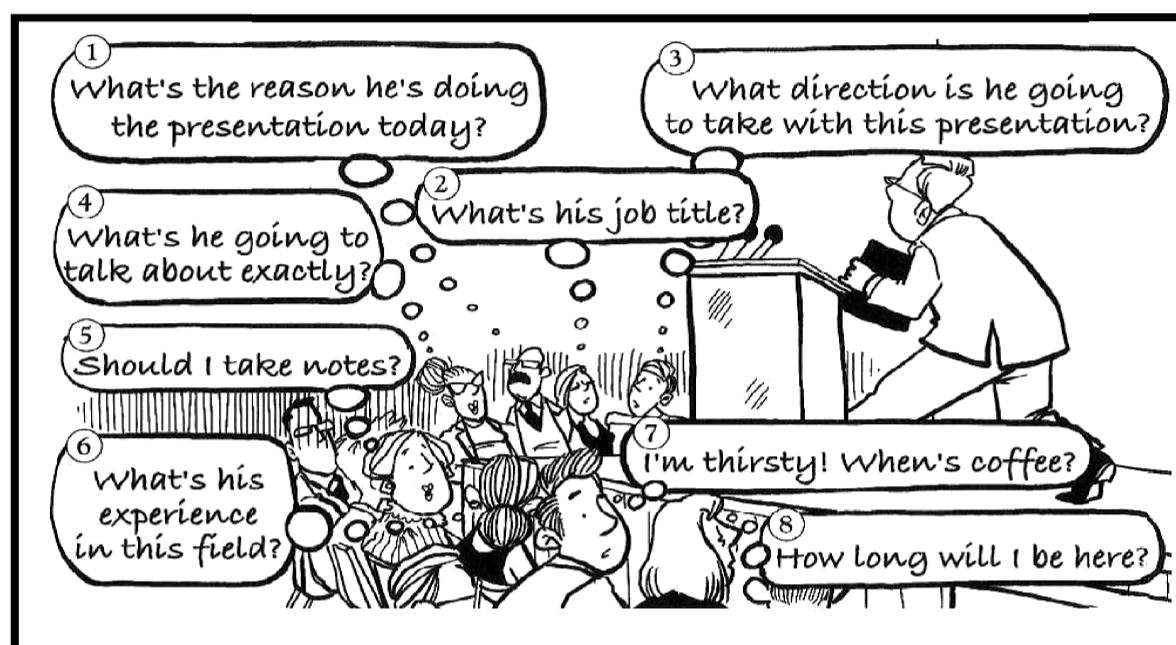
Figure 5.7. Presenting a Talk

Giving a talk is like taking your audience on a journey, therefore, in order to accompany you, they require some basic information so that they will be safe on your side ready to listen and get along your final message. These basic information revolve around Who, What, Why and How questions, as shown in the following diagram:
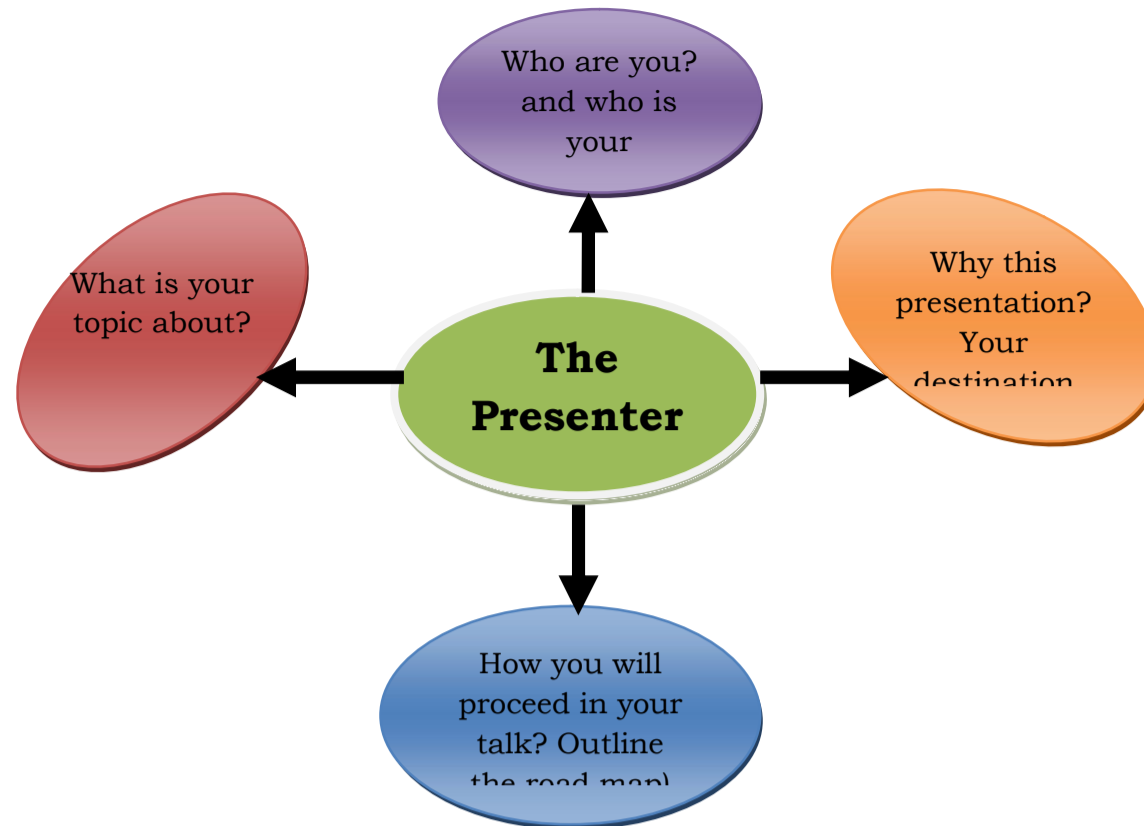
Diagram 5.2. Presenter's Concern before Delivery

Many students feel highly nervous or anxious about undertaking class presentations, especially when there is a mark attached. This is very understandable and natural. It is desired from teachers to say things like '*Well, there is no pressure on you*', '*You'll do fine on the day*', or '*Don't worry, we will be doing it in quite an informal way*' to lower their anxiety and encourage them to be highly motivated. Learners may follow these instructions for good presentation delivery:

- *Be Yourself,*
- *Think about excellent presenters:*
  - ➢ Their body movements,
  - ➢ Their gestures,

- Their eye contact,
- Their voice tone and pace,
- The kinds of language they use.

- *Have a powerful memory to boost your confidence:*

- An internal image of a presenter that you enjoy,
- The sound of your voice when you made a previous successful presentation,
- A phrase that sums up your positive feelings such as 'I'm a winner', 'This is going to work', or 'I WILL succeed'.

- *Using your body confidently:*

- Use a video camera and data show,
- How you look: dress to impress,
- Gestures,
- Eye contact,
- Using your voice,
- Your posture,
- Your voice tone and pitch.

Adopted from Chivers and Shoolbred (2007:34-37)

To evaluate learners' talks, the following teacher' Oral Presentation Evaluation Sheet is put forward by the Academic Studies English Support Materials and Exercises for Speaking & Listening (1999:62):

Presenter's Name and Topic:		1	2	3	4	5
Structure	Introduction: Opening immediately gets attention					
	Main idea clearly stated					
	Major headings clearly indicated					
	Body: Organization logical and appropriate					
	Major headings emphasized					
	Transitions adequate					
	Uses repetition, numbered lists, frequent review					
	Conclusion: summarizes content					
	Obvious and satisfying					
Content	Interesting					
	Well researched and/or accurate					
	Visuals used effectively					
	Acceptable grammar and pronunciation					
	Length appropriate to content					
Delivery	Eye contact					
	Voice: rate, tone, pitch					
	volume					
	emphasis					
	Facial expressions and gestures					
	Nervous habits and mannerisms					
Calculate total of each column		2	4	21	16	25
SUBTOTAL (Total of all columns divided by 2) 68 ÷ 2 =		**34** /50				
OVERALL IMPRESSION		**40** /50				
FINAL MARK (subtotal + overall impression)		**74** /**100**				

*Blank evaluation sheet provided on last page of this module.

Table 5.14. Oral Presentation Evaluation Sheet

Looking from learners' outlook, they can also self-evaluate their progress and achievement after presenting a talk by using the following speaking checklist:

Speaking Checklist

Use this checklist to evaluate your speaking.

Name _____ Date _____

Topic _____

1. Did I speak too slowly, too quickly, or just right? _____

2. Was the tone of my voice too high, too low, or just right? _____

3. Did I speak loudly enough for the audience to hear me? ____ Yes ____ No

4. Did I produce the correct intonation patterns of sentences? ____ Yes ____ No

5. Did I have a good opening? ____ Yes ____ No

6. Did I look at my audience? ____ Yes ____ No

7. Did I speak with feeling? ____ Yes ____ No

8. Did I support my ideas with facts and examples? ____ Yes ____ No

9. Did I tell the audience how I feel about the topic? ____ Yes ____ No

10. Did I use interesting, specific words? ____ Yes ____ No

11. Did I use visuals to make the speech interesting? ____ Yes ____ No

My Own Criteria

12. _____ ____ Yes ____ No

13. _____ ____ Yes ____ No

14. _____ ____ Yes ____ No

Table 5.15. Speaking Checklist (Bailey & Nunan, 2003:155)

5.4.4. Using PowerPoint Effectively in a Classroom Presentation

PowerPoint, PPT for short, was designed in 1987, and the company which produced it was rapidly bought up by Microsoft. By 2007, PowerPoint entirely dominated the world presentation software market,

both in commerce and in education. PowerPoint is presentation software that comes with Microsoft Office, it is capable of producing presentations of great sophistication, with a combination of text images, sounds and even videos. In this section, we will give guidelines on the effective use of PowerPoint in a speaking classroom presentation.

It is important to note that PPT is widely used in higher education in the United Kingdom and in the United States by teachers as the standard way of presenting. Students also use it as the major form of undertaking a class presentation and as a learning tool as well. Amongst the positive and negative points of PPT the following adopted table from Chivers and Shoolbred (2007):

What is good about PPT	What is bad about PPT
It can explain something in visual terms that would take many words to explain. PowerPoint is a wonderful organizer. You can put all your slides in sequence and number them, • You can add your own notes to give a personalized commentary on individual slides. You see your notes but no one else does. • You can run the software as a short automatic presentation while you sit back. memorable • powerful and strong: by using images which impact on the audience •thought-provoking: by using appropriate quotations and puzzles • colourful: by making the slides vibrant with background and colourful text • creative: by designing your own diagrams or by importing photographs, charts, • dynamic, current: you can quickly update slides and add new material at the last moment • fun to create.	-Too much reliance on PowerPoint -Information overload -Overloaded PPT may lead the audience to get distracted -Thinking in bullet points -Getting too technical and wasting time -Over complication just because the technology is there -Technology breaking down (technical problems in PC) Too many slides.

Table 5.16. The Pros and Cons of PPT

Considering the above points, a PPT presentation should serve as visual aids for memorable presentations. In the *"Pedagogical Value of PowerPoint,"* Delwiche and Ananthanarayanan (2004) define good presentation design as beginning with a *"solid argument and old-fashioned storytelling."* Slides should strengthen and not repeat your words. Endless bullet points and paragraphs of text are a recipe for disaster.

Therefore, instead of typing the bulk of the presentation content directly onto slides, learners can include the necessary information in the slides and the additional information in the "notes" field. Another crucial tip and most important of all, learners should not be slaves to their slides *"Try to change contact points by using a variety of presentation methods (slides, questions, discussion, video clips, etc.)"* Delwiche and Ananthanarayanan (2004).

In a simple image, a classroom speaking presentation should take into account these aspects:

- Think of PowerPoint as a very useful support. But not as the only resource at your disposal.
- Consider what you want the audience to be doing as they see the slides, and afterwards. Thinking? Taking notes? Being entertained?
- A simple structure for the whole presentation. Do you need PowerPoint for the whole presentation? Think about using PowerPoint as the beginning and ending of your show.

- Think in terms of ideas, not bullet points. If you are clear about the ideas that you are trying to communicate, you may find that you can neatly summarize them in bullet points. Or you may find that you need to expand your ideas. You might be better with one PowerPoint slide which you talk about, than half a dozen slides full of bullet points.
- Use images to support the central message. One of the hardest aspects of presenting is to use visual images that reinforce your message rather than detract from it.
- Keep it simple. The basic layouts and designs in PowerPoint will work if you keep them simple. After all, they have been designed by presentation professionals.

5.5. CONCLUSION

Succinctly, then, teaching oral skills is of vital significance in foreign language teaching/learning. To guarantee effective teaching/learning, a number of interesting factors should be taken into account. From this research work, it was found that it is fundamental for teachers to come across ways of dealing with the psychological aspects, incorporating self-confidence building and reflective activities into their courses.

This chapter intended to recommend a number of techniques for both teachers and learners to get a better speaking achievement with an intelligible pronunciation. In view of the fact that teaching pronunciation is of paramount importance, its teaching needs to be incorporated with a set of activities that are useful for improving and reinforcing speaking

competence and achievements and enhancing at the same time learners'
self-confidence.

CHAPTER SIX

Drawing the Conclusions: The End is a New Beginning

6.1. SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

6.2. RESEARCH METHOD PROCEDURE

6.3. RESULTS ACHIEVED AND CONCLUSIONS

6.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

6.4. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

6.1. SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

Self-confidence, self-esteem, self-concept, self-image, anxiety, motivation, language learning achievement, pronunciation practice, speaking competence, willingness to communicate, are all key-concepts that have been used in this research work to describe the relationship between learners' psychological health and some aspects of EFL language processing. Questions asked in this study revolve around why language learning is so much more ego-involving rather than other fields of study and what can be done to assist and support our learner's emotional journey.

This research depicts scenery of theoretical and practical frameworks to hopefully understand the place of self-confidence in language learning; its abundance of truly creative and humanistic goals supporting and encouraging positive self-confidence in EFL language classrooms as well. A great number of researchers believe that many teachers intuitively understand the importance of maintaining their students' psychological health. However, without offering a specific guidance, teachers may be at a loss as to how to provide this support while at the same time accomplishing more conventional language teaching goals.

The premise here, is that many learners experience a number of psychological problems such as anxiety, lack of self-confidence, fear of losing their face, these feelings drive learners not to *be themselves* when speaking a new language (Horwitz and Cope 1986). In a long term vision, lack of self-confidence in learners can, in short order; make them become

hesitant language teachers. These preliminary considerations were a strong motive behind conducting such a study.

Hence, the present dissertation is a classroom-oriented research on first-year LMD students, learning in English at Tlemcen University; aiming primarily at finding out possible correlation between pronunciation, EFL learners' speaking abilities and self-confidence. To investigate this chain, six chapters were outlined. The first, being an introductory one, tried to set out the basic stones for this research for the sake of mapping methodologically the research framework; describing the rationale for this study, its objectives, its research questions and hypotheses. It also brought into play the limitations and the delimitations of the current investigation.

The second chapter, being a critical review of the literature, tried to reflect upon relevant literature defining some key-concepts used in this investigation, in addition to similar studies conducted within the same scope of research. Stress was put on the target concepts and their interplay with each other in shaping the theoretical and conceptual approach to EFL pronunciation teaching in relation to self-confidence and class speaking performance.

The third chapter strived rather to give a brief description of the ELT situation in the Algerian educational system in general and at higher education in particular. It also focused on the research methodology adopted. The sample of the study consisted of 30 EFL first-year LMD students and seven teachers from Tlemcen University-Algeria. The researcher adopted four research instruments including the use of

questionnaires for both teachers and learners at the onset of the study; an *interview* to check their speaking difficulties and reasons behind their reluctance to take part in classroom discussion. Speaking *test* was also used to check learners' progress; in addition to *diaries* distributed to students to state their beliefs about themselves after every speaking course (TPO).

The fourth chapter aimed at analysing, quantitatively and qualitatively the results obtained, and their interpretation. It was displayed that within a classroom-oriented research, it seems impractical to rely on only one research method, but rather on a combination of different research tools and procedures to hopefully get satisfactory answers to the research questions set. The fifth chapter attempted to provide some practical pedagogical suggestions and recommendations for a better teaching/learning experience. Ultimately, this last part tried, in fact, to recapitulate the whole study and draw the possible conclusions from this research work, and put forward further questions that may be conducted for future investigations.

6.2. RESEARCH METHOD PROCESS

This study is a classroom-based research on EFL first-year LMD learners at Tlemcen University during the academic year 2011-2012. The sample consisted of 30 learners and 7 teachers. The researcher adopted the following research tools:

- Learners' Confidence Scale to measure learners' confidence degree.
- Teachers' Questionnaire at the onset of the study.

- Diaries throughout all the study process.
- Speaking Achievement Test.
- Learners' Interview at the end of the investigation.

6.3. RESULTS ACHIEVED AND CONCLUSIONS

Hopefully, the research questions asked have been answered, and interesting results were achieved. It was found that EFL learners' pronunciation level plays a major role in both self-confidence and speaking performance; learners with (good) pronunciation have no problems in speaking confidently. Furthermore, having a high degree of self-confidence drives learners to speak without anxiety or feel afraid of public speaking. Therefore, positive correlation exists between the three studied variables, i.e., throughout this study, it was found that there is a *cause and effect* relationship between pronunciation, self-confidence and speaking performance. Having pronunciation abilities leads learners to enhance their self-confidence which leads to high speaking achievement. The results can be summarized as follows:

- The correlation between overall self-confidence and speaking performance was $r =.697$. This level of Pearson Coefficient Correlation indicates that the correlation is positive, i.e., there is a statistical association between the dependent and independent variables, i.e., the more self- confident learners are, the higher their speaking performance will be.
- The ANOVA analysis revealed that self-confidence had a significant effect on the participants' oral performance: Sig. value p= 0.09. This denotes that there exist a statistical

correlation between general self confidence, speaking performance and thus, speaking confidence.

- Results also show that learners' fear of negative evaluation, peers' pressure, lack of knowledge and vocabulary, teachers' attitudes towards them, lack of support, low self-confidence, anxiety, lack of motivation and interest, together create barriers to learners' confidence to speak.

- A very noticeable remark was noted from this research is that confidence is not just about believing in oneself, it is also believing in the teachers' competence. Through learners' diaries, it was found that learners feel confident about what they are learning if they feel the assurance in what they receive from the teacher. If teachers often make mistakes, they will no more trust his information and this will lower from their self-confidence, too.

- Another important remark was found is that sometimes learners are confident enough to participate in the classroom with a weak pronunciation level. They just speak without caring about their pronunciation level. However, this category of learners will in all probabilities better their pronunciation level since *practice makes perfect*.

- The results of the study also imply that teachers may promote their learners' attitudes towards pronunciation learning and practice by providing appropriate materials and activities that are interesting and useful for students' goals and motivation.

6.4. RECOMMENDATIONS

Results have shown that language teachers are called for to focus more and more on building their students' self-confidence through creating a supportive classroom environment that encourages them to speak and take part in oral activities without fear. EFL teachers should create situations that persuade students to produce oral language. They may help learners identify their fears and help them learn to regulate and deal with them. They can also help learners maintain positive beliefs and views about themselves and avoid negative ideas. During oral activities, they should create a relaxed and humorous atmosphere; design interesting activities give more time and ample opportunities for all learners.

Additionally, the comments made by teachers, and the results obtained from this research, indicate that there is an urgent need for an ongoing development in the area of EFL pronunciation. In this light of thought, a number of proposals and recommendations have been put forward with a view to overcome learners' reluctance in this; encouraging teachers to teach pronunciation confidently and effectively.

6.5. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Notwithstanding the results achieved, there were some unavoidable limitations to be considered in the current research. To begin with, and due to the limited access to the participants, diaries were limited to twice per week, there are some learners who give up writing their diaries, and others failed to express their feelings in any language. Besides, owing to

the small number of participants in this study and their particular learning situation, generalizability is limited.

In addition, since the assessment of the speaking test was conducted by the researcher herself, it seems inevitable, to a certain extent, to be fully objective. In fact, it would have been kind of objective if it had been decided by two or three examiners rather than the researcher herself.

Beyond the current practices, there are some areas of research in foreign language teaching which are still crying for further investigation and understanding. These areas of research would guide us towards deeper and clearer understanding of training pronunciation in foreign language education for better achievements and, therefore, would open window for further discussion.

The results achieved in this research work denote, (hopefully), fascinating new avenues for research within the area of pronunciation practice, speaking performance and self-confidence. Therefore, it is important to bear in mind that the findings of the present study might be regarded as a beginning of a new research investigation based on the limitations and shortcomings encountered. Based on the whole research process, the researcher would like to propose the establishment of a new modular course to EFL first-year LMD students; entailing *pronunciation-based* research (gathering both theory and practice of different accents and varieties), and *speaking- confidence -based* course by initiating a modular course to cater for the learners' psychological state and well-being.

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SELF-CONFIDENCE QUESTIONNAIRE

Instructions:

- *This questionnaire is a part of a research work on learners' self-confidence. It aims at gathering data on how you value your self-confidence in regard to your speaking skills. You are kindly requested to read carefully all the statements in each section and give your response to each item by putting a tick (√) in the box that most suits your opinion:* **strongly agree** *,* **agree**, **Neither agree nor disagree, disagree** *or* **strongly disagree.**

- *There are no right or wrong answers*
  Your responses will be dealt with confidentially and used only for research purposes.

  - ***THANK YOU***

Section One: Test Confidence

Item	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	It is difficult for me to do what I want without the help of others.					
2	I avoid the leadership role in my life.					
3	I blame myself a lot when I make a mistake.					
4	When I discuss with others, I cannot insist on my opinion even though I believe it is right.					
5	I hesitate to participate in a discussion, even though I know a lot about the discussed topic.					
6	I often agree with others' opinions even though I am not convinced					

7	I believe others' comments on me are criticism.					
8	I avoid any situations where others observe me.					
9	I speak confidently when I am sure of what I am saying.					
10	I feel unsatisfied with my abilities no matter what efforts I exert.					
11	I feel that people often consider what I say as unimportant.					
12	I don't like to be the first to answer even though I know the right answer.					
13	Others' criticism makes me withdraw from meeting them.					
14	When I compare myself to my peers, I feel they are better than me.					
15	I can help my friends when we are assigned a group work.					

Section Two: Classroom Performance

Item	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
16	I cannot speak in English					
17	I feel my ideas in English are meaningless					
18	I do not dare to say my thoughts in English.					
19	I feel uneasy in the English speaking lessons.					
20	I do not feel shy of reading aloud during English classes.					
21	I can speak English in front of my classmates.					
22	I dislike competing in English lessons because I fear failure.					
23	I feel embarrassed when I discuss anything in English.					
24	I feel embarrassed when my English teacher asks me to repeat my answer.					
25	I feel I am ineffective in English tasks.					
26	I like group discussions in English classes.					
27	I can speak English with my					

Item	Statement					
	teacher only in private, but not in front of others in the classroom.					
28	I do not work hard on my English tasks because I doubt that I will do them successfully.					
29	I feel unconfident that I did the right thing in English tasks unless others tell me so.					
30	I make mistakes in English without being shy.					
31	I do not feel nervous on oral tests in English.					
32	My participation in the English class adds nothing to the class.					
33	I believe my abilities in speaking English are the worst in the class.					
34	I do not feel confused when it is my turn to answer in English.					

Section Three: Speaking Confidence

Item	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
35	I do not like speaking in English because I will be evaluated.					
36	I feel worried when the teacher asks me to speak.					
37	I feel confident when taking English speaking tests.					
38	I prefer to keep silence than making mistakes.					
39	I do not speak unless I am sure of what am saying.					
40	I feel that speaking in English is not within my abilities.					
41	I am not satisfied with my speaking performance in English no matter what I do.					
42	If the teacher asks us to present our Classroom talks, I do not like to be the first to do that.					
43	I feel shy when I present my talk in front of my classmates.					
44	I have good ideas but I am afraid of presenting them incorrectly.					
45	I feel my oral performance is not always as good as my					

	classmates.							
46	Being aware of the English sound System help me be confident							
47	Knowing how to pronounce correctly, develop my speaking level							
48	A word of encouragement from the teacher can be a motive to speak.							

THANK YOU

استبانة تقدير الذات في التعبير الشفوى باللغة الإنجليزية

التعليمات:

تقوم بـ حثـة بـإجراء دراسـة عن تقديرا   ذات دى طلاسـنة أو تـع ـ ن ـ غـة
الانج   زيةّ غـةُجنبـ ـة .هذاالاستبـ نة جزء من إجراءاتك دراسـة . أرجو أن تقرأنتبـ ه
جـ   لع   فقرات وأن تتكرم بوضـعلج   بتلئهـ ى كل فقرة بوضـع(√) في كـ لّ ذي
يذ   سب رأيك :أوافق بشدة، أوافقغـ   ر متأكد، لا أوافق، لا أوافق بشدة

امن   هم جدا أن تضع فلإلاعتبـ ا ارنقة ط   أقـ إجـ بتلك ا ىعبـ رات:

- لا تُوجد بـ   ضح حة و أخرئ   طئة.
- تنكّر ً أناإلّلا بـ   نت   طريتع   ملعهـ   بسرية مة وستستخدم لأغراض ل بحث
  ا عـ   ي فقط!

شكرا جزيلا ميه عدتلكمنه ركتك

رقم	العبارة	لا أوافق بشدة	لا أوافق	غير متأكد	أوافق	أوافق بشدة
1	مل صعب أن أقوم أريد دون أن يسـ عدني الآخرين					
2	أتجنتو ي أنقوار ديتقفي تي					
3	أ وم نفسيْكُ رطلندمـ أخطيء.					
4	عندم أختـ ف مع الآخرين لأستطـ ع الإصراو ى رأي حتى و كنت متأكد من صواب رأيّ.					
5	أتزادد في شـ ركة في أيّقـ شعـ ى ا رلجمِ من اميكبـ لد وضوع نقـ ش.					
6	بـ مّ أوافق الآخرين أرائهمِ ى ا رغم من علاقتد عيه					
7	اعتقد أن ردود فعل الآخريتّجـ هي هي عبـ رة علاّنقة دات موجهَة ي.					
8	أتجنب أي موقف يجعل الآخرين يلاحظونفي ـ ه					
9	أتحدث بثقتقندمـ أكون متلكداً أقول.					
10	اشعر لعدمرضـ عن قدراتي بغض نظر عنـ أبذ هـ م من جهد.					
11	اشعرا أنذ س بـ مّ يعتبروذ أفو غـ رمهم.					
1	أكره أن أكون أول منجـ بـ لى رغم من معرفتلإجاـ ا بتصدـ حة.					

						2
					يدفعني نقد الآخرين لى الانزواء عنهم.	13
					عندما أقارن نفسي بأقراني أشعر أنهم أفضل مني.	14
					أستطيع أن أكون عنصرًا فعّالًا في مجموعة إذا نفذ بعض زملائي.	15
					أستطيع تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية.	16
					أشعر أن الأفكار التي يطرحها مدرس اللغة الإنجليزية لا معنى لها.	17
					لا أجرؤ على التعبير عن أفكاري في درس اللغة الإنجليزية.	18
					أشعر بعدم راحة في دروس اللغة الإنجليزية.	19
					لا أشعر بالخجل من قراءة بصوت مرتفع في دروس اللغة الإنجليزية.	20
					أستطيع التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية مع زملائي في الصف.	21
					أكره المنافسة في دروس اللغة الإنجليزية لأني أخشى الفشل.	22
					أشعر بالحرج عندما أقف تحت ضوء اللغة الإنجليزية.	23
					أشعر بالحرج عندما يطلب مني الأستاذ التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية أمام زملائي في الصف.	24
					أشعر بأنني لدي فوائد عديدة في أنشطة اللغة الإنجليزية.	25
					أحب المناقشة الجماعية في حصص اللغة الإنجليزية.	26
					أستطيع التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية مع الأستاذ على انفراد فقط ولكن ليس أمام الآخرين في الصف.	27
					لا أبذل جهدًا كبيرًا في أداء الواجبات في مادة اللغة الإنجليزية لأنني أشك بأنني سأؤديه بشكل صحيح.	28

					في أداء واجبات اللغة الإنجليزية، لا أشعر بثقة بأنني قد أكملته بالشكل الصحيح إلا إذا أخبرني أحد بذلك.	٢٩
					أخطئ في اللغة الإنجليزية دون شعور بالخجل	٣٠
					لا أشعر بتوتر في مواقف ذات لغة إنجليزية شفوية	٣١
					مشاركتي في حصة اللغة الإنجليزية لا تضايقني كدرس.	٣٢
					أعتقد أن قدراتي في اللغة الإنجليزية هي الأسوأ في الصف.	٣٣
					لا أشعر بالارتباك عندما يحين دوري للإجابة باللغة الإنجليزية.	٣٤
					أكره التعبير الشفوي باللغة الإنجليزية لأنه يقوّمهم.	٣٥
					أشعر بتوتر عندما يطلب مني الأستاذ اللغة الإنجليزية التعبير الشفوي	٣٦
					أشعر بثقة عند أدائي لاختبار التعبير الشفوي باللغة الإنجليزية	٣٧
					أفضل الصمت بدلاً من التكلم بغير الصحيح	٣٨
					لكي أتكلم اللغة الإنجليزية يجب أن أكون متأكداً من صحته.	٣٩
					أشعر أن التعبير الشفوي بلغة الإنجليزية شيء ليس في حدود قدراتي.	٤٠
					يتضايق زملائي عن أدائي في التعبير الشفوي باللغة الإنجليزية وأبذل من جهد.	٤١
					إذا طلب مني الأستاذ عرض التعبير الشفوي لا أحب أن أكون أول من يعرض موضوعه.	٤٢
					أشعر بالخجل عندما أعرضهم زملائي	٤٣
					دفتري فيه وجود كن أخشى أعرضه بشكله أنا أعتني به عنه	٤٤
					أشعر أن أدائي شفوي	٤٥

					ستوى أداء زملائي	5
					ت الانج زية يس عد ء ى تقوية ثقتي بنفسي	معرفة صوت 6
					ت ا نطق يس عدني ء ى تك م	معرفة آ 4 7
					ذ ي قد يكون حـ فز تك م و شـ ركة	تشج ع المت 4 8

Appendix "C"

Teachers' Questionnaire

TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear teacher,

The present questionnaire attempts to shed light on your teaching methodology for English first-year LMD students and examine the relationships between the learners' self-confidence, pronunciation and speaking. Thus, you are kindly requested to answer the following questions by selecting the answer that best reflects your opinion and making comments whenever necessary.

Thank you.

Rubric 1: General Information

1. Your teaching experience..
2. Modules in charge: ....
3. Post- graduate option:..

Rubric 2: Self-confidence and speaking performance

1. Have you ever paid your students' attention towards their self-confidence when speaking?

☐ Always

☐ Sometimes

☐ Rarely

☐ Never

2. When teaching, do you focus more on:

☐ Learners' psychological status (affective and attitudinal factors)

☐ Learners' linguistic competence

☐ The appropriate and effective teaching methodology (speaking tasks and activities)

☐ The necessary material?

Others..

....

3. How do your students feel about their abilities to speak English?

☐ Highly confident

☐ Anxious and afraid to speak

☐ Demotivated

☐ Others

....

4. Do you think that learners' high feeling of self-confidence effect their speaking performance?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, how?

....

....

5. What signs of *low* self-confidence have you noticed in your learners during speaking course?

....

....

....

6. What signs of *high* self-confidence have you noticed in your learners during speaking course?

....

....

7. According to you, why are some EFL learners reluctant to participate in oral production course?

☐ Speaking is a difficult skill

☐ Students' low self-confidence

☐ Lack of vocabulary

☐ Afraid of negative evaluation

☐ Afraid of making mistakes

☐ Lack of linguistic knowledge

☐ Others

(specify)..

8. According to you, learners' speaking in the classroom is due to:

☐ The teacher's character

☐ The importance of the subject (personal interest in the subject)

☐ The student's character

☐ Previous knowledge

☐   Learners' motivation degree

Others? ....

9. What kinds of situations and language classroom activities have you found to be anxiety- provoking and confidence lowering for the students?

....

....

....

10.   How do you help your students cope with their confidence problems in the classroom?

....

....

Rubric 3: Self-confidence and Pronunciation

11.   Do you think that learners' pronunciation abilities affect their self-confidence?

☐ Yes   ☐   No

If yes, how?

....

....

....

....

12.   How may pronunciation practice help learners develop their self-confidence?

....

....

13. What relationships are there between self-confidence and pronunciation abilities?

....

....

....

Thank you for your cooperation...

Appendix "D"

Learners' Interview

Learners' Interview

The present interview is an attempt to collect data about the learners' speaking proficiency and difficulties. Thus, they were requested to answer the following questions in English and authentically reflect their personal opinions.

1. What do you think about your speaking level?

☐ Good

☐ Average

☐ Low

2. How do you feel when speaking English in class?

Option	Agree	Disagree
It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in our English class.		
I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking English in our English class.		
I always feel that the other students		

speak English better than I do.

I get nervous and confused when I am
speaking in English.

I am afraid that other students will laugh
at me when I speak English

3. When discussing a topic and you are not sure of your English pronunciation, what do you do?
☐ Speak and do not care about your mispronunciation
☐ Keep silent
☐ Find an alternative word that you feel sure about its pronunciation,
☐ Others specify...............................

4. How can you know that your pronunciation is wrong?
....
....

5. What do you do if you feel that people misunderstand your ideas because of your mispronunciation?
....
....

6. How do you feel when you produce correct sounds?
....
....

7. What do you feel when your teacher praises your speaking progress?

....
....Th*ank you for your collaboration*

Abu Bekr Belkaid University- Tlemcen
Faculty of Letters and Foreign Languages
Department of Foreign Languages
Section of English

LEARNERS' DIARIES ENTRY

Date:………………………….Time:……….

Instructions

Please describe your classroom learning experience in the TPO course. You are asked to write about the content of your class or learning activities, and what you think or feel about the class and any other things which are involved in your language learning experience.

Please write your comments and feelings in as much detail as possible, honestly and openly, as if you were keeping your own personal, confidential diary. You may use English, Arabic or French to reflect upon your feelings.

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Appendix F

Speaking Selected Topics:

Speaking Selected Topics:

Adopted from Edward R. Rosset (2001)

1. Family relationships
2. Generation gap
3. Holidays / Vacations
4. Life and destiny
5. Films
6. Marriage and divorce
7. Is life fair?
8. Television addiction
9. Travelling and Tourism in your country
10. Learning a foreign language
11. Fear from public speaking
12. Friendship
13. Pollution
14. Paradox of our time
15. Popular festivals in UK Vs Algeria
16. English as a Global Language
17. Practical happiness
18. Recipe for successful life
19. Working mothers Vs housewives
20. Hobbies and free time
21. Cell phones
22. Technology and Society
23. Facebook and other social media
24. Body language
25. Optimism and pessimism
26. University pressure
27. the Seven Wonders
28. Stress in exams
29. Becoming a teacher
30. Family tensions

	Content	Clarity	confidence	pronunciation	Time	Volume	
S1	1	3	3	4	1	3	15
S2	1	2	2	2	1	2	10
S3	2	3	3	3	1	3	15
S4	2	2	2	2	1	1	10
S5	1	2	3	2	1	2	11
S6	1	3	2	1	2	3	12
S7	1	2	3	3	2	2	13
S8	1	3	3	2	1	1	11
S9	1	2	3	3	1	2	12
S10	1	2	3	2	1	4	13
S11	1	1	2	2	2	3	11
S12	1	3	2	2	1	4	13
S13	2	2	1	1	1	1	8
S14	1	1	2	1	2	2	9
S15	1	2	1	3	2	3	12
S16	1	2	3	3	2	4	15
S17	1	3	3	2	1	3	13
S18	1	3	2	1	1	3	11
S19	1	2	2	1	1	3	10
S20	1	3	3	1	1	3	12
S21	2	3	2	1	1	3	12
S22	1	2	1	2	1	3	10
S23	1	2	1	2	1	2	9
S24	1	3	3	3	1	4	15
S25	1	2	3	1	2	3	12
S26	1	3	3	1	2	3	13
S27	1	3	2	2	1	3	12
S28	1	2	1	1	2	2	9
S29	1	2	3	2	2	4	15
S30	1	3	2	1	1	3	11

Category	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Poor
Score	+15	14- 13	12-10	-10
	5	5	16	4

Ite m	Data Coding : Test General Confidence	
	Statement	**Code**
1	It is difficult for me to do what I want without the help of others.	**A1**
2	I avoid the leadership role in my life.	**A2**
3	I blame myself a lot when I make a mistake.	**A3**
4	When I discuss with others, I cannot insist on my opinion even though I believe it is right.	**A4**
5	I hesitate to participate in a discussion, even though I know a lot about the discussed topic.	**A5**
6	I often agree with others' opinions even though I am not convinced	**A6**
7	I believe others' comments on me are criticism.	**A7**
8	I avoid any situations where others observe me.	**A8**
9	I speak confidently when I am sure of what I am saying.	**A9**
10	I feel unsatisfied with my abilities no matter what efforts I exert.	**A10**
11	I feel that people often consider what I say as unimportant.	**A11**
12	I don't like to be the first to answer even though I know the right answer.	**A12**
13	Others' criticism makes me withdraw from meeting them.	**A13**
14	When I compare myself to my peers, I feel they are better than me.	**A14**
15	I can help my friends when we are assigned a group work.	**A15**

C1 =

225/30=7,5

Situational Self-Confidence

Ite m	**Statement**	**Code**
16	I cannot speak in English	**B1**
17	I feel my ideas in English are meaningless	**B2**
18	I do not dare to say my thoughts in English.	**B3**
19	I feel uneasy in the English speaking lessons.	**B4**
20	I do not feel shy of reading aloud during English classes.	**B5**
21	I can speak English in front of my classmates.	**B6**
22	I dislike competing in English lessons because I fear failure.	**B7**

23	I feel embarrassed when I discuss anything in English.	*B8*
24	I feel embarrassed when my English teacher asks me to repeat my answer.	*B9*
25	I feel I am ineffective in English tasks.	*B10*
26	I like group discussions in English classes.	*B11*
27	I can speak English with my teacher only in private, but not in front of others in the classroom.	*B12*
28	I do not work hard on my English tasks because I doubt that I will do them successfully.	*B13*
29	I feel unconfident that I did the right thing in English tasks unless others tell me so.	*B14*
30	I make mistakes in English without being shy.	*B15*
31	I do not feel nervous on oral tests in English.	*B16*
32	My participation in the English class adds nothing to the class.	*B17*
33	I believe my abilities in speaking English are the worst in the class.	*B18*
34	I do not feel confused when it is my turn to answer in English.	*B19*

C2= *19*15/30 = 9.5*

Section Three: Task Self-Confidence

Item	Statement	Code
35	I do not like speaking in English because I will be evaluated.	*C1*
36	I feel worried when the teacher asks me to speak.	*C2*
37	I feel confident when taking English speaking tests.	*C3*
38	I prefer to keep silence than making mistakes.	*C4*
39	I do not speak unless I am sure of what am saying.	*C5*
40	I feel that speaking in English is not within my abilities.	*C6*
41	I am not satisfied with my speaking performance in English no matter what I do.	*C7*
42	If the teacher asks us to present our Classroom talks, I do not like to be the first to do that.	*C8*
43	I feel shy when I present my talk in front of my classmates.	*C9*
44	I have good ideas but I am afraid of presenting them incorrectly.	*C10*
45	I feel my oral performance is not always as good as my classmates.	*C11*
46	Being aware of the English sound System help me be confident	*C12*
47	Knowing how to pronounce correctly, develop my speaking level	*C13*
48	A word of encouragement from the teacher can be a motive to	*C14*

speak.		

C3= 14*15/ 30= 7

Pearson Correlation and Cronbach's Alpha

Confidence type	Pearson Correlation 'r'	Alpha
Test confidence	.897	.90
Classroom performance	.851	.80
Speaking Confidence	.799	.85

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Statistical Operations:

(see: http://www.danielsoper.com/statcalc3/default.aspx)

- **Pearson correlation coefficient:**

$$r = \frac{\text{cov}_{XY}}{\sigma_X \sigma_Y}$$

where *cov$_{XY}$* is the covariance between X and Y, *σ$_X$* is the standard deviation of X, and *σ$_Y$* is the standard deviation of Y.

- **Cronbach's Alpha**

$X = Y_1 + Y_2 + \cdots + Y_K$. Cronbach's α is defined as

$$\alpha = \frac{K}{K-1} \left(1 - \frac{\sum_{i=1}^{K} \sigma_{Y_i}^2}{\sigma_X^2} \right)$$

Where σ_X^2 the variance of the observed total test scores, and $\sigma_{Y_i}^2$ the variance of component *i* for the current sample of persons.

Significance of Alpha values:

Cronbach's alpha	Internal consistency
$\alpha \geq .9$	Excellent
$.9 > \alpha \geq .8$	Good
$.8 > \alpha \geq .7$	Acceptable
$.7 > \alpha \geq .6$	Questionable
$.6 > \alpha \geq .5$	Poor
$.5 > \alpha$	Unacceptable

- **ANOVA:**

The following formulas are involved in the calculation of a one-way analysis of variance:

🔵 **Beta function:**

$$B(x,y) = \int_0^1 t^{x-1}(1-t)^{y-1}\,dt$$

🔵 **F-distribution cumulative distribution function (CDF):**

$$F(x; d_1, d_2) = I_{\frac{d_1 x}{d_1 x + d_2}}(d_1/2, d_2/2),$$

where d_1 and d_2 are the degrees of freedom, and I is the regularized lower incomplete beta function.

🔵 **F-value for a one-way ANOVA:**

$$F = \frac{MS_{between}}{MS_{within}}$$

🔵 **Lower incomplete beta function:**

$$B(x; a, b) = \int_0^x t^{a-1}(1-t)^{b-1}\,dt.$$

🔵 **One-way ANOVA degrees of freedom:**

$$df_{between} = a - 1$$
$$df_{within} = N - a$$

where a in the number of groups, and N is the total sample size.

- **One-way ANOVA mean squares:**

$$\text{MS}_{between} = \frac{SS_{between}}{df_{between}}$$

$$\text{MS}_{within} = \frac{SS_{within}}{df_{within}}$$

- **Regularized lower incomplete beta function:**

$$I_x(a, b) = \frac{\text{B}(x; a, b)}{\text{B}(a, b)}.$$

where the numerator is the lower incomplete beta function, and the denominator is the beta function.

Résumé en Français:

Le présent travail de recherche a pour ambition de proposer les fondements théoriques et pratiques pour tenter de comprendre l'importance de la confiance en soi dans l'apprentissage des langues en général, et de la compétence « parler » en particulier. Il s'articule autour d'une enquête et d'une analyse des relations entre la confiance en soi et la pratique de la prononciation et les effets de cette situation sur la compétence générale en parlant des apprenants de la première année Anglais langue étrangères. Un tel débat est considéré comme l'un des motifs qui mènerait a une réflexion scientifique. Ce travail s'efforce donc de résoudre ces problèmes et de soulever certains aspects du débat actuel pour une contribution précieuse à la profession d'enseignant de langue anglaise.

Mots-clés*: confiance en soi, la prononciation, la compétence générale, la compétence « parler », les apprenants de première année Anglais (LMD).*

Summary in English

The present dissertation proposes theoretical and practical frameworks to hopefully understand the place of self-confidence in language learning in general, and speaking competence in particular. It revolves around investigating and analysing relationships between self-confidence and pronunciation practice and the effects of these variables on first-year EFL learners' general speaking competence. Such a puzzling debate is one motive towards conducting the present research work. It strives, then, to raise these problems and resolve some aspects of the current debate for a valuable contribution to the English language teaching profession.

Key-words: *self-confidence, pronunciation, speaking competence, first-year LMD students, classroom-oriented research.*

ملخص باللغة العربية:

تُعدُّ هذه الدّراسةُ محاولةً إظهار أهمية الثقة بالنفس في تعلم اللغة بشكل عام، ومهارات التحدث بصفة خاصة.إنَّ دراستنا – كما يظهر – تحاول إنشاء العلاقات الممكنة بين الثقة بالنفس والنطق وآثار ذلك على أداء و كفاءة التحدث لمتعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية للطلاب السنة أولى بجامعة تلمسان– قسم اللغات الأجنبية، فرع اللغة الانجليزية. ومن أهم مراحل البحث كان أولا تحديد المشاكل النفسية لدى الطلاب عندما يتحدثون الانجليزية وثانيا توضيح الأسباب و العوامل التي تؤثر على قدرتهم الناطقة ثم محاولة إعطاء بعض الحلول لتحسين مستوى الكفاءة عند الطلبة.

كلمات البحث: الثقة بالنفس، النطق، مهارات التحدث ، طلاب السنة الأولىLMD .

Introduction

*(...) The classroom is the crucible—the place where teachers and learners
come together and language learning, we hope, happens.
It happens, when it happens, as a result of the reactions among the
elements that go into the crucible—the teachers and the learners''.*
Gaies (1980) in Allwright and Bailey (1991:18)

In Practice, this may denote that an essential pyramid process exists within the teaching-learning process; namely between the teacher, the learner and the classroom. None of these elements go into the classroom with 'empty-handed', but rather every one brings into the classroom a number of influencing factors. The learner, on the one hand, will recall in the classroom his own learning experience, his life, his style, his emotions and his personal differences. The teacher, on the other hand, will bring into the classroom his learning/teaching experience, his personal character, and his course entailing all its connected variables. Various interactions take place between the teacher and the learner within the classroom setting. Chemistry of variables may come to light in the classroom setting, even the best laid-out lesson plans are subject to far reaching modifications as a result of the manifold existing challenges.

All these issues call attention to the urgent need to accomplish research regarding the different aspects of teaching and learning languages in a classroom setting, with the intention of gaining deeper understanding into these challenging processes and formulating new but practicable ways of enhancing their effectiveness and thus, their success. Thus, a classroom-oriented research is central for a better understanding

of the pyramid process. The present research concentrates, then, on three variables that may influence learners' achievement; notably pronunciation training, self-confidence and speaking competence.

Considering speaking as one of the most anxiety provoking skill which may be caused from learners' lack of self-confidence, this work is based on a "cause and effect" dimension. It attempts at looking on how may pronunciation practice enhances learners' self-confidence and therefore, develop their speaking competence. In view of this, the broad aims of this research work are to investigate and analyse relationships between self-confidence and pronunciation practice and the effects of this on EFL learners' general speaking competence; to examine the factors which may influence self-confidence, pronunciation and general speaking ability; to investigate learners' and teachers' perceptions of the factors involved; and to explore the learning processes associated with pronunciation and general speaking competence.

Thesis Organization

this first chapter has, in fact, been dedicated to setting the groundwork for the present thesis; it attempts to describe the rationale for this study, its objectives, its research questions and hypotheses; and also it brings into play the limitations and the delimitations of the present thesis.

Being the literature review of this research work, the second chapter discusses some key-concepts used in this work, including pronunciation learning, speaking skills and self-confidence as a psychological variable which may be either a speaking enhancer or a handicap towards learners' academic achievements.

The methodology chapter presents basis for an empirical study in the English Department at Tlemcen University. The researcher selects a descriptive approach in this chapter which aims primarily at providing *knowledge* (i.e. descriptions and explanations) about the target setting and population. It also portrays the research design and methodology including the instruments used for collecting data including questionnaires, diaries, a semi-structured interview and a test of achievement in speaking.

Based on the description presented in chapter three, chapter four strives to analyse both quantitatively and qualitatively the data obtained, attempting as much as possible to answer the questions set out at the onset of this investigation. The researcher also relies on statistical methods to increase the practicality and reliability of the results.

The fifth chapter suggests a set of techniques used to better learners' pronunciation in EFL classrooms proposing a state-of-the-art methodology related to designing a speaking-lab based course to EFL learners, which gathers pronunciation knowledge, learners' '*self*' and oral capacities. It also endeavours to provide the teacher with innovative ways of assessing the speaking skill in a more relaxing, motivating and non-threatening atmosphere for learning.

The concluding chapter summarises the important findings and discusses the implications, in addition to proposing a number of recommendations and suggestions for further research.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY: *Design & Rationale*

In the last decades, attention has grown in research in second and foreign language learning and teaching. The increased professional activity is strongly reflected in the growing number of books, journals and conferences devoted to issues of research. Our experiment is based on a classroom-oriented research, which combines different approaches. For instance, a classroom experiment may be accompanied by rich descriptions of the different instructional interventions or by analysis of classroom discourse twinned with qualitative and quantitative analysis of students' achievements. Combination of these approaches may afford comprehensive results and effective conclusions. As believed by Allwright and Bailey (1991:68): "*increasingly it appears, second language classroom researchers are calling for judicious selection and combined approaches rather than rigid adherence to one approach over another*".

Our investigation is based on the classroom-oriented research approach which may be defined by Allwright (1983:191) as: "*Classroom-centered research is just that—research centered on the classroom, as distinct from, for example, research that concentrates on the inputs to the classroom (the syllabus, the teaching materials) or the outputs from the classroom (learner achievement scores).*"

Research Objectives

Considering Arnold's (2000) view point about speaking as the most anxiety provoking skill, and his belief that this anxiety comes from learners' lack of self-confidence, the present research is based on a "cause and effect" dimension. It attempts at looking on how may pronunciation

practice enhance learners' self-confidence and therefore, develop their speaking competence. (see chapter one for more details).

Variables of the Study:

The variables of this study are:

- Self-confidence as an independent variable and it has three dimensions; *global self-confidence, situational confidence and task self-confidence.*
- Speaking achievement in English and pronunciation as dependent variables.

Research Aims

- ❖ To measure correlation between learners' pronunciation, self-confidence and speaking competence.
- ❖ To highlight factors in the teaching process influencing learners' speaking performance based on learners' and teachers' perceptions.

    To compare some high- and low-confidence learner groups in terms of their learning goals and the quality of their learning experiences in order to find out if it might be possible to enhance students' speaking competence by modifying certain parameters of our instructional contexts.

Research Instruments

It is often believed that the *"The backbone of any survey study is the instrument used for collecting data"* (Dörnyei, 2011). Thus, based on a *multimethod* approach, which requires a multiple sources of data collection, the researcher has designed the present study. It includes the use of *questionnaires* for both our EFL teachers and learners at the onset of the study; an *interview* to check their speaking difficulties and reasons

behind their reluctance to take part in classroom discussion. Speaking *tests* are also used to check learners' progress, in addition to diaries distributed to students to state their feelings about themselves after every speaking course. This was done to achieve triangulation to cross-check the validity of the results and to collect data which help the researcher handle the problem from different angles.

Results Achieved

Considering the achieved results, the following section attempts to summarise and draw conclusions to this investigation. The first research question was intended to explore possible relationships between self-confidence and speaking performance; learners' confidence scale was used for such a reason (see Table 4.1.). In order to examine statistically this correlation, the Pearson correlation coefficient was employed to determine the correlation between the variables. The results display that the correlation between overall self-confidence and speaking performance was *r* =.697. This level of Pearson Coefficient Correlation indicates that the correlation is positive; the correlation between the two variables was significant at the level of *0.01.* It is wiser, here, to mention that the value **r** is represented as: **-1 $\leq$ r $\leq$ +1**. The **+** and **−** signs are used for positive correlations and negative correlations, respectively, i.e., in positive correlation, if *x* and *y* have a strong positive correlation, *r* is close to +1. Positive value indicate a relationship between *x* and *y* variables. On the other hand, if *x* and *y* have a strong negative correlation, *r* is close to -1 and *r* value indicates a perfect negative fit.

Therefore, our findings denote that there is a statistical association between the dependent and independent variables, i.e., the more self-

confident learners are, the higher their speaking performance will be. Highly confident learners are ready to take the risk to speak in front of others. On the other hand, lack of self-confidence results lack of interest to struggle for high quality of oral performance, besides, less confident learners are not certain about their abilities which lead to low levels of achievement. Hence, when student' self-confidence increases, his/her speaking achievement increases and vice versa. The same result was achieved by Heyde (1977) who found a positive correlation between self-esteem and learners' oral performance. MacIntyre, Dörnyei, Clement and Noel (1998) suggest on their part, that self-confidence correlate to willingness to communicate in foreign languages. According to them, affective factors including self-confidence underline willingness to communicate.

The achieved results are similar to conclusions drawn by previous studies (Al-Hebaish, 2012; Fook *et al.*,2011; Aryana, 2010; Harris, 2009; Eldred *et al.*, 2004; Lloyd & Sullivan, 2003 ; Lockett *et al.*, 2003; Walter,2003 ; Bankston & Zhou, Brown,1994) that self-confidence had, in particular, an impact on learners' oral performance and speaking competence (see chapter II).

The second research question was examined through learners' diaries, interviews and speaking test. Results reveal that learners' fear of negative evaluation, lack of knowledge and vocabulary, teachers' attitudes towards them, low self-confidence, anxiety, lack of motivation and interest, together create a kind of psychological barriers to learners' confidence to speak.

Looking from the teachers' angle, it was found that learners feel unsecure in the classroom if they notice the carelessness of the teacher. Feeling the care and concern of the teacher may help learners to gradually become more willing to speak and participate. Thus, teachers need to create suitable learning environment and reconsider their teaching methods to come up with more effective approaches in teaching a foreign language. In this vein, Reid (1999) suggests that teachers should try to create a relaxed supportive learning atmosphere, which can make learners feel safe to speak or express their views. Yet, teachers assume that learning atmosphere is the responsibility of both the teacher and the learner. Besides, it is believed that a relaxed classroom atmosphere will foster pronunciation practice.

It is also important for teachers to avoid negative evaluation in classrooms and comment on students' behaviors with more encouragement. For instance, Kyle *et al.* (2004) advocate EFL teachers to give the most silent students the opportunity to speak and build up their self-confidence in a positive, caring environment by facilitating interactive group activities or calling on students in a non threatening manner.

Anxiety, on the other hand, seems to be the most important factor to consider in the speaking classroom. Teachers need to be aware of the fact that speaking a foreign language is naturally anxiety provoking; therefore, measures should be taken within the classroom setting to minimize its effect on learners' outcome. This was also found by other studies (e.g. Aida, 1994; Pierce, 2004) in which anxiety is considered as situation-specific and has been termed *"communication apprehension"* by Horwitz, and Cope (1986). Communication apprehension in language learning is

often regarded as a situation characterized by reluctance to talk or shyness in communicating ideas and is "*a distinct complex of self-perception, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors...arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process*" (Horwitz *et al.* 1986: 128).

It was also uncovered that before speaking, learners encounter psychological and linguistic difficulties and obstacles, i.e., it is not just the outcome which is concerned with lack of confidence and anxiety, but even the very first stages of the speaking task. Surprisingly, it was found also that it is not only psychological factors that affect learners' outcome, there are other factors to consider such as linguistic competence, vocabulary knowledge and love of the subject. For instance, there are learners who are simply more gifted language learners than others, and there are others who are confident language learners in writing but not in speaking.

Further, results showed that learners with high pronunciation level expose high level of confidence and this has led to achieving high level of oral presentation. What is more, learners with low pronunciation level display little self-confidence, and this had an impact on their speaking scores (Heyde,1979; Hassan,1992; Truitt,1995; Shumin,1997; Timothy et al., 2001). In other terms, the learners' confidence level is, indeed, a major sign towards successful oral achievement.

Finally, in an attempt to link the three variables together throughout this study; it was found that there is a *cause and effect* relationship. Having pronunciation abilities leads learners to enhance their self-confidence which will increase their speaking abilities. This seems similar

to Heyde's (1977) findings in her pilot study on self-esteem and oral performance. She found that subjects with high self-esteem have higher ratings from both their point of view and their teachers on their oral performance than subjects with low self-esteem.

The findings mentioned above highlighted the importance of self-confidence in speaking a foreign language. Self-confident learners are ready to take the risk of speaking. Conversely, low confident learners feel uncomfortable, afraid and frustrated in the classroom. As a result, they tend to perform with less effectiveness and satisfaction, which is affecting their academic achievement in general and speaking performance in particular.

Therefore, language teachers are called for focusing more and more on building their students' self-confidence through creating a supportive classroom environment that encourages them to speak and participate in oral activities without fear to make mistakes. Our EFL teachers should create situations that encourage students to produce oral language. As Swain (2000:99) proposes, teachers should motivate learners to *"process language more deeply, with more mental effort than … input"*. They may help learners identify their fears and help them learn to deal with them. They can support positive thinking and avoid negative views and beliefs. During oral activities, they should maintain a relaxed and humorous atmosphere, design interesting activities and give more time and opportunities for all learners.

Besides, learners' pronunciation also affects their confidence to speak; hence, mere exposure to target language may not be sufficient for

fluency improvement. Teachers should help EFL learners develop their pronunciation level, which will enhance their self-confidence; this in its turn will in all probabilities improve their speaking performance.

Suggestions and Recommendations

Succinctly, then, teaching oral skills is of vital significance in foreign language teaching/learning. To guarantee effective teaching/learning, a number of interesting factors should be taken into account. From this research work, it was found that it is fundamental for teachers to come across ways of dealing with the psychological aspects, incorporating self-confidence building and reflective activities into their courses.

Beyond the current practices, there are some areas of research in foreign language teaching which are still crying for further investigation and understanding. These areas of research would guide us towards deeper and clearer understanding of training pronunciation in foreign language education for better achievements and, therefore, would open window for further discussion.

The results achieved in this research work denote, (hopefully), fascinating new avenues for research within the area of pronunciation practice, speaking performance and self-confidence. Therefore, it is important to bear in mind that the findings of the present study might be regarded as a beginning of a new research investigation based on the limitations and shortcomings encountered. Based on the whole research process, the researcher would like to propose the establishment of a new modular course to EFL first-year LMD students; entailing *pronunciation-based* research (gathering both theory and practice of different accents

and varieties), and *speaking- confidence -based* course by initiating a modular course to cater for the learners' psychological state and well-being.

Notwithstanding the results achieved, there were some unavoidable limitations to be considered in the current research. To begin with, and due to the limited access to the participants, diaries were limited to twice per week, there are some learners who give up writing their diaries, and others failed to express their feelings in any language. Besides, owing to the small number of participants in this study and their particular learning situation, generalizability is limited.

General Introduction

The growing importance of English as a world language and the advance of technology and education reform are believed to be key-determinants for new developments in English language teaching/ learning profession. Studying English as a foreign language is a challenging effort for students whose goal is effective communication. However, among the most crucial areas of difficulty learners may face is the sound system of English. Fortunately, there is now a move for an intensive change in the area of English pronunciation teaching (Richards *et.al,* 2002; Brown, 2010).

For a long time, it seems that pronunciation teachers in many EFL perspectives have been adopting what some would characterize as a conventional methodology for teaching English pronunciation based on drilling and automatic exercises. The result of this reveals that many learners display significant phonological difficulties which prove highly detrimental to successful communication in English.

In this demanding age, and perhaps owing to the effects of the globalization process as a widespread phenomenon, a sound attention has been drawn towards the importance of pronunciation teaching (Hismanoglu, 2006). Nonetheless, some teachers may claim that pronunciation teaching seems to be discouraging since not all learners achieve native-like pronunciation, and successful communication may take place even without good pronunciation. This is clearly revealed by Kenworthy (1987: 3) who states that: *'for the majority of learners a far more reasonable goal is to be comfortably intelligible'*. However, the present research work puts a special emphasis on pronunciation practice as an

enhancer and motivator to raise learners' self-confidence to speak competently.

Research has thrown considerable attention on the nature of spoken discourse at a large extent. Speaking is described as being an interactive process involving the production and perception of information within different contexts. It requires from learners not only to know how to produce what they want to say, but also when, why, where to produce language. This may involve other dimensions such as the psychological side of learners.

Self-confidence appears to be among the variables which may affect the progress of learners' speaking competence. Thus, the dynamic correlation between self-confidence, pronunciation and speaking achievements has been placed at the heart of research for the present dissertation. Such a puzzling debate is one motive towards conducting the present research work. It strives, then, to raise these problems and resolve some aspects of the current debate for a valuable contribution to the English language teaching profession.

1.9. *EARLY STUDIES*

In language learning and teaching, many educational psychologists place a heavy emphasis on some personality traits that may influence learning a foreign language. It is often assumed that learning a foreign language may be a distressing experience for individuals. For instance, Stengal (1939), discussed in Arnold and Brown (1999:21), used the term "language shock" to describe apprehension experienced by individuals learning a foreign language. Attention was then drawn to psychological

variables such as anxiety, motivation, apprehension, self-confidence and self-esteem within the classroom setting. Self-confidence generally appears to be one of the vital variants that may promote either failure or success in language learning. Thus, teachers need to be aware of their learners' self-confidence when dealing with a task.

The affective dimension of learning is probably one of the most significant variables which may influence language learning success or failure (Oxford, 1996). Successful language learners often appear to be those who know how to control their emotions and attitudes about learning (Naiman, Frohlich, and Todesco, 1975; Wenden, 1987). Negative feelings can stunt learning process and thus, its progress. Conversely, positive emotions and attitudes may facilitate language learning and make it more effective and enjoyable.

Another idea revolves around the "vicious circle" of learning problems where self-confidence and anxiety seem to be at the heart of the issue. Cheng et al. (1999:437) for instance, attempt to unveil the different elements of anxiety in speaking and writing. They estimate that learners with low level of self-confidence are likely to feel little assurance about their abilities to learn another language; they concluded the study by stating that in order to enhance learners' self-confidence, non-threatening and supportive classroom atmosphere is compulsory.

Nonetheless, it is often reported that EFL learners may feel much anxiety and lack self-confidence in the process of language learning. What seems to be noticeable from a number of studies is that speaking and listening seem to be the greatest source of anxiety among students. This point is made particularly strong by Horwitz (1986).

Therefore, quite a number of researchers and language teachers seem to be aware of the urgent need to boost EFL students' self-confidence, both in terms of their general linguistic abilities and also their oral achievement. It is worth pointing out that self-esteem is one of the primary affective elements (Oxford 1996). It is a self-judgment of worth or value, based on a feeling of efficacy and a sense of interacting effectively with one's own environment. Learners with high self-esteem maintain positive evaluations of themselves (Tesser & Campbell, 1982). Amber (in Tyacke & Mendelsohn, 1986) found that unsuccessful language learners had lower self-esteem than successful language learners.

*Similarly, i*n the search for psychological variables that might characterize "*good language learners*", a significant number of researchers in the 1980s and early 1990s focused on one facet of the primary personality trait "*extraversion*" (Beebe, 1983; Ely 1986, 1988) which could be most relevant to foreign language learning, namely risk-taking. The interest in that particular variable at the time was probably not just a coincidence. A few years earlier, Naiman *et al.* (1978) failed to confirm their hypothesis that good language learners (as defined by their test scores) would be more extraverted. This disappointing finding reverberated through the world of applied linguistics (Dewaele and Furnham, 1999) and reduced the initial enthusiasm about the predictive power of this personality dimension on success in foreign language learning (FLL).

From another intricate level, within the hierarchy of personality traits, a further facet which may have an influence on learners' success in FLL is the degree of risk-taking. There is a *prima facie* evidence that the

extraverts are more inclined to take risks in using the FL in class (Ely, 1986: 3). Besides, extraverts tend to be more optimistic and hence more confident in the pay-off of their risk-taking.

The conclusion drawn from these studies is that whenever learners are called on to perform a task, a number of psychological manifestations come into view. In speaking tasks for example, learners take the risk every time they open their mouths to speak a foreign language. In this context, it is worth quoting *Beebe (1983) (in Seliger and Long 1983: 126)*

> *They (learners) fear looking ridiculous; they fear frustration coming from a listener's blank look, showing that they have failed to communicate; they fear the danger of not being able to communicate and thereby get close to other human beings. Perhaps worst of all, they fear a loss of identity. Given these realities, we must conclude that all second and foreign language learning involves taking risks.*

Beebe's (ibid) point of view links at a large extent language learning and achievement with risk taking. Hence, producing speech in a FL is a gamble and not all learners are equally inclined to face the potential social embarrassment of getting something wrong. As Brown (2001:166) points out: "*Interaction requires the risk of failing to produce intended meaning, of failing to interpret intended meaning, of being laughed at, of being shunned or rejected. The rewards, of course, are great and worth the risks*".

The third studied variable is pronunciation practice. A number of studies demonstrate the effect of classroom pronunciation teaching on learners' language learning progress (Yule & Power, 1994; Elliot, 1995; Derwing, Munro & Wiebe, 1997, 1998; Derwing & Rossiter, 2003). Some

reach the conclusion that pronunciation practice may have positive effects on learners' speaking improvement. Jamieson & Morosan, 1986; Derwing, Munro, & Wiebe, 1997, illustrate that the long-term ESL individuals' pronunciation training and practice may significantly direct learners to achieve *intelligibility, accentedness* and *comprehensibility.*

Conversely, some studies attain a more negative effect of pronunciation instruction than positive. Under certain conditions, Suter (1976) conducts a study on non-native speakers of English on pronunciation aspects for the sake of reaching significant relationships between pronunciation accuracy and speaking. Unexpectedly, Suter found a negative correlation when analyzing the pronunciation scores, he concludes his study by stating that the more formal training on pronunciation a speaker had had, the less accurate the pronunciation tended to be.

As a result, the present study is, then, a classroom-oriented experiment, which is based on the assumption that there is a high correlation between pronunciation practice, self-confidence and learners' speaking performance. It attempts to reach the conclusion about whether learners' capabilities are being set in stone or changeable through hard work, classroom involvement and strategic approaches.

1.10.   STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

We are living in an educational world where speaking competence is seen as a necessary positive personal characteristic (Daly, 1991: 7). Global expansion of English has increased this demand to acquire good communication skills. However, it is often assumed that learners of

English frequently express a feeling of stress, nervousness or anxiety while learning to speak English and claim to have a *'mental block'* when speaking (Glenda & Anstey, 1990; Brockner, 1988; Bandura, 1982).

This research is, then, based on Arnold's (2000:3) analysis of what learners face in speaking. He posits:

> *The speaking skill is so central to our thinking about language learning that when we refer to speaking a language we often mean knowing a language.... Many researchers have pointed out that the skill producing most anxiety is speaking (MacIntyre and Gardner 1991).... This anxiety comes in part from a lack of confidence in our general linguistic knowledge but if only this factor were involved, all skills would be affected equally. What distinguishes speaking is the public nature of the skill, the embarrassment suffered from exposing our language imperfections in front of others.*

According to him, among the hurdles to speaking is anxiety which is correlated to the lack of self-confidence in the learners' linguistic aptitude. Acknowledged by a great number of researchers (*Tesser & Campbell, 1982;* Beebe (1983) in Seliger and Long, 1983*;* Arnold, 2000), the fear of speaking in public is related to a large extent to the learners' beliefs about themselves, i.e., the more confident learners feel about their competences, the more likely they are to take risks in the learning process and succeed. Thus, students' language learning progress and their self-confidence will gradually increase if teachers reflect on their own teaching and endeavor to support students to attain their goals.

Thus, self-confidence is the variable that attracted the researcher's attention in the present work, and motivated her to link it to EFL learners' speaking achievements and to pronunciation practice. Moreover, another drive towards conducting this study is the remark made by Morley (1991:500) about the changing goal of pronunciation:

The goal of pronunciation has changed from attainment of 'perfect' pronunciation to the more realistic goals of developing functional intelligibility, communicability, increased self-confidence, the development of speech monitoring abilities and modification strategies for use beyond the classroom.

In the same line of thought, Kenworthy (1987) believes that students' personal attitudes and self-confidence are main features in improving English pronunciation. He believes that it is not merely exposure that matters, but also how the students react to the opportunities of listening to English spoken by a native speaker.

Therefore, this research work is an attempt to investigate how learners' self-confidence enhancement through pronunciation practice may influence their speaking achievements.

1.11. *THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL APPROACH*

Considerable attention has grown within research in second and foreign language learning and teaching during this changing and challenging age of globalisation. This has led to an increasing professional activity and development which is highly reflected in the growing number of books, journals and conferences devoted to issues of research. Our experiment is based on a *classroom-oriented research* approach, which combines different approaches. For instance, a classroom experiment may

be accompanied by rich descriptions of the different instructional interventions or by analysis of classroom discourse twinned with qualitative and quantitative analysis of students' achievements. Combination of these approaches may afford comprehensive results and effective conclusions. As believed by Allwright and Bailey (1991:68): "*increasingly it appears, second language classroom researchers are calling for judicious selection and combined approaches rather than rigid adherence to one approach over another*".

Hence, within a classroom-oriented setting, a number of researchers point out the necessity of a particular methodology that needs to be adopted when conducting this kind of research. In this respect, Johnson (1993) addresses six different approaches, which she claims are not *mutually exclusive*, but interact with one another in experimentation. These six typologies are: *correlational approaches, case studies, survey research, ethnographic research, discourse analysis,* and *experimental research.* This study relies for the most part on an experimental methodology, while integrating statistical, correlational and survey techniques as well.

1.12. *RESEARCH OBJECTIVES*

The main objective in writing this thesis has been to demonstrate that individual differences in the affective dimensions of learning are related to some of the core issues in applied linguistics and that they can be significantly coupled with the most important processes underlying foreign language research. Strangely enough, very little is said about the learners' *self* and the actual processes and mechanisms that are responsible for causing the differences amongst learners (MacIntyre *et al.* (2001), as cited in Brown, 2007).

In view of this, the aims of this research work are to investigate and analyse relationships between self-confidence and pronunciation practice and the effects of this on general speaking competence; to investigate the factors which may influence self-confidence, pronunciation and general speaking ability; to investigate learners' and teachers' perceptions of the factors involved; and to investigate the learning processes associated with pronunciation and general speaking competence. In a clearer picture, the objectives of this research are:

- ❖ To measure correlation between learners' pronunciation, self-confidence and speaking competence.
- ❖ To highlight factors influencing learners' speaking performance based on learners' and teachers' perception.
- ❖ To compare some high- and low-confidence learner groups in terms of their learning goals and the quality of their learning experiences in order to find out if it might be possible to enhance students' speaking competence by modifying certain parameters of our instructional contexts which, perhaps, may trigger our learners' self-confidence.

1.13. *RESEARCH QUESTIONS & HYPOTHESES*

Therefore, within the context of higher education, the objective of this research is to answer the following general question: What relationships are there between pronunciation practice, EFL learners' self-confidence and speaking competence? On the basis of this research question, four sub-research questions were formulated as follows:

- ❖ What might be the relationship between self-confidence and EFL learners' speaking competence?

- ❖ What factors (in the perceptions of the learners) influence their speaking ability and their speaking scores?
- ❖ What factors (in the perceptions of the teachers) influence learners' speaking ability and speaking scores?
- ❖ What relationships might exist between pronunciation achievement and EFL learners' self-confidence?

To investigate these questions, the researcher puts forward the following hypotheses:

- ❖ High level of self- confidence may lead to improved speaking abilities, and vice-versa.
- ❖ Psychological problems such as anxiety, lack of self-confidence, worth and negative feedback together with lack of vocabulary may create barriers towards learners' confidence to speak.
- ❖ Negative evaluation, demotivation, afraid from making mistakes may affect the learners' speaking abilities.
- ❖ Improved pronunciation practice may lead to higher self-confidence and this in turn may lead to improved general speaking competence.

1.14. *INITIAL LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY*

The major limitations in the present research might be summarised in the following points:

- The study involves a small sample which restricts the generalisability of the findings to larger populations.
- Besides, the results achieved are related to a limited time-span, and may have been different if the study has been conducted earlier or later.

To put it in a nutshell, this research work has advantages and disadvantages like any other experimental research, i.e., greater depth and understanding, then, is needed to further clarify the issue in question. Possible studies based on large samples and statistical testing may help reach the generalisation of the findings.

1.15.   ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

To test the above hypotheses, six chapters are devoted to this research work: this first chapter has, in fact, been dedicated to setting the groundwork for the present thesis; it attempts to describe the rationale for this study, its objectives, its research questions and hypotheses; and also it brings into play the limitations and the delimitations of the present thesis.

Being the literature review of this research work, the second chapter discusses some key-concepts used in this work, including pronunciation learning, speaking skills and self-confidence as a psychological variable which may be either a speaking enhancer or a handicap towards learners' academic achievements.

The methodology chapter presents basis for an empirical study in the English Department at Tlemcen University. The researcher selects a descriptive approach in this chapter which aims primarily at providing *knowledge* (i.e. descriptions and explanations) about the target setting and population. It also portrays the research design and methodology including the instruments used for collecting data including questionnaires, diaries, a semi-structured interview and a test of achievement in speaking.

Based on the description presented in chapter three, chapter four strives to analyse both quantitatively and qualitatively the data obtained, attempting as much as possible to answer the questions set out at the

onset of this investigation. The researcher also relies on statistical methods to increase the practicality and reliability of the results.

The fifth chapter suggests a set of techniques used to better learners' pronunciation in EFL classrooms proposing a state-of-the-art methodology related to designing a speaking-lab based course to EFL learners, which gathers pronunciation knowledge, learners' '*self*' and oral capacities. It also endeavours to provide the teacher with innovative ways of assessing the speaking skill in a more relaxing, motivating and non-threatening atmosphere for learning.

The concluding chapter summarises the important findings and discusses the implications, in addition to proposing a number of recommendations and suggestions for further research.

General Conclusion

Self-confidence, self-esteem, self-concept, self-image, anxiety, motivation, language learning achievement, pronunciation practice, speaking competence, willingness to communicate, are all key-concepts that have been used in this research work to describe the relationship between learners' psychological health and some aspects of EFL language processing. Questions asked in this study revolve around why language learning is so much more ego-involving rather than other fields of study and what can be done to assist and support our learner's emotional journey.

This research depicts scenery of theoretical and practical frameworks to hopefully understand the place of self-confidence in language learning; its abundance of truly creative and humanistic goals supporting and encouraging positive self-confidence in EFL language classrooms as well. A great number of researchers believe that many teachers intuitively understand the importance of maintaining their students' psychological health. However, without offering a specific guidance, teachers may be at a loss as to how to provide this support while at the same time accomplishing more conventional language teaching goals.

The premise here, is that many learners experience a number of psychological problems such as anxiety, lack of self-confidence, fear of losing their face, these feelings drive learners not to *be themselves* when speaking a new language (Horwitz and Cope 1986). In a long term vision, lack of self-confidence in learners can, in short order; make them become hesitant language teachers. These preliminary considerations were a strong motive behind conducting such a study.

Hence, the present dissertation is a classroom-oriented research on first-year LMD students, learning in English at Tlemcen University; aiming primarily at finding out possible correlation between pronunciation, EFL learners' speaking abilities and self-confidence. To investigate this chain, six chapters were outlined. The first, being an introductory one, tried to set out the basic stones for this research for the sake of mapping methodologically the research framework; describing the rationale for this study, its objectives, its research questions and hypotheses. It also brought into play the limitations and the delimitations of the current investigation.

The second chapter, being a critical review of the literature, tried to reflect upon relevant literature defining some key-concepts used in this investigation, in addition to similar studies conducted within the same scope of research. Stress was put on the target concepts and their interplay with each other in shaping the theoretical and conceptual approach to EFL pronunciation teaching in relation to self-confidence and class speaking performance.

The third chapter strived rather to give a brief description of the ELT situation in the Algerian educational system in general and at higher education in particular. It also focused on the research methodology adopted. The sample of the study consisted of 30 EFL first-year LMD students and seven teachers from Tlemcen University-Algeria. The researcher adopted four research instruments including the use of *questionnaires* for both teachers and learners at the onset of the study; an *interview* to check their speaking difficulties and reasons behind their reluctance to take part in classroom discussion. Speaking *test* was also used to check learners' progress; in addition to *diaries* distributed to

students to state their beliefs about themselves after every speaking course (TPO).

The fourth chapter aimed at analysing, quantitatively and qualitatively the results obtained, and their interpretation. It was displayed that within a classroom-oriented research, it seems impractical to rely on only one research method, but rather on a combination of different research tools and procedures to hopefully get satisfactory answers to the research questions set. The fifth chapter attempted to provide some practical pedagogical suggestions and recommendations for a better teaching/learning experience. Ultimately, this last part tried, in fact, to recapitulate the whole study and draw the possible conclusions from this research work, and put forward further questions that may be conducted for future investigations.

6.2. RESEARCH METHOD PROCESS

This study is a classroom-based research on EFL first-year LMD learners at Tlemcen University during the academic year 2011-2012. The sample consisted of 30 learners and 7 teachers. The researcher adopted the following research tools:

- Learners' Confidence Scale to measure learners' confidence degree.
- Teachers' Questionnaire at the onset of the study.
- Diaries throughout all the study process.
- Speaking Achievement Test.
- Learners' Interview at the end of the investigation.

6.3. RESULTS ACHIEVED AND CONCLUSIONS

Hopefully, the research questions asked have been answered, and interesting results were achieved. It was found that EFL learners' pronunciation level plays a major role in both self-confidence and speaking performance; learners with (good) pronunciation have no problems in speaking confidently. Furthermore, having a high degree of self-confidence drives learners to speak without anxiety or feel afraid of public speaking. Therefore, positive correlation exists between the three studied variables, i.e., throughout this study, it was found that there is a *cause and effect* relationship between pronunciation, self-confidence and speaking performance. Having pronunciation abilities leads learners to enhance their self-confidence which leads to high speaking achievement. The results can be summarized as follows:

- The correlation between overall self-confidence and speaking performance was r =.697. This level of Pearson Coefficient Correlation indicates that the correlation is positive, i.e., there is a statistical association between the dependent and independent variables, i.e., the more self- confident learners are, the higher their speaking performance will be.

- The ANOVA analysis revealed that self-confidence had a significant effect on the participants' oral performance: Sig. value p= 0.09. This denotes that there exist a statistical correlation between general self confidence, speaking performance and thus, speaking confidence.

- Results also show that learners' fear of negative evaluation, peers' pressure, lack of knowledge and vocabulary, teachers' attitudes towards them, lack of support, low self-confidence, anxiety, lack of motivation and interest, together create barriers to learners' confidence to speak.

- A very noticeable remark was noted from this research is that confidence is not just about believing in oneself, it is also believing in the teachers' competence. Through learners' diaries, it was found that learners feel confident about what they are learning if they feel the assurance in what they receive from the teacher. If teachers often make mistakes, they will no more trust his information and this will lower from their self-confidence, too.

- Another important remark was found is that sometimes learners are confident enough to participate in the classroom with a weak pronunciation level. They just speak without caring about their pronunciation level. However, this category of learners will in all probabilities better their pronunciation level since *practice makes perfect*.

- The results of the study also imply that teachers may promote their learners' attitudes towards pronunciation learning and practice by providing appropriate materials and activities that are interesting and useful for students' goals and motivation.

6.4. RECOMMENDATIONS

Results have shown that language teachers are called for to focus more and more on building their students' self-confidence through creating a supportive classroom environment that encourages them to speak and take part in oral activities without fear. EFL teachers should create situations that persuade students to produce oral language. They may help learners identify their fears and help them learn to regulate and deal with them. They can also help learners maintain positive beliefs and views about themselves and avoid negative ideas. During oral activities, they should create a relaxed and humorous atmosphere; design

interesting activities give more time and ample opportunities for all learners.

Additionally, the comments made by teachers, and the results obtained from this research, indicate that there is an urgent need for an ongoing development in the area of EFL pronunciation. In this light of thought, a number of proposals and recommendations have been put forward with a view to overcome learners' reluctance in this; encouraging teachers to teach pronunciation confidently and effectively.

6.5. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Notwithstanding the results achieved, there were some unavoidable limitations to be considered in the current research. To begin with, and due to the limited access to the participants, diaries were limited to twice per week, there are some learners who give up writing their diaries, and others failed to express their feelings in any language. Besides, owing to the small number of participants in this study and their particular learning situation, generalizability is limited.

In addition, since the assessment of the speaking test was conducted by the researcher herself, it seems inevitable, to a certain extent, to be fully objective. In fact, it would have been kind of objective if it had been decided by two or three examiners rather than the researcher herself.

Beyond the current practices, there are some areas of research in foreign language teaching which are still crying for further investigation and understanding. These areas of research would guide us towards

deeper and clearer understanding of training pronunciation in foreign language education for better achievements and, therefore, would open window for further discussion.

The results achieved in this research work denote, (hopefully), fascinating new avenues for research within the area of pronunciation practice, speaking performance and self-confidence. Therefore, it is important to bear in mind that the findings of the present study might be regarded as a beginning of a new research investigation based on the limitations and shortcomings encountered. Based on the whole research process, the researcher would like to propose the establishment of a new modular course to EFL first-year LMD students; entailing *pronunciation-based* research (gathering both theory and practice of different accents and varieties), and *speaking- confidence -based* course by initiating a modular course to cater for the learners' psychological state and well-being.

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Self-Confidence and Language Teaching:
a Psychological Outlook

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Abstract:

In language learning and teaching, many educational psychologists place a heavy emphasis on some personality traits that may influence learning a foreign language. Self-confidence is one of the vital variants that may promote either failure or success in language learning. However, it is often reported that EFL learners may feel much anxiety and lack self-confidence in the process of language learning.

Hence, the present paper calls for the attention towards the "self" of learners because based on the feeling about themselves, they may in all probabilities be more active and autonomous.

Key-words: *self-confidence, language teaching, psychology*

في ميدان تعلم وتعليم اللغة عادة على عدد من الصفات الشخصية التي قد تؤثر على تعلم اللغة الأجنبية. الثقة بالنفس هي واحدة من المتغيرات الحيوية التي قد تؤدي بها إلى الفشل أو النجاح في تعلم اللغة. وبالتالي غالبا ما يشعر متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية بالكثير من القلق وعدم الثقة بالنفس عند التعلم أو التواصل مع الآخرين. علاوة على هذا ما يمكن ملاحظته من خلال عدد من الدراسات هو أن الشخصية تلعب دورا كبيرا في تعلم اللغة.

لذلك جاءت هذه الورقة لتدعو إلى الاهتمام بـ"نفس" المتعلمين لأن بناء على ما يشعرون عن أنفسهم يتحقق النجاح.

الكلمات المفتاحية : الثقة بالنفس ، تعليم اللغة، علم النفس

INTRODUCTION

Individual learner differences appear to likely affect various aspects of language learning in general and may help determine what practical activities may be optimal for learners' achievements. Individual differences have been researched extensively; making this arena one of the most systematically studied psychological aspects in language research (Dörnyei 2008). The most important result from these investigations was the conclusion that there exist factors which help learners excel within the learning process through the application of individualised learning techniques. In this line of thought, Segalowitz (1997:85) wonders:

> Why do individuals differ so much in second language attainment success? After all, every healthy human being in an intact social environment masters a first language to a degree of fluency that, in other skill domains, would be recognized as elite or near elite levels...

Thus, researchers emphasize on individual differences from an individual to another merely to the extent that those individualizing traits display permanence over time (De Raad, 2000). With the shift towards more education-friendly and classroom-based approaches to language study, research took another direction since the 1990s and turned its attention towards more cognitive theories of learners' *self*. Therefore, bringing language learner identity and personality research more into the line with the cognitive revolution in the field of psychology, has created the philosophy that shape learners' psychological engagement while learning. These patterns of thinking may inglobe for example, self-perceptions, self-efficacy beliefs, self-esteem, self-worth, and self-confidence (Pintrich and Schunk, 2002).

In view with this, the experimental and theoretical work conducted by Clément (2001) and his colleagues was subsumed to scrutinize the interrelationship between social contextual variables (including ethnolinguistic vitality), attitudinal/motivational factors, self-confidence, language identity, and L2 acquisition/ acculturation processes (Clément & Gardner, 2001; Dörnyei, 1999, 2001). From this angle, one would recognise that Clément and his associates' attention was turned more towards *self-confidence* as a variable which is a key component in language achievements and success.

SELF-CONFIDENCE IN PSYCHOLOGY

Over the last past few years, the approach to the research, theory, and practice of *self-confidence* seems to have generated some interest among psychologists and researchers. Self-confidence from a psychological point of view appears to represent one of the few dimensions of human behaviour which broadens across the whole range of human existence. It has created ample interest for such a long time, much like the topics of personality or identity.

It is generally acknowledged that the maintenance and enhancement of self-confidence has always been identified as an essential human impulse. Psychologists have long emphasized the crucial role played by the learners' self-image, motivation, affect, and social interactions. Therefore, self-confidence is widely regarded as a valuable individual variable. For instance, if one takes a bird eye view and dates back to William James work; one may notice an important strand in psychology which has activated *"believing in oneself"* as a key to personal success. At present, on the other hand, attention is drawn towards *"self help"*, which purports to help learners improve and enhance their self-confidence, and be more optimists.

Feelings of self-confidence and self-efficacy grow from mastery experiences. People who feel effective are likely to keep on in the face of failure and achieve greater success because of their unstoppable efforts (Bandura, 1997). Having the sense of confidence about the attainability of goals may generalize a sense of optimism when confronting a challenge, for instance, optimists tend to take a posture of confidence and persistence (even if progress is difficult or slow). Pessimists, on the other side of the coin, seem to be doubtful, hesitant und unconfident. This divergence may even be amplified under conditions of serious adversity.

Form another psychological angle, people who have strong confidence in their abilities to perform and manage potentially difficult situations will approach those situations calmly and will not be excessively disrupted by difficulties. Alternatively, people who lack confidence in their own abilities will approach such situations with apprehension, thereby reducing the probability that they will perform effectively.

Led by the work of the Canadian social-psychologists Gardner and Lambert (1972), research into learners' psychological attitudes to the target language, was for many years gradually growing and influential in successful learning. It was argued that language learning entails much more than acquiring a body of knowledge and developing a set of skills. It is fairly crucial to consider the "self" of the learners and thus, their psychological state to overcome their difficulties in language achievements.

THE CONCEPT OF *SELF-CONFIDENCE*

A simple definition of self-confidence is the amount of reliance one has, i.e., one's knowledge and one's abilities. Self-confidence seems to be the first step to progress, development, achievement and success. Additionally, self-confidence refers to the belief that a person has the ability to produce results, accomplish goals or perform tasks competently (Dörnyei, 2008). It is also a building block for success throughout one's career and a key competency in the self-awareness cluster. It is one of the most important factor studied by psychological researchers (Clement, Gardner, and Smythe (1977) to express *"a powerful mediating process in multi-ethnic settings that affects a person's motivation to learn and use the language of the other speech community"* Dörnyei, (2008: 73).

From another angle, Norman and Hyland (2003) suggest that there are three elements to confidence:

❖   'Cognitive', i.e., the person's knowledge of their abilities;
❖   'Performance', i.e., the person's ability to do something;
❖   'Emotional', i.e., the learners' comfortable feeling about the former two aspects.

Having all this in mind, one may presume that a self-confident person wants to take further risks, placing himself in unfamiliar situations and examines his capacities in different contexts, and particularly making mistakes do not prohibit him to increase his ability to learn. One other significant dimension is worth considering when talking about self-confidence is the symptoms interconnected with less confidence. There are two categories namely emotional and physical symptoms. As for the emotional symptoms, they are as follows: apprehension, uneasiness and dread, feeling restless, strong desire to escape, avoidance behaviour, hyper-vigilance, irritability, confusion, impaired concentration or selective attention, self-consciousness and insecurity, and behavioural problems. The physical symptoms are noticed through racing heartbeat, chest pains, hot flashes or chills, cold and clammy hands, stomach upset, shortness of breath, sweating, dizziness, muscle tension or aches, headaches, fatigue and insomnia (Wiley 2003).

Furthermore, levels of confidence are variable for instance, a learner possesses the knowledge or skills required to do a specific task, but not be confident to act because of the specific situation or environment in which he is involved. Thus, he could be confident at one level of performance but not at another, such as being confident to write a passage but feel unconfident about starting a pronunciation learning course (Eldred 2002). Therefore, teachers need to develop both situational and overall confidence.

This is fine in principle, but as the reality turns out to be different, there are general impressions about which learners do and do not seem to have self-confidence as a general personality trait, yet remain unclear about as to how those learners are coping with different language aspects being learned. However, the learners' over-self-confidence may interfere with the specific learning tasks at hand; just as lack of confidence may prevent some learners from fully exploit what they know.

The successes and achievements in turn will strengthen the learners' self-confidence further. It is natural that learners with a certain amount of confidence are offered leadership and other responsibilities of groups. More and more opportunities automatically come to learners with a good self-confidence. In short, success flows to those who have a genuine self-confidence. Helping learners feel good about themselves by making them believing in their capacities need to be incorporated in the teaching process. For instance, some learners are good at this and others are good at that, but they need to recognize that they are all gifted in a way or in another. Besides, it is important to acknowledge the extension provided by Clément and his colleagues (cf. Clément, 1980; Clément & Kruidenier, 1985) that self-confidence is a social product which is due to contacts between environments where different language communities exist together without excluding its cognitive components. In this vein, Dornyei (2008:73) states that:

> Linguistic self-confidence—derived from the quality and quantity of the contact between the members of the L1 and L2 communities—is a major motivational factor in learning the other community's language, and determines the learners' future desire for intercultural communication and the extent of identification with the L2 group....Linguistic self-confidence in Clément's view is primarily a socially defined construct

At first glance, it might seem that despite the fact that identifying key definitions, noteworthy findings, or leading theories of self-confidence, one still needs further research to identify the most useful and accepted ways of defining such a concept. From a psychological stand point, self-confidence is illustrated with research examples about confidence-building; it may be defined as a facet of competence and of worthiness. Self-confidence is not a concept reared in the same abstract discursive tradition of self-worth or self-value, it is a more complex one.

Self-Confidence as Competence

Self-confidence appears to present knowing one's own abilities and having enough faith in them to make sound decisions in the face of uncertainty and pressure, it is a belief in one's own abilities to take on a difficult challenge. A confident person exudes a strong *self-presentation* and expresses him- or herself in an assured, impressive, and unhesitating manner. The confident person will take on new challenges and hold on to his or her view, even if others disagree. Thus, if confidence is viewed as competence, this depends on two things: an individual's hopes, desires, or aspirations, which are termed "pretensions," and his or her ability to realize them, which in turn requires competence. Accordingly, work that stems from educational psychologists tend to focus on behavioural outcomes and the degree of discrepancy between one's "ideal" self and "real" self.

Hence, when combining confidence with competence, we may deduce a competence-based definition; we also may automatically maintain that it is a certain type of competence, notably, competence in arenas which are related to individual's developmental history, personality characteristics, values, and so forth. A variety of studies have demonstrated the positive impact of confidence on performance.

Self-Confidence as Worthiness

Shaping attitudes about the 'self' seems to be more complex than doing so for anything else. There seems to be that a person's evaluation or judgment of their own "worth" plays an important role in bringing the notion of values into play. Therefore, the domain of behaviour matters to individual's self- worth, as recognised by Rosenberg (1979:30-31):

> *The individual simply feels that he is a person of worth; he*
> *respects himself for what he is, but he does not stand in awe*
> *of himself nor does he expect others to stand in awe of him.*
> *He does not necessarily consider himself superior to others.*

At some point, seeing self-confidence in terms of worthiness involves dealing with the issues associated with attitudes, self-image, self-representation and self-concept. Therefore, this vision may yield at least to one tangible power: viewing self-confidence in terms of an attitude may mean that it can be measured.

Self-Confidence Vs Self-Esteem

It seems to be wiser to establish satisfactory differences between self-confidence and self-esteem. Branden (1969:110) offers such a distinction by putting self-esteem a general term that covers both self-confidence and self-respect, as follows: *"Self-esteem has two interrelated aspects: it entails a sense of personal efficacy and a sense of personal worth. It is the integrated sum of self-confidence and self-respect"*.

On his part, Dorney (2008:211) establishes a fine relationship between the two concepts. He presumes the fact that *"self-esteem is closely related to the notion of self-confidence, which has a vigorous research tradition in applied linguistics and which, therefore, may have diverted scholars from the study of self-esteem"*. Undeniably, there seems to be both self-esteem and self-confidence unveil a common prominence on the *"individual's beliefs about his or her attributes and abilities as a person, and various measures of self-esteem and self-confidence/ efficacy have been found to correlate with each other highly"* (ibid).

CONFIDENCE STRATEGIES

Students' confidence in language learning, especially speaking, is one of the main significant factors to drive or to inspire students to reach their goals. Confidence strategies may help students develop positive expectations and attitudes for successful achievement of language learning. In this context, Keller (as cited in Aik & Tway, 2006: 31) has developed a model which identifies four kinds of strategy known as the ARCS model (Attention, Relevance, Confidence and Satisfaction) and then it was summarized and discussed by Small (as cited in

Aik & Tway, 2006: 31) to englobe confidence strategy which:

- Informs the learner about the learning and performance requirements and assessment criteria.
- Provides challenging and meaningful opportunities for successful learning.
- Links the learning success to personal responsibility, for example, providing positive feedback to the learner about his /her efforts to learn.

On his part, Saetan (1991:8) identifies the characteristics of self-confident learners as likely to choose ways to self-check their learning outcome whereas others require someone to check their understanding of language learning.

SELF-CONFIDENCE and LANGUAGE LEARNING

In language learning and teaching, many educational psychologists place a heavy emphasis on some personality traits that may influence learning a foreign language. From a motivational perspective, the most important factor studied by (Clément, 1994; Gardner, 2001; and Dörnyei, 1999) was *self-confidence*, which was introduced by Richard Clément who added this motivational subsystem to Gardner's motivation model. The concept of *linguistic self-confidence*, in general, is one of the vital variants that may promote either failure or success in language learning. Noels (1994), in his part, expanded the applicability of the construct of self-confidence by demonstrating that it is also a crucial motivational subsystem in foreign language learning situations where there is little direct contact with the target language members. Thus, EFL teachers need to be aware of their learners' affective domain when dealing with a task.

The affective domain, as Brown (2000:143) believes *"refers to emotions and feelings"*. Discussing the affective factors explicitly may help us come across the fact that there seems to be a general consensus among researchers that it represents the emotional side of human behaviour and it may be a vital factor in the learner's ability to overcome setbacks or mistakes that may take place in the learning process. Affective factors denote a very important impact on student's outcome, for this reason, it is important to understand student's feelings and know more about these factors. Affective factors play a very significant impact on student's outcome and achievements. Many studies were conducted to examine factors that may affect EFL learners' performance; indeed, there are manifold psychological factors that most pervasively obstruct the learning process.

For instance, Krashen (1981) believes that self-confidence appears to be a central aspect of the *'affective filter'* which is defined as a psychological factor which filtrates the amount of language received by learners' brain. This filter may enable learners encourage intake, or valuable input. Thus, the affective filter hypothesis embodies Krashen's (ibid) view that a number of 'affective variables' play a facilitative, but non-causal, role in second language acquisition. Krashen claims that learners with high motivation, self-confidence, a good self-image, and a low level of anxiety are better equipped for success in second language acquisition. Low motivation, low self-esteem, and debilitating anxiety can combine to 'raise' the affective filter and form a 'mental block' that prevents comprehensible input from being used for acquisition. In other words, when the filter is 'up' it impedes language acquisition. On the other hand, positive affect is necessary, but not sufficient on its own, for acquisition to take place.

When affective factors are explicitly discussed, there seems to be a consensus among psychologists that the general notion of self-confidence may be considered as a key-factor in the learners' ability to overcome their language setbacks, it is normally assumed to have an influence on successful language learning. In this respect, Krashen (1981: 75) claims that: *"Not surprisingly, nearly all the available literature suggests that self-confidence is very much related to second language development..., the self-confident, secure person is a more successful language learner"*.

Nonetheless, one should be aware that the lack of self-confidence may be an inhibiting factor for learners and this idea is shared by Naiman *et al* (1978) who believe that poor learners, in all probabilities lack self-confidence. Moreover, the higher anxiety learners experience, the lower scores they get, the less confident learners become. On the contrary, the more confident learners feel the higher scores they get. The more confident a learner feels, the less anxiety he experiences in learning.

AFFECTIVE FILTERS IN LANGUAGE LEARNING

Krashen's affective filter, mentioned earlier, consisting of the variables of anxiety, motivation, and self-confidence may strongly enhance or inhibit second language acquisition by playing a critical mediating role between the linguistic input available in the educational setting and the student's ability to learn. He (1981:75) gathers them as following:

> Self confident people have the advantage of not fearing rejection as much as those with high anxiety levels and are therefore more likely to put themselves in learning situations and do so repeatedly...[they] are less hampered by the conscious operation of the monitor because they are not so worried about how they appear.

Thus, it appears essential to have a look on anxiety, motivation and self esteem as significant affective filters.

Anxiety

Like any other affective factors, anxiety is not easy to define, it is has been in the limelight of language research for decades. Is is associated with *"feelings of uneasiness, frustration, self-doubt, apprehension or worry"* (Scovel cited in Brown, 2000:151). Anxiety, as perceived intuitively by many language learners, negatively influences language learning and has been recognised to be one of the most highly examined variables in

psychological research (Horwitz, 2001: 113). Psychologists establish a distinction between three categories of anxiety: *trait anxiety, state anxiety,* and *situation-specific anxiety. Trait anxiety* is relatively steady personality characteristic, while *state anxiety* is a transient anxiety, a response to a particular anxiety-provoking stimulus such as an important test (Horwitz, 2001: 113). The third category, *Situation-specific anxiety,* refers to the constant and multi-faceted nature of some anxieties (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991a: cited in 2001: 113). It is aroused by a specific type of situation or event such as public speaking, examinations, or class participation (Ellis, 1994: 480). In this context, Gardner and MacIntyre (199: 3) concluded, *"The results of these studies of language anxiety suggest that anxious students will have lower levels of verbal production … and will be reluctant to express personally relevant information in a second-language conversation".*

Motivation

There seem to be a considerable amount of research on motivation in the learning process. It is one of the variables which have a strong impact on student's success or failure. The theory of the Canadian psychologists Gardner and Lambert was one of the most dominant motivation theories of the L2 field for more than three decades. Certainly the role of others in developing motivation is central to teaching and education, in this context, Scheidecker and Freeman (1999:116) believes that *"Motivation is, without question, the most complex and challenging issue facing teachers today".* Motivation is an inner drive or emotions that move people to particular actions (Brown, 2000).

Without ample opportunities for motivation, even individuals with outstanding abilities cannot accomplish long-term goals, this is what Dornyei (2008:65) deduces about motivation:

> *It provides the primary impetus to initiate L2 learning and later the driving force to sustain the long and often tedious learning process; indeed, all the other factors involved in SLA presuppose motivation to some extent.*

From another layer of analysis, motivation is affected by many factors as mentioned by Danis (1993:3) *"…interest in the subject matter, perception of its usefulness, general desire to achieve, self-confidence, self-esteem as well as patience and persistence".* Therefore, teachers need to be aware of their own possible prejudices with regard to individual differences and psychological variables to help their learners develop the feelings about

themselves and be more positive.

Self-esteem

Self-esteem is an umbrella term which covers other basic characteristics and traits. Branden (2001:252) defines it as *"the experience of being competent to cope with the basic challenges of life and being worthy of happiness. It consists of self-efficacy…and self-respect"*. As any psychological facet, self-esteem has multi-dimensions which are according to Brown (2000: 145): *global, situational* and *task self-esteem*.

- *Global Self-esteem*: represents general assessment a person makes about himself,
- *Situational Self-esteem*, on the other hand, refers to abilities in specific situation such as foreign language context.
- *Task Self-esteem*: relates to particular tasks within situations, for instance, within the educational domain, task self-esteem might refer to one subject matter.

In a more comprehensive fashion, Lawrence (2006:6) put them as follows: *"global self-esteem refers to an all-round feeling of self-worth and confidence. Specific self-esteem refers to a feeling of self-worth and confidence with regard to a specific activity or behavior"*. What is more, self-esteem contributes to people' failure or success, as put by Brown (1977: 352): *"A person with high self-esteem is able to reach out beyond himself more freely, to be less inhibited, and because of his ego strength, to make the necessary mistakes involved in language learning with less threat to his ego"*.

All the above was an attempt to lay down the foundation of the issues of learners' self and its development. The present research is an attempt to find out the relationship between learners' self-confidence, pronunciation awareness and speaking achievement, thus it seems worthwhile to link learners' confidence with their speaking competence in the following section.

SELF-CONFIDENCE AND SPEAKING ACHIEVEMENTS

One of the most important aspects of speaking is to have self-confidence in what to say and how to say it. It is mostly recognized that what a person feels reflects what he thinks, and what he thinks determines what he says. Therefore, having a low sense of self-confidence in speaking English will create threatening atmospheres in the classroom, and learners

However, like any psychological test, the most important problem
that may face researchers is that they are subjective in drawing conclusions
about the person, since they are related to individuals reporting their own
experience, behaviour, or characteristics. The problem lies on the responses,
due to the fact that even the most well-meaning subjects are going to be
filtered by manifold factors which usually involve characters such as the
self-perception, anxiety, anger, doubt, or mental illness.

From another layer of analysis, researchers and theoreticians grapple
with the fact that there is considerable methodological diversity in the
psychology of self-confidence. For instance, one way of understanding such
methodological divergence in the social sciences is to organize it in terms of
increasing degrees of objectivity (measurability), which may result in all
probabilities in a kind of pyramid, as shown in Figure 1.1. by Christopher
(2006: 42).

Figure 1. Confidence Theoretical Methodologies

Throughout this pyramid, various methods were used for searching
self-confidence in terms of the strengths and weaknesses. The next adopted
table from Christopher (2006) examines the range of methods from a
different, more revealing angle:

CONCLUSION

All in all, and to put it in a nut shell, it is crucial to posit that acknowledged by a great number of researchers, the fear of speaking in public is related in a large extent to the learners' beliefs about themselves, i.e., the more confident learners feel about their competences, the more likely they are to take risks in the learning process and succeed. Thus, if teachers are always aware and reflect on their own teaching and try to promote students to achieve their task, students' language learning repertoires and confidence will gradually increase.

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Texte de la couverture :

الإنسان عدو ما يجهل

علم لغة، تجتنب بلاهة حرب. أنشر ثقافة، تكتسب شعبا لشعب .

L'homme est l'ennemi de ce qu'il ignore :

Enseigne une langue tu éviteras l'absurdité d'une guère,

Répands une culture, tu rendras

Un peuple auprès d'un autre populaire

Texte de Naim Boutanos-Calligraphie de Hassan Massoudy

IMAGOLOGIE

INTERCULTURALITE

ET

DIDACTIQUE

Sommaire

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Using Portfolios for Assessment Purposes: Practice through Researching Practice

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Abstract:
It seems that no act is complete until it has been evaluated and criticized by others, thus; in order to develop professional competencies of teacher educators, attention should be turned towards some key assessing areas within the teaching and learning contexts. Based on the assumption that portfolios are rapidly gaining momentous popularity because of its ability to promote development of higher-order skills such as reflection, critical analysis and self evaluation in students, our main aim in the present paper is to shed light on using portfolios for assessment purposes in our educational settings. However, to be effective, both students and instructors need to be very clear about the purpose of the learning portfolios and the underlying principles, as well as the key process in portfolio development. Hence, clear guidelines on portfolio development need to be fixed, yet opening the door for originality and creativity of students. It is also very important to consider this process as a continuous dialogue between students and instructors.

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Résumé:

Il semble qu'aucun acte n'est complet tant qu'il n'a pas été évalué et critiqué par les autres, donc, afin de développer des compétences professionnelles des enseignants, l'attention devrait être tournée vers certains domaines dans l'évaluation de l'enseignement et des contextes d'apprentissage. Basé sur l'idée que les portfolios sont gagné rapidement une popularité fondamentale en raison de sa capacité à promouvoir le développement des compétences telles que la réflexion, la critique 'analyse et d'auto-évaluation des étudiants. Notre principal objectif dans le présent article est de démontrer l'utilisation de portfolio pour des fins évaluatives dans nos systèmes éducatifs et d'enseignement. Néanmoins, pour être efficace, les étudiants et les pédagogues devraient être très clair sur le but d'utiliser le portfolio et aussi les principes dans le développement du portfolio. Par conséquent, des lignes et principes doivent être fixés clairement sur le développement des portfolios ouvrant la porte à l'originalité et la créativité des étudiants. Il est également très important de considérer ce processus comme un dialogue continu entre les étudiants et les instructeurs.

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Introduction: Defining Portfolios

Significant attention seems to gradually grow in portfolios as a form of assessment which may provide a more *authentic, student-centered experience and growth-oriented interactions* between learners and teachers than tests and final assignments. There are various benefits in using portfolios to assess adult learning and outcomes and it requires from the teachers careful planning, patience and flexibility with students. Thus, the purpose of this paper is to provide a preliminary overview of the process of portfolio assessment, illustrating with examples, describing practical details, and offering suggestions for implementation in our educational system.

Portfolios have long been recognised as an authentic assessment tool which is used to examine and diagnose students' progress. It is a systematic collection of student achievements and thus, their learning outcomes evidenced by the compiled material in the portfolio that illustrate the achievement (Venn, 2000). Krulik and Rudnick (1998) contend that portfolios are best used for diagnostic and *self-assessment* purposes and therefore should not be neglected, i.e., it should include evidence of student reflection & self-evaluation, guidelines for selecting the portfolio contents, & criteria for judging the quality of the work. On their part, Paulson and Meyer *(1991:60)* define portfolio as:
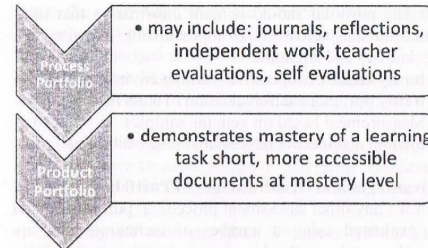
"A *purposeful collection of student work that exhibits the student's effort, progress, and achievements in one or more areas. The collection must include student participation in selecting contents, criteria for selection, the criteria for judging merit, and evidence of student self-reflection".*

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By constructing a portfolio, students may recognize their own growth and learn to take improved responsibility for their education and development. Teachers may use portfolios for assessment purposes and to record educational outcomes. The following example presents a portfolio evaluation instrument:

School: _____
Student's Name: _____ Date: _____
Birth date: __ __ __ Grade Level: _____
Activities: _____
Principal: _____
Names of the School's Portfolio Team:
_____ _____ _____
_____ _____ _____
Evaluator's Comments: _____

Portfolio Evaluation Form

There are several items of portfolios suggested by Crowley (1993:545) which seem to be appropriate for problem solving situations such as samples of journal writings, student-made concrete representations, and group projects. It has manifold types according to the intended assessment purposes. We may suggest the following types:

- may include: journals, reflections, independent work, teacher evaluations, self evaluations
- demonstrates mastery of a learning task short, more accessible documents at mastery level

Characteristics of Portfolios

Portfolios may provide an important position in creating an intersection of learning and assessment; hence, teachers should find how they may join both processes successfully. Some characteristics of good portfolios are suggested by Paulson and Meyer (1991:61-62). They may be summarised as follows:

1. The portfolio may offer the student an opportunity to learn about learning. Thus, the end product must include information showing that a student has engaged in self-reflection.

2. The Portfolio is something that is done by the students, not to the students. Such assessment, in addition, offers a concrete way for them to learn to appreciate their own work and value themselves as learners.

3. The files and document compiled in the portfolio is the kind of documents which students take on new meaning for certain purposes. For instance, a portfolio for problem solving activities should be separated from other portfolios such as a portfolio on mathematics projects or classroom exercises on certain topics in mathematics.

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4. The portfolio should contain information that illustrates students' growth and improvement, likewise their weaknesses and strengths.
5. It may create ccooperative learning environment
6. It may ppromote self-evaluation of student
7. Measurement based on genuine samples
8. Student and teacher have shared responsibilities

Advantages and Disadvantages of Portfolios

Like any other assessment procedure, portfolios might be evaluated using a number of techniques and approaches such as *checklists*, *rating scales*, and *rubrics*. There are numerous benefits of using portfolios in assessment, however, one should be conscious about how to use them and when. Among the gains they may offer the following:

- It is more natural since it is collected in the classroom and shows the actual students' work on solving problems, including the ways and strategies they use to learn.
- It may provide information about students' growth on a certain period of time (e.g. every semester).
- It also may encourage student self-evaluated skills and allows realistic assessment of proficiency.
- Giving students the opportunity to actively participate in the learning process.
- Providing a process for structuring learning in stages.
- May offer a profile of learners' abilities, skills and interests.
- Facilitating cooperative learning activities, including peer evaluation and tutoring, cooperative learning groups, and peer conferencing.

On the other hand, there are some drawbacks regarding the use of portfolios to assess student learning, they may be summarised as what follows:

- Teachers are likely to encounter difficulties to attain acceptable levels of reader/scorer/assessor reliability of portfolios.
- It takes more time for teachers to assess portfolios since they have to make selective criteria of assessment using rubrics (It is Time consuming and efforts demanding) (Payne 2003).
- Gathering all necessary data: Problems with storage (difficult to manage).

Portfolios for Assessment Purposes

Portfolio for assessment purposes seems to be essential, not only to improve the complex task of student assessment, but also to contribute to a more positive attitude and enjoyment towards learning (Thomas et al 2004). It may afford evidence about students' ability to solve problems, to analyse them in level-headed ways. Portfolios can also be used as a *diagnostic assessment* to identify students' misconceptions on learning tasks and to encourage students' self-assessment. Portfolios, indeed, are recognised as flexible and may grant tremendous opportunities for assessing learning effectively.

Conclusion

It is noteworthy that portfolio assessment is an ongoing process. and it seems to be an imperative part in education for the purpose of creating effective learning environments. Teachers should be cognisant of the fact that assessment system should match between both the curriculum and the learning process. In this vein, the rationale behind assessment covers in some way every aspect of educational fields, namely learners, teachers, parents and school administrative.

The integration of portfolio in assessment in an EFL classroom seems to be more appropriate than trying to replace existing and traditional forms of assessment. The most vital consideration is to involve students in their learning to assist them to learn through assessment. As it seems to be obvious, nothing is perfect, and there will always be strengths and weaknesses of all kinds of assessments, and a unique perfect model does not exist. Nonetheless, if teachers and educators try to work with their own experiences and appraise the existing literature on portfolio research, they may, in all probabilities be able to design a better assessment tool.

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