An Evaluation of the Teaching of the Speaking Skill in EFL Classrooms within the Framework of the CBA: The Case of 3rd Year Pupils in 3 Secondary Schools in Tlemcen

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Abstract

The objective of this research was to describe and evaluate the teaching of the speaking skill within the framework of the CBA in the Algerian secondary school EFL classrooms. It investigated the reason/s behind the Algerian learners' difficulties to express themselves orally in English after seven years of target language learning. The research was conducted in three secondary schools in Tlemcen during the academic year 2013-2014. The subjects of the study were 150 third year secondary school pupils from the scientific stream and 10 EFL teachers. Three research instruments were used: a classroom observation, a pupils' questionnaire and for the sake of triangulation an EFL teachers' structured interview. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analyzed. The findings suggested that teachers were attempting to implement the new approach (CBA) to education in EFL classrooms required by the educational reform of 2003 which required both teachers and pupils to develop new teaching and learning strategies. However, many difficulties were raised such as lack of congruence between teaching and evaluation namely that of the speaking skill and the difficulties in the construction and administration of any speaking activities. Inadequate evaluation in the Baccalaureate examination, focusing on reading and writing and neglecting speaking, led learners to give little importance to the latter. Moreover, the research findings revealed that the Algerian EFL teachers did not apply the principles of competency based learning, delivering materials in the traditional way that did not meet the pupils' interests and needs in developing their speaking skill. Finally, it was concluded that in order to insure that oral language be given its rightful place in the curriculum, teachers must implement programmes that contain oral language evaluation.

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

AF   Absolute Frequency

BAC   Baccalaureate Examination

BIEF   Bureau d'ingénierie en éducation et en formation (The Office Of Engineering in Education and Training)

CBA   Competency Based Approach

CLT   Communicative Language Teaching

CNP   Commission National des Programmes (National Commission of Programmes)

EFL   English as a Foreign Language

ELT   English Language Teaching

EU   European Union

FL   Foreign Language

GTM   Grammar Translation Method

ICT   Information and Communication Technologies

INRE   Institut National de Recherche en Education (National Research Institute in Education)

L2   Second Language

LLS   Language Learning Strategies

MEN   Ministère de l'Éducation nationale

MT   Mother Tongue

ONPS   Office national de publications scolaires (National office of the school publications)

PARE   programme d'appui à la réforme du système éducatif algérien

PES   Professeur d'Enseignement Secondaire (Secondary school teachers)

RF   Relative Frequency

SSP   Secondary School Pupils

TEFL   Teaching English as a Foreign Language

UNESCO   United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

USAID   United States Agency for International Development

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General Introduction

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

> I think it's essential for us to be able– in this global
> community and as the global community becomes even
> smaller through the internet and through all kinds
> of electronics– that we are able to communicate....
> It is essential that there be a uniform way of talking,
> for the economy, for national communications, for
> exchange of politics and even on the level of individual
> couples being able to communicate.... And there are
> rules for that.[1]

(Kuriansky, 1999)

In other words, one may say that globalisation has affected the social, cultural, technological, political and economical aspects of our life, modifying our practices and changing the vision which we have of ourselves and of the society we live in. With the change of this vision is born the need to adapt and adjust the educational process which should ensure the training of future citizens on the basis of our past, the realities of the present, and the challenges of the future. The multiple changes associated with globalization are thus as many reasons which inspire the educational reforms in this beginning of the 21st century.

The importance of English in the academic and professional domains as well as the need for communication among people of different cultures and languages, triggered by travelling and globalisation, puts pressure on people to learn languages more quickly and efficiently. Indeed, learning a foreign language is a challenging effort for those whose goal is effective

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[1] Judith Kuriansky, psychologist and therapist, speaking on the BBC World Service, August 1999

communication. Learning a new language, today, is also substantially different from what it used to be in the past: people are more in need to communicate orally, and we cannot wait for years before they engage in real communication.

Because of the growing importance of English as a world language and the advance of technology, there is an urgency to learn languages which is felt everywhere within societies all over the world. The search for new and more efficient teaching methods is a consequence of the requirements for fluid communication. Thus, the education reform is believed to be a key-determinant for new developments in English language teaching

English teaching in Algeria is often criticised on the grounds that it has been slow to progress. Indeed, although the English language is studied during seven years starting from the age of eleven and continuing up until graduation from secondary schools at the age of eighteen and that the primary objective of the syllabus prescribed by the Algerian Ministry of Education is to stress the importance of developing pupils' ability to use English for the purpose of oral communication, the Algerian learners continue to experience difficulty in using the language for purposeful communication.

Therefore, as the calls for a more communicative approach increase, there has been much debate with regard to the best way to achieve this objective and thus to improve the speaking ability of Algerian learners, which represents the one of ultimate target of the Ministry of Education. The latter has, since 2003, implemented the Competency Based Approach (CBA) methodology on a multi-level scale and part of this educational reform concerns EFL teaching and learning.

The Speaking Skill in the Algerian EFL classes remains an elusive challenge for many teachers. EFL pupils need to learn how to speak in order to be fully proficient in the target language. The teaching and learning of the speaking skill encompasses the whole language teaching process. Without a real

assessment in oral proficiency, it is extremely difficult to gauge how the pupils are progressing with their studies. Along with outlining the main elements in language teaching and how they are applied to EFL classrooms, this research is twofold:

First, it identifies the way in which the teaching of the speaking skill has been administered in the EFL classrooms under the CBA since the 2003 educational reform in education; then it investigates the Algerian EFL teachers' perceptions of the practical constraints inherent to the implementation of this communicative skill in the EFL classrooms which systematically affect their teaching and the preparation of the secondary school pupils to the BAC examination.

Second, it identifies EFL third year secondary school pupils' learning needs in oral expression, and more importantly the main reasons which lie behind their poor achievement in the speaking skill after seven years of English learning, by isolating one possible cause: their lack of exposure to the language outside classrooms. The researcher will also discuss what steps can be taken to create meaningful and effective speaking evaluation for an EFL classroom.

The teaching of the speaking skill has become one of the most important issues in language teaching and learning since the speaking ability has become more central in EFL language teaching with the advent of Communicative Language Teaching. The ability to communicate in the target language can be used as a lever to motivate the learners as they will be speakers of that language. This is more likely to be accomplished when the teaching is tied to the instructional goals, i.e., language outcomes of the syllabus. However, there are many difficulties involved in the construction and administration of any speaking task. This forms the core of the present research study, which tries to investigate the following research questions:

1. How do Algerian secondary school teachers handle the speaking skill under the CBA?

2. What are the difficulties they face when teaching the speaking skill under the CBA?

3. How do Algerian 3rd year secondary school pupils respond to learning to speak under the CBA?

4. What is the pedagogical change that can be brought to improve the teaching of the speaking skill under the CBA in Algerian secondary school EFL classrooms?

The investigation throughout this work will attempt to provide arguments for the following research hypotheses:

1. Many Algerian EFL teachers do not really understand the concept of competency based teaching; therefore, deliver materials in the traditional way focusing on reading and writing.

2. Limited teacher training in the use of the CBA, overloaded classes, and examination system neglecting oral skills are among the major difficulties that teachers have to cope with.

3. There is lack of interest of third year EFL secondary school pupils in learning to speak.

4. To enhance the effectiveness of teaching the speaking skill; the curriculum, teaching and evaluation need to be developed in a concordant way within the framework of the CBA.

In order to find out to which extent these hypotheses are true, the researcher has opted for a certain methodology to evaluate the teaching of the speaking skill in the Algerian EFL classrooms. A case study was chosen to investigate a randomly selected sample of 150 third year EFL secondary school pupils from the scientific stream, and ten EFL teachers using a mixed-methods approach which includes the use of both quantitative and qualitative approaches for the sake of collecting data. Three research

instruments have been utilized in order to triangulate the results including classroom observation conducted by the researcher in the studied setting, a questionnaire administered to the pupils and a structured interview prepared for the teacher.

This research work is composed of five interrelated chapters that are linked to enlighten the reader on this work.

Chapter one provides a theoretical overview of the speaking skill, its importance, its characteristics as well as the speaking skill in the different English language teaching methods. It tackles the teaching of the speaking skill in EFL classrooms, by defining the key concept related to both its teaching and learning. It also attempts to provide a theoretical basis on which the teaching/learning of the speaking skill is based on. This theoretical background attempts to explain how speaking is viewed in the field of foreign language teaching and the crucial role that it plays in language learning. It as well cites the different approaches to its teaching, and finally demonstrates the different techniques and strategies that contribute to the acquisition of oral language proficiency.

Chapter two describes the educational context of English language teaching (ELT) with reference to 3rd year secondary school learners as well as exposing the actual objectives and perspectives of teaching English in Algeria, in the light of the newly adopted reform. It first gives an overview of the Algerian educational system since its independence, it describes the EFL teaching/learning situation in the Algerian secondary school, explains how speaking is taught there and presents the syllabus used. It at the same time examines the many contextual variables shaping the teaching of ELT in general and speaking in particular, namely teachers" and learners" attitudes to the speaking skill, the current employed teaching approach, and the teaching constraints inhibiting learning oral proficiency.

Chapter three sheds light on the data collection procedures undertaken to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses. Indeed, it is targeted towards the description of the research design i.e., case study and procedures, i.e., the ways in which the research is conducted, involving the approaches utilized for collecting data (a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods), the setting of the study, the research instruments of data collection (classroom observation, students' questionnaire and teacher's interview), sampling techniques. The third chapter includes a well organised outline of what the investigator does from defining the research problem to the presentation of the sampling population and the research instruments used to collect data.

Chapter four is devoted to the analysis of the results obtained from the different research tools. In the previous chapter the researcher has described the design of the present research work which involved the selection of a number of data collection techniques, namely classroom observation, questionnaire and interview. The main results obtained from the three data collection methods are going to be systematically analysed, discussed and interpreted in this chapter in an attempt to answer the research questions. This chapter, therefore, stands for the practical part of the study which involves the combined use of both quantitative and qualitative data analysis techniques. It is expected then that results of this investigative study would hopefully provide a thorough diagnosis of the problem under study and would also pave the way to a better testing of research hypothesis so as to propose alternative remedies to the present way of teaching speaking.

Chapter five in its turn constitutes the closing phase of our investigation, as it is mainly concerned with proposing alternative recommendations to deal with the learners' failure to express themselves in correct English. It simply tries to suggest what exactly learners need to "know" in terms of learning and communicative strategies to be able to use the language well enough for some

real world purposes. It thus, moves the focus to the reconsideration of the teachers and learners roles within the reforms that have occurred at national and international levels.

Chapter One
Literature Review on the Speaking Skill

1.1 Introduction

The English language is the most widely used language in the world; and the need of English for communicative purposes will continually grow in the next years as it is a lingua franca[1] in different domains, contexts and fields of research. Soares 2011 states that 400 million people speak English as their first language, 1 billion people speak it as their second language and this number will continue to grow in the next years. The speaking skill or the oral performance in the field of education and language learning is one of the productive skills to be developed by the FL learners to achieve communicative purposes.

This chapter will shed some light on one of the most essential language learning skill which is the speaking skill for it is by the mastery of it that learners can become speakers of that language. The speaking skill can help learners to better understand the language and to be good communicators in the target language. The speaking skill is a crucial issue of concern in every FL classroom. Traditionally, speaking was taught as drills to promote learners speaking performance. However, currently they are recognized as an integral part of the language learning process that should go hand in hand with the other skills.

This first part of the present research will deal first with what is meant by the speaking skill; trying to give a clear definition of what is meant by the speaking skill as this term has been frequently interchanged with other terms such as oral performance, communicative abilities or even communicative performance to refer to the speaking skill in EFL classrooms. In addition to this, it will focus on the importance and nature of speaking in EFL classrooms. In fact, the speaking skill should be systematized into the teaching /learning process; thus teachers in EFL classrooms should be clear about the purpose in integrating the speaking skill. On the other hand, this chapter will give an overview about the

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[1] Lingua franca – Common means of communication. If two persons from two different countries speaking different languages, they would probably speak English to each other. By doing so, English becomes a lingua franca, since it is native to none of the involved persons.

teaching of the speaking skill throughout the different teaching methods mainly the newly introduced teaching approach to determine the process of the teaching of that skill within the framework of the CBA as it does not take place in a vacuum, and then many factors have implications when teaching the speaking skill.

1.2 The Speaking Skill

Speaking is one of the four language skills namely reading, writing, listening, and speaking, and the most neglected skill in language teaching, though success in mastering a foreign language is shown through the ability to speak that language. Nevertheless, the speaking skill is not a simple skill as it combines different kinds of knowledge of the target language. Luoma (2004: 1) argues that "speaking in a foreign language is very difficult and competence in speaking takes a Long time to develop."

In a world dominated by communication, the importance of mastering the speaking skill is of no doubt. Ur states that one of the main reasons of the importance of the speaking skill is that:

> . . . of all the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), speaking seems intuitively the most important: people who know the language are referred to as "speakers" of that language, as if speaking included all other kinds of knowing; and many if not most foreign language learners are primarily interested in learning to speak.

(Ur, 1996:120)

In the same respect Nunan (2003: 48) defines it as the productive oral skill and it consists of producing systematic verbal utterances to convey meaning. Indeed, whatever the reason is when learning a foreign language, the major motivation to learn it is to be able to speak with speakers of that language. When learning a new or foreign language the learners are judged according to

their abilities to interact in the target language thus mastering the speaking skill is important to show one's ability to speak comprehensively and fluently. In relation to our study, it is then necessary to know and define what is the speaking skill and in which form it is presented. In The following two sub sections clear definitions of the speaking skill will be discussed in accordance with the educational field of learning a foreign language as well as the nature of the speaking skill will be presented.

1.2.1 Definition of the Speaking Skill

The speaking skill has been defined differently and in different contexts, and it is often discussed, in a context of public speaking. However, the Speaking skill that we are referring to in this study is much more than that.

The emergence of oral production as an object of study is justified by a turning point in the teaching and learning methods of foreign languages which gave a priority to productive skills and communication. But how can the speaking skill be defined?

There are many definitions of the speaking skill presented by different scholars. According to the Oxford Dictionary (2009: 414), speaking is "the action of conveying information or expressing one's thoughts and feelings in spoken languages."

Thus, speaking is seen as an act of focusing on communication to achieve specific purposes, e.g. to get information, etc., or is described in terms of its basic competences used in daily communication such as, giving directions, expressing feelings etc.

In addition to that it has also been described by many experts as an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing and receiving and processing information. (Brown, 1994; Burns & Joyce, 1997). Sharing the same viewpoint, Florez (1999:1) added that speaking is an

"interactive process, which consists of 3 main stages "producing, receiving and processing information."

Actually communication and speaking are considered as an interactive process in which individuals alternate in their roles as speakers and listeners and use both verbal and non-verbal means to reach their communicative goals.

Richards and Renandya (2002: 204) state that: "effective oral communication requires the ability to use the language appropriately in social interactions that involves not only verbal communication". Chaney (1998:13), for example, defines speaking as: "…. the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal or non verbal symbols in a variety of contexts".

Indeed, non verbal features such as gestures, body language, and expressions are needed in conveying messages without any verbal speech. Brown (2007: 237) states that: "…. in any social interactive communication it is not what you say that is important but how you say it using body language, gestures, eye contact, ………. and other nonverbal messages."

One should not forget that speaking depends on the context or the situation in which it is taking place. Some parameters have to be taken into account when two individuals or more are involved in a conversation. The form and meaning of the communication act are dependent on the context in which it occurs, including the participants themselves, their collective experiences, the physical environment, and the purposes for speaking; it is often spontaneous, open-ended, and evolving. (Brown, 1994; Burns & Joyce, 1997).

This means that when referring to the Context in which a conversation is taking place it requires from us to "not only know how to produce specific points of language such as grammar, pronunciation, or vocabulary seen as linguistic competence but also that they understand when, where, why and in what ways to produce language, Sociolinguistic competence" (Hedge, 2000: 261). Besides, it is

"a skill by which they [people] are judged while first impressions are being formed" (idem)

From the definitions given above it can be concluded that there are different concepts of speaking i.e. speaking as an action, a process and a skill. In this study, the term speaking will be used to refer to a skill related to language teaching and learning. In this light, Nunan (2003: 48) puts it that "speaking is the productive oral skill. It consists of producing systematic verbal utterance to convey meaning".

Also considering speaking as a skill, Bygate (1987: 3) investigates the distinction between knowledge and skill in speaking lesson, which he considers as crucial in the teaching of speaking, indeed to be a good learner of speaking, studying knowledge of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, intonation, etc. is not enough but the skill to use this knowledge to communicate successfully is of no doubt very important.

Thus, the speaking skill is related to communication, whether to transfer or to get information from other people in a real life situation, to be able to use the language to express meaning in an accurate and fluent way making use of all the different micro skills that constitute the language.

Therefore, whenever the terms speaking skills and teaching speaking skills are mentioned in this thesis, they refer to all the above-listed aspects. The speaking skill is the art of communication and one of the four skills, which must be mastered in learning foreign languages.

Consistent with this view, is Nunan‟s description of what teaching speaking involves. According to him, to teach speaking means to teach language learners to:

- Produce the English speech sounds and sound patterns

- Use word and sentence stress, intonation patterns and the rhythm of the second language.

- Select appropriate words and sentences according to the proper social setting, audience, situation and subject matter.

- Organize their thoughts in a meaningful and logical sequence.

- Use language as a means of expressing values and judgments.

- Use the language quickly and confidently with few unnatural pauses, which is called as fluency.

(Nunan 2003: 265)

1.2.2 Speaking Sub Skills

Human beings acquire the ability to speak before going to any learning institution. Therefore, the oral communication, obviously, always precedes the writing skill. Children learn how to speak the mother tongue well before learning how to write and have a good control of the oral skill before even going to school. A term defined by Krashen and Terrell in 1983 as "language acquisition" in opposition to "language learning". The former refers to the natural way to develop linguistic ability which is realized through communication. This means that people are not necessarily aware that they are acquiring language.

On the other hand, in language education, "language learning" is defined as the formal knowledge of a language. Learning is therefore conscious and refers to "explicit knowledge of rules" (Krashen and Terrell, 1983: 26).

Therefore, we consider that foreign language learners should be confronted immediately with the oral language and that from the beginning of their learning so that they can be able to communicate orally and thus to acquire an oral competence of the target language.

In EFL, oral skills learning always formed part of the practices of teaching: reading aloud, conversation, dialog between learners, drills, etc. However the practice of oral teaching still seeks a true place in the teaching and learning context of EFL. In fact, teachers still pain to regard the teaching of the speaking skill as object of study of whole share. It is perhaps the reason for which it has been more the subject of research these last years.

In this research, we will try to answer a certain number of related questions to the introduction of the teaching of the speaking skill in EFL classrooms of language learning and to determine the nature of the spoken language. For instance and according to Nunan (1989: 32) successful oral communication involves:

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

- mastery of stress, rhythm, intonation patterns;

- an acceptable degree of fluency;

- transactional and interpersonal skills;

- skills in taking short and long speaking turns;

- skills in the management of interaction;

- skills in negotiating meaning;

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

- skills in knowing about and negotiating purposes for conversations;

- using appropriate conversational formulae and fillers.

The learners begin either with the smallest units of language or with the larger parts of language; with the macro-skills or the micro skills. These two approaches are called bottom-up or top-down approach to speaking; the first means learning for example individual sounds, and moving through the mastery of words and sentences to discourse. The top-down approach, on the other hand, proposes that the learners start with bigger or larger units, which are embedded in meaningful contexts, and use their knowledge of the contexts to comprehend and use the smaller language elements correctly.

Brown (2001: 271) explains that, micro skills are very important. One implication is the importance of focusing on both forms and function of the language. He also mentions that the pieces of language should be given attention as they may form the whole. Furthermore he lists micro skills of oral communication as:

- Use an adequate number of lexical units (words) in order to accomplish pragmatic purpose;

- Produce fluent speech at different rates of delivery;

- Use grammatical word classes (nouns, verbs, etc), system (e.g. tense, agreement, and plural form), word order, patterns, rules, and elliptical forms;

- Produce speech in natural constituent in appropriate phrases, pause groups, breath groups, and sentences;

- Express a particular meaning in different grammatical forms;

- Accomplish appropriately communicative functions according to the situation, participants and goals;

- Use appropriate registers, implicative, pragmatic conventions, and other sociolinguistics features in face to face conversations;

- Convey links and connections between events and communicate such relations as main idea, supporting idea, new information, given information, generalization, and exemplification;

- Use facial features, body languages, and other non verbal features along with verbal language to convey meanings;

- Develop and use a battery of speaking strategies such as emphasizing key words, rephrasing, providing a context for interpreting the meaning of words, appealing for help, and accurately assessing how well interlocutor is understanding you.

1.3 The Importance of Speaking

In the traditional approaches the emphasis was mainly on reading comprehension and written production. The Grammar-Translation method is one example, Richards and Rodgers (2001) mention that reading and writing are the essential skills to be focused on however, little or no attention is paid to the skill of speaking and listening.

The major goal of all English language teaching should be to give learners the ability to use English effectively, accurately in communication (Davies & Pearse, 1998).In the communicative approach, speaking was given more importance since oral communication involves speech where learners are expected to interact verbally with other people. Moreover, the teachers' talk will be reduced; that is to say learners are supported to talk more in the classroom. Ur declares also that people who know a language are referred to as "speakers" of that language, as if speaking included all other kinds of knowing.

Foreign language learners give the speaking skill priority in their learning because if they are fluent speakers in the target language then they will be considered as they have mastered the other skills. Moreover, the main

question often given to foreign language learners is "do you speak English?" but not "do you write English?" We understand that most of people take speaking and knowing a language as synonyms.

Celce-Murcia (2001: 103) argues that for most people the ability to speak a language is synonymous with knowing that language since speech is the most basic means of human communication.

The importance of speaking is revealed with the integration of the other language skills. For instance, learners' vocabulary and grammar can be improved by speaking and then improving their writing skill. Furthermore, the speaking skill, helps the learners to express their personal feeling, emotions, opinions or ideas; tell stories; inform or explain; request; converse and discuss i.e. through speaking, we can display the different functions of language.

Mastering a language and being able to communicate orally in English is very important in real life as well if we consider that many companies and organizations look for people who speak English very well for the purpose of communicating with other people around the world. So, speakers of foreign languages have more opportunities to get jobs .

Baker and Westrup (2003: 05) support that

> …..a student who can speak English well may have greater chance for further education, of finding employment and gaining promotion.

In other words the ability to interact orally in English offers many benefits in today's business world as a means to communicate with people on the other part of the world. Thus, the ability to communicate appropriately in English is important, particularly for those who want to carry on higher studies or are willing to commit to international business as it is the International language of today's modern world.

1.4 Speaking and Listening

Speaking and listening are two essential and interrelated skills in language learning, yet in which many learners receive little or no instruction (Purdy, 1984: 3). So, part of being a proficient speaker is the ability to understand the oral language so that the responses will be accurate. The listening comprehension has to be treated as an integral part of the speaking skill. Considering the learners using the target language outside the classroom and being exposed to natural speech. And by exposing learners to spoken discourse features it facilitates their oral production and helps them sound normal in their use of the foreign language.

Speaking is rarely carried out in isolation, as put by Redmond and Vrchota (2007:120) "speakers are at the mercy of listeners." According to Foster and Sarett "the able speaker is a good listener" which denote a parallel growth of the two skills and that speaking and listening are positively correlated.

Moreover, Hargie (2006:268) describes listening as the ability to perceive and process information presented orally. Thus, listening skill involves a list of processes of perception, interpretation, evaluation, retaining, recalling, and reaction to the speakers (Ibid.)

Therefore, for communication to occur, both a speaker and a listener must take parts in it through interacting and negotiating verbally. The speaker produces comprehensible output, and the listener pays attention and then tries to process these output effectively. Speaking and listening are important for learners for a number of reasons:

- Spoken language is at the heart of much human interaction, at home at work and in society;
- Speaking and listening skills are important in all contexts in which learning takes place;

- Good speaking and listening skills are a key aspect of employability: getting a job, maintaining employment and progressing at work;
- Learners need to use and develop their speaking and listening skills to maximize learning gains.

(Lee, 2004)

To sum up, listening will not occur in isolation there must be a speech to listen to and it is as important as the speaking skill because to communicate face to face has to be developed through time and in pairs or more.

1.5 Speaking and Writing

Writing and speaking are two essential skills for learners to develop their language communicatively. However, some claim that written language is worth more than spoken language since it is a more proper form, while some people have the opinion that written language is a reflection of spoken language, (Cushing, 2002: 15).   The speaker's sentences also cannot be as long or as complex as in writing. Speaking and writing are productive skills while they are completely different from each other.

There are many differences between the processes of speaking and writing. Spoken language is more spontaneous, during conversations; responses are unplanned and spontaneous, producing language which reflects this (Foster et al., 2000: 368). Whereas writing is   more   ordered. Unlike speech, writing requires systematic instruction and practice. Thus, Writing is not simply speech written down on paper.

Here are some of the differences between speaking and writing that can be analyzed in terms of seven points of contrast:

- *Speaking 1* Speech is time-bound, dynamic. It is part of an interaction in which both participants are usually present, and the speaker has a particular addressee (or several addressees) in mind.

- *Writing 1* Writing is space-bound, static, permanent. It is often the result of a situation in which the writer is usually distant from the reader, and often does not know who the reader is going to be.

- *Speaking 2* The spontaneity and speed of most speech exchanges make it difficult to engage in complex advance planning. The pressure to think while talking promotes looser construction, repetition, rephrasing, and comment clauses ('you know', 'mind you', 'as it were'). Intonation and pause divide long utterances into manageable chunks, but sentence boundaries are often unclear.

- *Writing 2* Writing allows repeated reading and close analysis, and promotes the development of careful organization and compact expression, with often intricate sentence structure. Units of discourse (sentences, paragraphs) are usually easy to identify through punctuation and layout.

- *Speaking 3* Because participants are typically in face- to-face interaction, they can rely on such extra linguistic clues as facial expression and gesture to aid meaning (feedback). The lexicon of speech is often characteristically vague, using words which refer directly to the situation (expression, such as 'that one', 'in here', 'right now').

- *Writing 3* Lack of visual contact means that participants cannot rely on context to make their meaning clear; nor is there any immediate feedback. Writers must also anticipate the effects of the time-lag between production and reception, and the problems posed by having their language read and interpreted by many recipients in diverse settings.

- *Speaking 4* Unique features of speech include most of the prosody. The many nuances of intonation loudness, tempo, rhythm, and other tones of voice cannot be written down with much efficiency.

- *Writing 4* Unique features of writing include pages, lines, capitalization, spatial organization and several aspects of punctuation. Only a few graphic conventions relate to prosody, such as question marks and

underlining for emphasis. Several written genres (e.g. timetables, graphs, complex formulae) cannot be read aloud efficiently, but have to be assimilated visually.

- *Speaking 5* Many words and constructions are characteristic of (especially informal) speech. Lengthy coordinate sentences are normal, and are often of considerable complexity. Nonsense vocabulary is not usually written, and may have no standard spelling ('whatchamacallit'). Obscenity may be replaced by graphic euphemism (f ***). Slang and grammatical informality, such as contracted forms (isn't, he's) may be frowned upon.

- *Writing 5* Some words and constructions are characteristic of writing, such as multiple instances of subordination in the same sentence, elaborately balanced syntactic patterns, and the long (often multi-page) sentences found in some legal documents. Certain items of vocabulary are never spoken, such as the longer names of chemical compounds.

- *Speaking 6* Speech is very suited to social or 'phatic' functions, such as passing the time of day, or any situation where casual and unplanned discourse is desirable. It is also good at expressing social relationships, and personal opinions and attitudes, due to the vast range of nuances which can be expressed by the prosody and accompanying non-verbal features.

- *Writing 6* Writing is very suited to the recording of facts and the communication of ideas, and to tasks of memory and learning. Written records are easier to keep and scan; tables demonstrate relationships between things; notes and lists provide mnemonics; and text can be read at speeds which suit a person's ability to learn.

- *Speaking 7* There is an opportunity to rethink an utterance while it is in progress (starting again, adding a qualification). However, errors, once spoken, cannot be withdrawn; the speaker must live with the consequences, interruptions and overlapping speech are normal and highly audible.

- *Writing 7* Errors and other perceived inadequacies in our writing can be eliminated in later drafts without the reader ever knowing they were there. Interruptions, if they have occurred while writing, are also invisible in the final product.

Pearson (2005: 5)

Understanding the differences; between speaking and writing helps to overcome the problems with traditional approaches to teaching speaking, and then, planning instruction in the light of these distinctions. Basically, spoken discourse is different form written discourse in three main parameters: planning, contextualization and formality. Speech is more commonly unplanned, contextualized and informal than writing. (Nunan, 1989: 26)

Therefore, though speaking and writing are productive skills, they are completely different from each other. According to Bygate (1987:10-11) spoken language is more spontaneous, chaos, and disorder form. It may be informal, short and clear sentence, whereas writing is more ordered and coherent structures.

1.6 Characteristics of Speaking Performance

In recent teaching context, a lot of attention has been paid to design activities which focus more on tasks that are balanced between the need to achieve   fluency and accuracy. These criteria are also based upon in the assessment of the oral skills. Andryani (2012: 2) describes speaking skill as the ability to speak the target language to communicate with others and it consists of many sub-skills such as: accuracy, fluency, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and comprehensibility.

In the communicative approach, fluency and accuracy are of the main characteristics of this approach, and they are seen as complementary in accomplishing a given task. Many questions have been raised about the role of

accuracy in CLT theory. Richards and Rodgers (2001: 157) mention that "fluency and acceptable language is the primary goal: Accuracy is not judged in the abstract but in context",

In the same line of thoughts Hedge (2000: 61) makes the important point that "The communicative approach somehow excuses teachers and learners from a consideration of how to develop high levels of accuracy in the use of grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary."

In addition to that and as Canale (1983:5) notes:

> communicative competence refers to both knowledge and skill in using this knowledge when interacting in actual communication. Knowledge refers here to what one knows (consciously or unconsciously) about the language and about other aspects of communicative language use; skill refers to how well once can perform this knowledge in actual communication.

Then, for successful communication, EFL Learners should develop oral abilities in different context dependent trying to perform through classroom speaking activities; and this is an obvious point since the emphasis of CLT is on the communicative process, rather than language forms. However, simultaneously learners should know the language system and be able to be accurate in their speaking tasks. (Bizzell, 1989).

Littlewood (1989) summarizes the purposes of communicative activities under the following four rubrics:

- Communicative activities improve motivation. The more learners see their classroom learning related to their objectives the more their motivation increase.
- Communicative activities allow natural learning as many aspect of language learning can happen only through natural process.

- Communicative activities can create a context which supports learning. It creates positive personal relationships among the learners or the learners and the teacher.
- Communicative activities can be adapted to suit the learners' levels of communicative ability.

The following sections are divided into the different sub skills in performing oral communication.

1.6.1 Fluency

Fluency is defined as being able to speak or write quickly or easily in a given language. And according to the oxford English dictionary it comes from the Latin word *fluentem* meaning "to flow."

Fluency is the first feature by which foreign language learners are evaluated in an oral interaction. The definition of the term fluency can be very complex, Lennon (1990), as an example, distinguishes between the term's broad and narrow sense of fluency. In its broad meaning, it has been defined as

> … the ability to express oneself intelligibly reasonably, accurately and without too much hesitation, otherwise the communication will break down because listeners will lose their interest.

(Hughes 2002:113)

According to Byrne (1986:9), fluency can be broken down into quantifiable factors such as: words per minute; repetitions; self-corrections; filled pauses; etc. in the same line of thoughts, Ellis (2003: 342) provides that "fluency is the extent to which the language produced in performing a task manifests pausing, hesitation, or reformulation".

Thornbury, (2005) argues that speed and pause are important factors in fluency, because speakers need to take breath. Thus, though foreign

language learners refer to fluency as the ability to speak fast and in a rapid speech, pausing is according to Thornbury a necessity. In addition to that, native speakers also pause from time to time to make the interlocutors grasp what they said. However, if foreign language learners face difficulties in speaking at the same rate, he suggests what is called "production strategies", which is the ability to fill the pauses. The most common pause fillers are "uh" and "um", vagueness expressions such as "to sum up" and "I mean".

To achieve fluency, the teachers then should train learners to use their personal language freely to express their own ideas and then avoid imitations of a model of some kind (Hughes 2002:113).

Hedge Tricia (2000: 54) adds also that

> The term fluency relates to the production and it is
> normally reserved for speech. It is the ability to link
> units of speech together with facility and without strain
> or inappropriate slowness, or undue hesitation.

Hughes (2002) supports also that fluency and coherence refer to the ability to speak in a normal level of continuity, rate and effort in addition to link the ideas together in a coherent way. Speech rate and speech continuity are the key indicators of coherence.

Fluency can be defined as the ability to speak fluently and accurately. Fluency in speaking is the   aim of many language   learners. Fluency is an important part of speaking and includes the following:

• The ability to use language spontaneously.

• The ability to listen and comprehend spontaneously.

• The ability to respond spontaneously.

• The ability to compensate for any lack in any of the above.

(Graham 2001)

As such fluency activities seek to improve the speed and efficiency with which learners access their language system knowledge. It entails getting learners to use language they already know. It entails getting learners to use language that they are already well familiar with. Fluency work entails getting language to become "automatic". Fluency can be described according to the following levels from the inability to speak to an effortless conversation:

- Speech is so halting and fragmentary that conversation is virtually impossible.
- Speech is very slow and uneven except for short or routine sentences
- Speech is frequently hesitant, with some unevenness caused rephrasing and grouping for words
- Speech is occasionally hesitant, with some unevenness caused by rephrasing and grouping for words.
- Speech is effortless and smooth, but perceptible now native in speed and unevenness
- Speech or all professional and general topics as effortless and smooth as a native speaker's.

Thornbury (2000)

1.6.2 Accuracy

Accuracy refers to the use of correct forms where utterances do not contain errors affecting the phonological, syntactic, and semantic or discourse features of a language (Bryne, 1988). It refers to the speaker ability to produce grammatically correct sentences.

Skehan (1996 b: 23 cited in Ellis and Barkhuizen 2005: 139) defines accuracy as referring "to how well the target language is produced in relation to

the rule system of the target language." Therefore, learners should focus on a number of things in their production of the spoken language, mainly, the grammatical structure, and vocabulary and apply them in oral interactions.

Accuracy as well as fluency are necessary for successful communication. As Ebsworth (1998) says,

> A steady stream of speech which is highly inaccurate in vocabulary,   syntax, or pronunciation could be so hard to understand as to violate an essential aspect of fluency being comprehensible. On the other hand, it is   possible for the speaker to be halting but accurate... Sentence level grammatical accuracy that violates principles of discourse and appropriateness is also possible, but such language would not be truly accurate in following the communicative rules of the target language.

Thus, it may not be too much that one can be able to communicate in the target language in a fluent way and being comfortable using the language and can be reasonably understood by other speakers. However, this does not mean that he/ she is free of errors in his/her communication, though they do not obstruct the comprehension of the message. Indeed, just because a speaker focuses on accuracy does not mean they will be capable of producing effective communication.

Accuracy refers to the correctness of the language being produced. Thus, the learners should have a wide range of grammatical structures; the learners should also be able to form complex structures and sentences as well as long accurate sentences. Paying attention to correctness and completeness of language form is of more importance for oral proficiency.

1.6.2.1 Pronunciation

Pronunciation is a crucial speaking sub-skill and by far the departure point for any oral interaction since the success of any communication process is closely tied to the mastery of the sound system.

The way of speaking the language is called pronunciation. Pronunciation refers to the way a word or a language is usually spoken. It is the way for learners' to produce clearer language when they speak. Hornby (1984:670) explains that, "pronunciation is a way in which a language is spoken, person's way of speaking a language or words of a language". Redmond and Vrchota (2007: 104) argue that

> It is imperative that you use the correct word in the correct instance and with the correct pronunciation. Pronunciation means to say words in ways that are generally accepted or understood.

Pronunciation refers to the way a word or a language is usually spoken. Pronunciation is the way for students to produce clearer language when they speak. It deals with the phonological process that refers to the component of a grammar made up of the elements and principles that determine how sounds vary and pattern in a language. There are two features of pronunciation; phonemes and supra segmental features (see 1.6.3). A speaker who constantly mispronounces a range of phonemes can be extremely difficult for a speaker from another language community to understand.

Therefore, learners should practice pronunciation overall. They should be aware of the different sounds and their features. They have also to be aware of where the words should be stressed, when to use rising intonation and when to use a falling one. However, if the pronunciation is not correct, the speakers then will not be understood and therefore accuracy is not achieved.

1.6.2.2 Vocabulary

In Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary (Hornby, 1984:461)

> vocabulary is defined as the total number of words in a
> language, the words known to a person and a list of words
> with their meanings, especially at the back of a book used
> for teaching a foreign language.

Achieving accuracy in terms of vocabulary refers to the appropriate selection of words during speaking. Learners often find difficulties when they try to express what they want to say, they lack the appropriate vocabulary, therefore its development must be an important and ongoing part of classroom learning.

Laflamme (1997 in Brynildssen, 2000) offers several key principles that should guide the creation and implementation of a comprehensive vocabulary development for foreign language learners.

1. Teachers must offer direct instruction of techniques or procedures for developing a broad and varied vocabulary. This instruction can be provided both formally through the language arts programme, and informally through various classroom interactions-such as story time-with learners.

2. New vocabulary terms must be connected to learners' previous knowledge and experiences. If learners are unable to contextualize new words by attaching them to words and concepts they already understand, the words will likely have little meaning to them. And as Ediger (1999: 2) points out, "if meaning is lacking, the chances are, pupils will memorize terms and concepts, for testing purposes only or largely".

3. Learners should be able to contextualize the vocabulary terms they have learned and use them in society (Ediger, 1999: 7). In order for learners to do this successfully, they must first learn to become comfortable using

these words in the classroom. Learners should be required or encouraged to incorporate new vocabulary terms into their oral and written reports and presentations.

4. Practice and repetition are important methods by which learners can become familiar with new words and understand how they may be used correctly (Laflamme, 1997). Learners should be frequently exposed to the same words through practice exercises, classroom use, and testing.

5. Teachers should model an enthusiasm for and curiosity about new words through their own behaviors and attitudes. Teachers who are enthusiastic about vocabulary development will automatically look for "teachable moments" throughout the day, pointing out interesting words as they crop up in texts, stories, or conversation; asking learners to explore alternative ways of expressing concepts; and helping identify colorful, descriptive ways of speaking and writing.

6. Schools, teachers, and learners must be committed to vocabulary development over the long term. The teaching of vocabulary must be an interdisciplinary project, integrated into the curriculum at every level.

1.6.2.3 Grammar

The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2001:1437) defines grammar as "the rules by which words change their forms and combine into sentences". grammar tells how language works in communicating ideas. Ideas are generally expressed in sentences. Sentences are made by grouping and arranging words. Therefore, grammar is also the study of words in sentences.

Grammar are the rules of a language. It is a description of the rules for forming sentences, including an account of the meanings that these forms convey (Thornbury, 1999:13). In foreign language learning accurate use of the language

structures is a key part though the grammar of speech differs of that of writing, this is why it is important to teach grammar in a spoken context rather than a written one as it is always useful for learners to see how language works in sentences or paragraphs in a spoken context; which will facilitate their understanding of the language.

According to that, Mumford (2008: 1) defines Spoken Grammar '…as those aspects of English which are almost always associated with the spoken language or its written representation, as recorded in the new corpus based grammars…'

Carter and McCarthy (1995:141) argue that if we aim to foster speaking skills then we need to focus on spoken language and not the written form. They add that it would be methodologically unsound to base spoken instruction on the written form.

Thornbury (2005 cited in Saci 2013) lists the following features of spoken grammar. First, the clause is the basic unit of construction, and clauses are usually added (co-ordinate). Also, direct speech is favoured, a lot of ellipsis and many question tags as well. Another key features of spoken grammar are the use of head- body- tail construction, and the use of performance effects (hesitation, repeats, false starts, incompletion, syntactic blends).

1.6.3 Supra-Segmental Features

The study of phonological features applied to groups larger than the single segment, such as the syllable or the word, are known as supra-segmental features. Variations in length are also usually considered to be supra-segmental features, although they can affect single segments as well as whole syllables. All of the supra-segmental features are characterized by the fact that they must be described in relation to other items in the same utterance.

1.6.3.1 Word and Sentence Stress

Word and sentence stress: "Word stress" relates to the stress given to one syllable within a word. "Sentence stress" relates to the stress that is given to the key words in a sentence: the words that communicate the sentence' main meaning. In phonetics, it is the intensity given to a syllable of speech by special effort in utterance, resulting in relative loudness. This emphasis in pronunciation may be merely phonetic (*i.e.,* noticeable to the listener, but not meaningful), as it is in French, where it occurs regularly at the end of a word or phrase; or it may serve to distinguish meanings, as in English, in which, for example, stress differentiates the noun from the verb in the word "permit." (Britannica)

1.6.3.2 Intonation

Intonation refers to the music of a certain language; this basically means according to the Cambridge dictionary how a person's voice falls and rises in speech, etc. In some languages, especially the English language, intonation carries the meaning of a particular phrase or sentence. When looking at questions tags for example at the end of the sentence. This may show that the speaker is looking for agreement.

- e.g. "I thought that he went to Paris, didn't he?"

  (Didn't he is the question tag.)

When learning English as a foreign language, it is important to understand intonation. Other languages, when compared to English, may probably not have the same degree of intonation; and this may cause problems when learning to speak English. The three main patterns of intonation in English are: falling intonation, rising intonation and fall-rise intonation.

- **Falling intonation**

Falling intonation describes how the voice falls on the final stressed syllable of a phrase or a group of words. A falling intonation is very common in wh-questions.

➢ Where is the nearest bank? ↘

We also use falling intonation when we say something definite, or when we want to be very clear about something:

➢ I think we are completely lost. ↘

- **Rising intonation**

Rising intonation describes how the voice rises at the end of a sentence. Rising intonation is common in yes-no questions:

➢ I hear the Health Centre is expanding. So, is that the new ↗?

- **Fall-rise intonation**

Fall-rise intonation describes how the voice falls and then rises. We use fall-rise intonation at the end of statements when we want to say that we are not sure, or when we may have more to add:

➢ I don't ↘ support any football team at the m↘om↗ent. (But I may change my mind in future).

➢ It rained every day in the first↘ week↗. (But things improved after that).

We use fall-rise intonation with questions, especially when we request information or invite somebody to do or to have something. The intonation pattern makes the questions sound more polite:

➢ Would you like another co↘ff↗ee?

1.6.3.3 Linking of Words

When we speak in English, we join or "link" words to each other. Because of this linking, the words in a sentence do not always sound the same as when we say them individually. Linking is very important in English. When we speak naturally we do not pronounce a word, stop, and then say the next word in the sentence. The pronunciation of a word can change a little when it's part of a phrase or sentence. Fluent speech flows with a rhythm and the words bump into each other.

Linking allows words to be said together more quickly. It is a way of joining the pronunciation of two words so that they are easy to say and flow together smoothly. When we use linking, two things will happen:

- ➢ you will understand other people more easily
- ➢ other people will understand you more easily

In English there are different ways that this happens.

- ➢ **Consonant to vowel linking** - when the first word ends with a consonant sound and the second word begins with a vowel sound.
- ➢ **Vowel to vowel linking** - when certain vowels come next to each other an extra sound is added to make the link smooth.
- ➢ **Linking'r'**In standard British English (RP) the letter 'r' after a vowel sound at the end of word is often not pronounced. However, when the following word begins with a vowel the /r/ sound is pronounced to make a smooth link.

1.6.3.4 Rhythm

English is a very rhythmical language, so that a learner who can maintain the rhythm of the language is more likely to sound both natural and fluent. Rhythm is a combination of stress, intonation, linking and the speed of talking. In a stress-timed language like English, syllables are stressed at roughly regular

intervals. As it is the key words in sentences that are stressed, the words in between get shortened and weakened so that two or three of them together take up to the same amount of time as the single, stressed syllables before and after them. This produces the rhythm, or "beat," of spoken English.

Rhythm is a product of sentence stress and what happens to the words and sounds between the stresses. Unfortunately, learners are often introduced first to written forms and the complexities of spelling which may lead the learners to have particular problems. Teachers should remember to:

- Provide natural models of new target language before introducing the written form.

- Use natural language themselves in the classroom.

- Encourage learners to listen carefully to authentic speech.

- Teach recognition before production.

- Integrate rhythm and other aspects of phonology into grammar, vocabulary and functional language lessons as well as listening and speaking activities.

A number of useful teaching techniques established by Darn, 2010 are listed here, focusing either on rhythm as a whole or on contributing aspects, and divided into recognition and production activities.

> **Recognition**

- Speed dictations (the boys are good / the boy is good / the boy was good).

- Ask learners how many words they hear in a sentence (to practise recognizing word boundaries).

- Ask; "What's the third / fifth / seventh word?" in the sentence.

- Teaching weak forms and contractions at the presentation stage, and highlighting these on the board.

- Authentic listening.

➤ **Production**

- Drills (especially backchaining).

- Physical movement (finger-clicking, clapping, tapping, jumping) in time to the rhythm of the sentence.

- Focus on stress in short dialogues (Can you? Yes, I can).

- Making short dialogues, paying attention to stress and rhythm (How often do you speak English? Once in a while).

- Headlines, notes and memos (build the rhythm with content words, then add the rest).

- Reading aloud (with plenty of rehearsal time).

- Focus on short utterances with distinctive stress and intonation patterns and a specific rhythm (long numbers, 'phone numbers, football results).

- Poems, rhymes and tongue-twisters (limericks are good at higher levels).

- Songs (the rhythm of English lends itself to Rock and Pop Music, while Rap involves fitting words into distinct beat).

1.6.3.5 Phrasing

Phrasing refers to the appropriate use of pauses to show the correct meaning of groups of words. Pausing adds power to your speech. Used well your silences will literally speak louder than your words.

Pausing is one of the most overlooked delivery techniques, it is also the way something is expressed in words: the particular words or the order of words that are used to express something and there are many benefits of using pauses effectively.

> ➤ **help your audience understand you**

Pauses allow you to punctuate your spoken words, giving your listeners clues as to when one phrase, one sentence, or one paragraph ends, and the next begins. Zellner notes that pauses "participate in rendering human communication more intelligible." Zellner also points to research by Grosjean and Deschamps (1975) which shows that "the more complex the communicative task, the greater the number of pauses." She writes:

> In other words, pauses helps to structure the entire utterance for both speaker and listener. By subdividing speech into smaller segments, pauses probably contribute a great deal to the improvement of speech comprehension.

The audience doesn't have the benefit of punctuation, bolding, italics, bullets, and other formatting as in written material. We have to provide that, and pauses are a central way to do it.

> ➤ **help convey emotion**

Cahn shows that, along with other linguistic factors, pauses help to convey emotion. That is, the placement and duration of pauses should differ depending on whether you are conveying sadness, anger, gladness, or some other emotions.

1.7 Teaching Speaking: Methods and Approaches

According to Bailey (2003:48) Speaking is the real-time, productive, aural/oral skill. It is considered to be one of the four macro skills and one of the most important skills necessary for effective communication and language

proficiency. Foreign language teaching was built over years, in contact with linguistics and applied linguistics. These two disciplines allowed researchers and teachers to reflect on practices and methods of teaching languages. Since the focus of the present research is the teaching of the speaking skill, it is important to give a brief overview of the teaching of this macro skill in the different teaching methods.

1.7.1 The Grammar Translation Method

Called the Grammar-Translation Method or the Traditional Method; this method of language teaching was dominant during the 18th and the 19th centuries. It aimed at the teaching of Latin and Greek or the reading and the translation of literary texts in the target foreign language; thus "to read then consisted in being able to develop bridges between the native tongue and the target language by the means of translation" (Cornaire, 1991: 4).

The Grammar-Translation Method is characterized by systematic analysis of grammar, which represents the nucleus of the method. Thus the knowledge of the language is reduced to its grammatical system, as the emphasis was on the written language, rote learning of vocabulary and extensive use of translation in teaching and learning types of activities, as well as a preference for classical literary works (Richards & Rodgers1986). The major objectives of foreign language learning at that time were viewed as the ability to read in the target language. The belief behind the GTM is that a foreign language can be most effectively learned by mastering a set of grammar rules and then applying them in exercises (Stern, 1983).

Besides, the GTM aims at the acquisition of a general culture and the development of the learner's logical powers by giving more importance to literary form than to the meaning of the texts, i.e., the language is not taught with an aim of communication but rather like intercultural disciplines. It put the mastery of the literary writing initially, that method was centred on the writing skill, which put the practice of the oral skills at the edge .Consequently, it leaves little space

to the oral expression and develops writing more. Among the characteristics of this method we note: a solid lexical luggage, and training of grammatical rules.

It is thus the teacher who chooses the literary texts and the exercises related to the topic taught; he/she asks the questions and corrected the errors of the pupils which were not really allowed. It is him/her which holds the knowledge which is in only one direction since pupils are regarded as passive learners who have the role of imitating models and memorizing lists of words by heart. In this method the use of the mother tongue is accepted as it allows explaining the concepts and difficult facts expressed in foreign language.

The focus on the written form of the language rather than the oral one and the use of the learner's native language or mother tongue in teaching foreign languages led to some disappointing results of the Grammar Translation Method. In fact, the inability to generate effective communicative learners in the target language contributed to its disappearance and prepared the advent of other methods in language teaching, like the direct method.

1.7.2 The Direct Method

Actually, the oral production was introduced by the 1910's with the Direct Method which consisted in imitating the learning of the native language. The teacher exposed the pupils to the target language by showing them objects and by naming them in the FL. This method gave a considerable importance to oral skills, but was primarily used to extend the vocabulary with the impossibility of using the Mother Tongue.

It appeared in Germany and France against the principles of the Traditional Method because "the Direct Method refuses the translation, plunges the pupil in a "bath of language" and stresses the oral expression" (Robert, 2002: 121). It sought to meet the needs of the society at that time which did not want a literary language anymore. Puren (1990) considers that the Direct Method implies avoid passing via the Mother Tongue in learning foreign languages. It is

also the first method specific to the teaching of living foreign languages because it was interested in communicative needs.

This method refuses any use of the Mother Tongue and it privileges the oral practice of the foreign language in the classroom where the teacher presents and works directly without passing by the native tongue, the course is primarily oral and the stress is laid on pronunciation. Indeed, and contrary to the Traditional Method, it stresses the teaching of foreign words and insists on the explanations and learning of vocabulary which are done using objects or pictures, without any translation in the Mother Tongue. Learners are fully exposed to the target language in which they must carry out their own reflections. This method privileges conversation. It makes it possible to set up supports other than books, in the process of learning foreign languages.

Through "vocabulary training", the teacher explains the vocabulary in the context either by the pictures, by giving concrete examples or by gestures; it is necessary to take concrete words known by the pupils or that they can easily replace them. The majority of the texts of the textbook at that time were on daily life. The teacher avoids using translation, he teaches vocabulary starting from the real or illustrated objects. The exercises of conversation and the questions and answers directed by the teacher are favoured allowing the pupils to practice the language orally through dialogues thus writing remained in the second plan.

The principles of the Direct Method modified certainly the teaching and learning of foreign languages but they caused problems of practice for teachers, with the prohibition of the use of the Mother Tongue and the requirement of an excellent control of the target foreign language on the behalf of the teacher, who was not well trained for such a teaching led to its end.

1.7.3 The Audio-Lingual Method

This method made it possible to give space for oral expression in language classes and put a reflection on the learning process. The Audio-Lingual Method

was born during the Second World War but it is in the middle of the 1950's that it developed as a method for language teaching. It is based on the behaviourist theory and the goal is to communicate orally as indicate it Germain (1986: 16) "The theoretical bases of the approach remain on the structuralist model of Bloomfield associated with the behaviourists theories on repetitions and drills". The method must lead learners to produce linguistic behaviours closest to real situations, through the use of dialogues in the target language. The idea is for the pupils to practice the particular construct until they can use it spontaneously. There is no explicit grammar instruction and everything is simply memorized.

According to Skinner, the acquisition of a language concerns pattern drills: stimulus-response reinforcement; it is made by intensive oral repetitions in order to fix linguistic automatisms. The learning of the language will consist of practicing the language in its oral form: "This method gives primacy to the learning of oral skills rather than writing put far in the process" (Robert, 2002: 121).

However , by the late 50's the effectiveness of the method itself was questioned as Jeremy Harmer (2001: 79) notes, "Audio-lingual methodology seems to banish all forms of language processing that help learners sort out new language information in their own minds." Indeed, the learners are unable to use the language in the context of real communication because the input and output are restricted and both teachers and pupils know what to expect. From there, the birth of a new method was necessary to take into account the degree of maturity of learners.

Therefore, the learning of foreign languages is based on a system of habit formation based on mastering the structural elements of the language and the rules that combine them (Richards & Rodgers, 1986). Below, some of the pedagogical principles of the Audio Lingual Method.

- No grammar rules- the rules will figured out from examples. Grammar no longer consists of a collection of rules, but a list of structures;

- The importance is given to the oral aspects of the language, breaking with the relevance of the written language;

- learners first hear a dialogue, repeat and memorize them. The teacher pays attention to pronunciation and fluency. Correction is immediate.

- Opportunities for the learner to make mistakes should be minimized because good verbal habits are formed by giving correct responses rather than by making mistakes;

- Memorizing dialogues/pattern drills is an effective way to form good verbal habits;

- The language skills should be taught strictly in the order of listening, speaking, reading, and writing because "aural-oral training is needed to provide the foundation for the development of other language skills"

(Adapted from Richards & Rodgers, 1986: 51)

Some obvious problems with ALM, however, are:

- The description of the grammatical system is rather incomplete.

- Learners often fail to transfer skills acquired through pattern drilling to real communication

- The practice activities tend to involve meaningless learning and language use.

The ALM was criticized on the basis that the emphasis was on the mastery of language structures which led to generate structurally competent but communicatively incompetent learners. Then, because it lacked the functional and communicative potential of language and of the necessity to use the language

communicatively in the classroom, the adoption of a new approach to language teaching namely the communicative language teaching was necessary.

1.7.4 The Communicative Approach

In reaction to the preceding methods, and to the structure drills, a new approach was born known as "communicative" which was developed in the beginning of the 1970's. The approach is a mosaic of several learning theories like constructivism and the cognitive theory which are the basis of several theories of teaching and learning.

This approach revolutionized the world of didactics by the concept of "communicative competence" ,i.e., the language is an instrument of communication where this competence of communication is the conjunction of several components such as the grammatical competence, the discourse competence, the sociolinguistic competence and the strategic competence (Canale,1983) as follows:

- Grammatical competence - the knowledge of the language code (grammatical rules, vocabulary, pronunciation, spelling, etc.).

- Sociolinguistic competence - the mastery of the socio-cultural code of language use (appropriate application of vocabulary, register, politeness and style in a given situation).

- Discourse competence - the ability to combine language structures into different types of cohesive texts (e.g., political speech, poetry).

- Strategic competence - the knowledge of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies which enhance the efficiency of communication and, where necessary, enable the learner to overcome difficulties when communication breakdowns occur.

(Celce-Murcia & Dornyei, 1995)

In this communicative approach the intention of the teacher is to prepare his/her learners for the act of communication where the learner is not any more an external observer but a participant in situations of communication more close to reality in other words "authentic" and where group work is privileged. Teachers are advised to choose authentic documents which will serve the communication needs as much as possible from where the use of teaching equipment varied like written documents, texts of authors, poems, etc.

In this approach, the oral language is dominant, but there is a certain revalorization of the writing skill thus the four skills can be developed (reading, writing, listening and speaking) with situations which allow the introduction of role plays. These role plays allow learners how to adapt themselves, under conditions which are linked to reality, the oral activities of the target language, which make reference, to the writing skill, with similar activities enabling the learners to adapt themselves to the written form of the language.

The teacher must have a good knowledge of the target language to be able to help each pupil to use the language and to express himself as often as possible in the foreign language even if the use of the MT is possible, and by taking into account the needs of the learners, the teacher will become a "facilitator indeed", it is there to correct the errors and the learner becomes an "active" partner being able to communicate progressively in the classroom and elsewhere, it is one of the principles of the CLT; and to make the learner responsible for his/her learning and to be autonomous. The communicative approach is a revolutionary method in language learning; yet its limits are still badly defined.

Among the pedagogical principles of the communicative language teaching is that language should be:

- Centered on its communicative functions;

- The teaching and learning is learner-centered;

- Learners are negotiators, discoverers, communicators;

- The teacher's role is to be an organizer, a guide, a facilitator, a researcher, and a learner;

- The learners should be given opportunities to use the target language for communicative purposes;

- Effective communication is of mere importance rather than accuracy.

1.7.5 The Competency Based Approach

After the implementation of the communicative approach in the Algerian educational system, educationalists became aware that it was not very practical considering difficulties of time and space. Then, a second approach was adapted; namely the competency-based approach, helping the learners to acquire a communicative competence by focusing on the learner as the target of the learning process. The focus, in this approach, was on the meaning conveyed by the context rather than the grammatical forms used in it. This approach has been an answer to the requirements of the 21st century which dictated certain measures to the teacher better considered as a facilitator.

The CBA focuses on outcomes of learning and addresses what the learners are expected to do rather than what they are expected to learn about. The CBA emerged in the United States in the 1970s and refers to "an educational movement that advocates defining educational goals in terms of precise measurable descriptions of knowledge, skills, and behaviours learners should possess at the end of a course of study." Richards and Rodgers. In addition to that The U.S. Office of Education views CBA as a "performance-based process leading to demonstrated mastery of basic and life skills necessary for the individual to function proficiently in society" (U.S. Office of Education, 1978).

In the same line of thought, Schenck notes that "Competency Based Approach is outcome based instruction and is adaptive to the changing needs of students, teachers, and the community." He adds that:

> Competencies describe the student's ability to apply basic and other skills in situations that are commonly encountered in everyday life. Thus CBA is based on a set of outcomes that are derived from an analysis of tasks typically required of students in life role situations.

Therefore CBA is a functional approach to education that emphasizes life skills and evaluates mastery of those skills according to actual learner performance. Competencies have been used in the educational field in order to allow the learner to develop his capacity to think and act according to a vision of a world that he will construct day by day. Since emphasis is put on the learner's social and personal development, the aim is to make him reinvest his knowledge while performing tasks at school level as well as at social and professional levels. The programme has been conceived with the purpose of ensuring sustainable and viable learning.

The introduction of the new programme since 2003 which is centred on competencies fits in a set of instructions commissioned by the Ministry of Education. This was not very practical considering difficulties of time and space. These instructions are based on worldwide research that highlights the importance of the links between learning and context of use, thus helping the learners in making learning meaningful.

The underlying theory of language learning adopted by the CBA is based on the assumption that language learning is intended for communication in various social contexts. In other words, the learners do things and get things done with language in specific situations. In this way, the learners are considered as active participants in the whole learning process whereas, the teacher is considered as a facilitator and an organiser. Therefore, the syllabus advocates a

learner-centred approach, which focuses and draws from the experience, knowledge and expertise of individual learners.

A further analysis of the syllabus shows that its ultimate aim is to enable learners to: communicate orally in an effective and efficient way in varied situations; develop skills, knowledge of, and about, the language in terms of listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar and vocabulary.

Concerning the Speaking objectives of the syllabus, the learners are expected to be able to participate as speakers in pair or group activities real or imagined life situations; produce, and recognise all the sounds of the English language; produce stress and intonation patterns of complex utterance; contribute and respond constructively to discussions, put across their own ideas and justify a point of view. In this newly introduced approach the learners have to read aloud familiar stories, poems and dialogues; use language to convey information, ideas and motions effectively in varied situations, contribute to the planning of and participation in a group presentation fluently and finally, use spoken English appropriately.

We saw in this historical insight how the oral teaching was dealt with by the various methods and approaches of language teaching and learning, which constitutes the major concern of all current research in didactics.

1.8 Conclusion

This first chapter has tried to cover the vast area on the speaking skill in the field of education stressing its crucial role in the process of teaching and learning. In fact what should be taken into consideration is that Pupils' speaking performance is a process basic to teaching and should not be considered as an add-on feature of instruction but as an integral part of it.

This chapter has dealt with various aspects of the speaking learning process as well as the principles that guide good speaking tasks. The first part

has defined the concept of speaking and has established a clear difference between its different characteristics. Teaching and learning the speaking skill is a continuous process that could profoundly influence pupils' achievement. This is why we have tried to make clear the process of pupils' learning of that neglected skill in language teaching as well as its different characteristics.

It also strives to shed light on the components of the speaking skill in teaching and learning, In particular, the distinctions between the micro and macro skills and sub skills used by learners when interacting orally. Finally, the chapter focused also on the different criteria that the teacher should take into consideration when teaching his/her pupils. Hence, it is incumbent upon the teachers to teach speaking in an effective manner, keeping in mind the purposes and principles behind it.

The next chapter aims at investigating the teaching of speaking for Algerian EFL learners at the secondary school level. For this purpose, it is useful to present the educational context in which our targeted pupils develop starting from a general overview of ELT in the Algerian educational system to a more specific one dealing with the instruction received by our learners at different levels.

Chapter Two

ELT, the Speaking Skill and Reform in the Algerian Educational System

2.1 Introduction

The Algerian educational system witnessed several reforms during these last years which have been operated at all levels of education. In fact, the Algerian school which was criticized by the whole society by the end of the 1990s was no more able to offer its learners the values and the educational level expected whether it was at the primary, middle or secondary schools. Thus, a reform of all the education system was launched in 2003.

This huge task, directed by the programme PARE [1] and supervised by UNESCO, tackled several aspects and allowed the establishment of new programmes, the publication of new textbooks, and the use of a new method of teaching named the Competency-Based Approach or the CBA; the objective being to allow the Algerian school to go out of its stagnation. The process of this reform was completed in 2007-2008 with the first promotion of pupils graduated from this new system.

In order to better understand the extent of the educational reform opened by Algeria since the beginning of 2003, the researcher has begun by pointing out to the ideological bases of the old educational system whose obsolescence justified the urgency of the operated reorganization taking into consideration all the challenges of the 21st century.

This second chapter deals first with a historical overview of the Algerian educational system. In addition to that the researcher will bring a historical overview of the reform referring to all the changes that have been introduced to our curricula more than 10 years ago now and the new approach to language teaching and learning namely the CBA. The second part of this chapter will be

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[1] Programme d'Appui à la Réforme du Système Educatif (Supporting Programme for the Reform of the Educational System). After the meeting, which gave birth to new relations between the international organization and the Ministry of Education, in Algiers in February 2001, the agreement supporting the reform of the Algerian education system (PARE) was signed between UNESCO and the Algerian ME in Paris in October 2003.

devoted to introduce a more or less relevant literature closely related to the speaking skill in the Algerian educational context. A focus on some principles and goals of teaching the target skill are also discussed in this chapter.

2.2 An Overview of the Algerian Educational System

The history of the country can be divided into four main periods: the post-independence period, the economic-liberal period, the socio-political-crisis period, and the national reconciliation period. This part will provide the status of the foreign languages during these periods.

2.2.1 The Post-Independence Period

The educational system before 1962 was designed to meet the needs of the French population and to perpetuate the French educational and cultural pattern. At that time, French was the language of instruction, and Arabic, was an optional foreign language, if taught at all. During the colonial period, French was the official language of Algeria and the educational system was dominated by the French language, following the French educational system, thus, little space was given to other languages to grow.

At the time of independence in 1962, the Algerian education system was in complete disarray as the Algerian government inherited an education system focused on French content and conducted in a French language by French teachers who left Algeria after its independence which led the Algerian authorities to train teachers hastily or recruit them as expatriate teachers.

At that time, Algerian authorities set out to reform the educational system to make it more suitable to the needs of a "developing nation". During that period the Arabic language was imposed gradually at the different levels of education and the aim was to re-establish Algeria's Arab Islamic Heritage (Mize, 1978).

It is clearly explained by Metz in her book Algeria: A Country Study (1994):

> The hallmarks of their programme were arabization, remove foreign teachers and curricula, and replace French with Arabic as the medium of instruction. They also planned to channel students into scientific and technical fields, reflecting the needs of Algerian industrial sectors.

However, during the post independence period the French and the Arabic language went hand in hand in the Algerian post independence education sector; one used in the teaching of sciences and technology and the other one for social sciences and non-technical fields. It was till 1991 that a mandating law affirmed the use of the Arabic language in all sectors and at all levels. During the post-independence period the Algerian educational system was divided into two levels: the primary school and the secondary school, the English language was introduced at the third year secondary school level.

2.2.2 The Educational Reform of 1971

This period, began in the early seventies till the end of the nineties, Algeria engaged in the process of "Arabization" [2] in which the government launched the process where the use of Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) gradually replaced French. Yet, it should be noted that the modus operandi was launched without effective preparation, there were indeed: lack of teachers training, lack of teaching materials and resources for learners. This led the younger generations to encounter real learning problems in both languages. (Miliani, 2001)

The education reform of 1971 introduced the nine-year basic education programme. The structure of the school system is based on six years of primary

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[2] "Arabization" is the policy involved in the replacement of the French language by the Arabic language as a national medium in the entire Algerian official context mainly in education beginning in the lower levels of education in the seventies and extended to higher education in the eighties. (Chaker, 1997)

school, three years of middle school and another three years of secondary school. Together, the nine years of primary and middle education constitute the compulsory basic education. Further reforms in 1976 guaranteed that education at every level is provided free to all.

During that period, the teaching of the French language was introduced in the fourth year at the primary school level and that of English in second year of the middle school. However, in the very early 90's, English was introduced alongside French as a first foreign language to be taught from the fourth year of the primary school. Until there, the French language was the only foreign language taught at the primary level (N. Clark, 2006). Furthermore, a major event marked this period in terms of English language teaching which was when the government decided to "Algerianise"[3] the English textbooks and methods (Hayane, 1989)

More than 25 years after the creation of the fundamental school (basic education) it is recognized as being a failure, which led the government to initiate reform, deep in the education system (adopted by the Council of Ministers on the 30th, April 2002). The reform which was implemented beginning from the academic school year of 2003 started by the renewal of the programmes at all levels and to bring new perspectives on language education policies in Algeria.

2.2.3 The Educational Reform of the Early 2000's

A key feature of this reform is the emphasis on the early teaching of foreign languages. Thus, according to the new educational programme, the French language is taught as a first foreign language from the second year of primary school, and English is introduced in the first year of middle school.

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[3] A French word derived from a word found in the title of a novel published in 1911, "The Algérianistes", the work of Robert Arnaud, born in 1873. Though, Jean Pomier is the true father of the term "Algerianisme".

During that period, the authorities recognize the importance of better quality in education and its current priorities are:

- Strengthen and renovate educational research capacity;

- Revise programmes and improve curriculum design mechanisms to make what children learn more relevant to their cultural and social environment;

- Improve teachers and staff training;

- Improve the school environment by providing adequate pedagogical materials;

- Strengthen management capacity at central and provincial levels;

- and improve cost and financing mechanisms in education.

Ministry of National Education 2003

2.3 Historical Overview of the Educational Reform of 2003

These last decades, a new world built itself according to new changes whose challenges already gave rise to a new term called globalization. However, this new configuration of the world has to function according to a new logic, because based exclusively on the criteria of optimal rationality and profitability. From there, it should be well understood that the level of effectiveness of the education system is from now on placed at the centre of the social and economical stakes to which the 21st century prepares.

Algeria suffered a too long time from a political system that had durably established an ideological opposition to progress of which one of the effects was to have induced an education system voluntarily directed towards a restricted objective of identity authentication. It is thus not a coincidence if the regulation

of April 16th, 1976 [4] functions like a reference frame criterion of definition of an assigned identity, on the one hand, and like involuntary factor of inhibition of the rare attempts at modernization of the Algerian School, on the other hand. (Miliani, 2003)

No matter what it was, it is allowed to say today that it was that dominant ideology of the time which had made useless any tendency of reform of the education system. The latter was largely criticized by the Algerian society having become aware of the need for changes in the methods and contents of the teaching approaches.

It should also be said that the last decade of the twentieth century which witnessed devastator terrorism in the country, called the -"black decade" - undoubtedly contributed to force the leaders to better integrate in their analysis the claim of the elites to the reorganization of the educational system. The first thing which was done by the current president was the creation of a National Commission of Reform of the Education System in May 2000, which became effective from 2003, approved beforehand by the Council of Ministers.

It should be mentioned that the implementation of the first steps of reform had not led to a general opposition of certain groups of influence traditionally favourable to a certain cultural and educational status quo. Though, it seems that the first measurements were greeted with certain indifference by the society, exactly as if nobody wanted to really accept the reality of the need for a radical change. (Djebbar. 2008)

One should specify that the National Commission of Reform of the Education System succeeded in gathering in the same place the main parts of the different political trends of the country. Besides, those in charge of the reform have in their turn shown a great discretion concerning the application of the first

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[4] The regulation of 1976 is the one which the national education and training system followed for decades; it is now replaced by the regulation of 2008 No. 08-04 which provides framework law for national education.

steps of the educational reform; its disadvantage was not to have sufficiently associated the civil opinion at the appropriate time, to hope to gain collective adhesion necessary to that objective. Therefore, the lack of visibility which can sometimes have characterized the reform launched in 2003 does not denigrate the success of the actions undertaken at that time. Indeed, the first results obtained led to think that the reform was on the right track. Still is necessary to try hard to evaluate, the extent of this reform.

At this stage it is worth mentioning the different levels of instruction in the Algerian educational system since the 2003 reform. Then, the following figure summarises the different levels of education as well as the different streams at the secondary level.
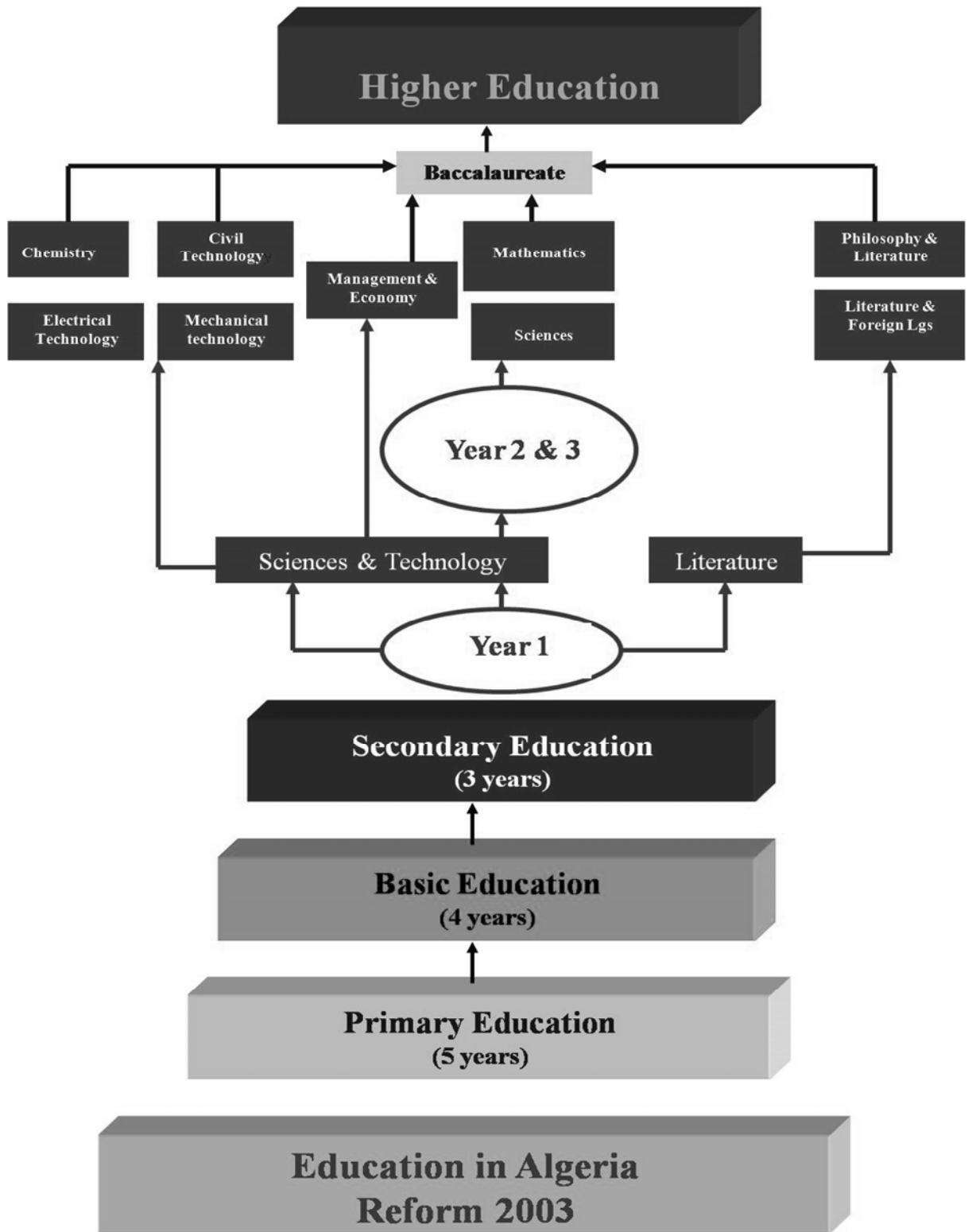
Figure 2.1: Algerian Educational Reform

(Syllabus for English, 2004)

2.4 Reform First Observations

What are the conclusions that can be drawn more than ten years after the educational reform of 2003? This question naturally arises today. Indeed, the reform in education is a process which is rather long and difficult, and we have to take into consideration the methods and the contents of the teaching approaches that must be restructured to adapt them to the requirement imposed by a world in fast transformation. The previous Algerian educational system was based on simple principles which were the old methods of accumulation of knowledge, so one can ask the following questions:

- What was the reason of the establishment of a new educational policy?

- What are the objectives of this new educational reform?

- Which types of evaluation are necessary?

- What are the training measures for the teachers and how can we make them ready to invest more effectively in the new objectives of the reform?

The following sub-sections will try to answer the above questions concerning the reform in education.

2.4.1 Reform in Education

The National Commission of the reform of the education system privileged the situations of training to allow all the teachers and learners, to acquire greater competence; reorganization of teaching, continuing training for teachers, the introduction of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), reorganization of pedagogy and the programmes; in order to improve quality of the teaching as well as their relevance. All these variables are part of a

new vision of teaching in which "the Competency-Based Approach" that constitutes the basis of all the New Algerian educational system.

At this point, it is important to mention that linguistic qualification of the pupils also represents one of the major concerns of the reform process which makes a broad place to the efforts of valorisation of the Arabic language. In addition to the generalization of the teaching of the Amazigh language which is now, at the sides of Arabic, an official language and an element of rehabilitation of the whole cultural components of the Algerian community.

But the rehabilitation of the cultural identity of the nation is obviously not enough to a larger opening to foreign languages; this necessary opening on the cultural and linguistic diversity of the world would help the pupils to reinforce their capacities of integration as factors of change across the world and to adopt the new technological requirements. (HULING, 2004)

Remain finally what it is agreed to call "humanities". For various reasons, they were sometimes entirely neglected of the programmes and school textbooks of the Algerian School. However humanities represent everywhere in the world an essential part of the teaching contents to instigate the young generations to the notions of progress and the conditions of social peace, among them, we can mention: philosophy, civic education and religious education. In addition to that, since the signature in 2005 of a partnership of training with the European Community, "the values of democracy" and "human rights" have been added as subject matters.

On the other hand, UNESCO has brought, through its programme of support to the reform of the education system, an appreciable technical and methodological contribution, the introduction of ICTT [5] into the courses and the

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[5]The Information and Communication Technologies in Teaching (ICTT)

training of the teachers. In so far as the new methods of technology and communication (ICT) do not constitute the solution to the whole problems in education, one can mention that it may be considered to a certain point that their uses in education support a great rationalization of education.

Thus, these are essentially the objectives of the reform of education which we have tried to grasp the multi-field configuration of it. From this point of view we can add that the support of UNECO to the reform constitutes a living testimony of seriousness and the quality of the co-operation between the Algerian ministry of Education and UNESCO to mark the starting point of the programme launched in 2003.

2.4.2 Reform in Teacher Training

The other large side of the reform relates to the essential question of the continuing training of the teaching staff which, which, constitutes the angular stone of all the building. Convinced that the success of the educational reform is largely dependent on the degree of qualification of the teachers, the Ministry of Education undertook, since 2005, to launch series of measures to allow no less than 214 000 teachers to profit from an additional training with the objective of achieving international qualification criteria of recruitment.

It is thus in this way that the "BAC" plus a three years university degree is from now on required for the teachers of the primary level, the "BAC" plus a four years university degree for those of the middle school level and then finally the "BAC" plus a five years of successful higher learning is necessary for the whole of the teachers of the secondary education, and no exception would be granted to these criteria of quality in the future. (MEN, 2005)

In the same way that the continuing training of the teachers has to play a central role in the general process of the reform, the reorganization of teaching and the improvement of the school rhythm as well as the methods of teaching are as many actions that have to be completed.

The other innovation holds in the progressive generalization of the pre-schools. Although it puts enormous problems of infrastructures and means, the institutionalization of pre-schools becomes the rule in the new system of education. It must allow, in the new programmes, the children under six years old to reach an early training and socialization in conformity with the international standards as regards to education.

One will have now clearly admitted the particularly complex policy of this reform which needs time and should regularly undergo the corrective measures and the necessary refitting imposed by a permanent evaluation of teachings. Indeed, a successful educational system is the one which is built at the same time that it is accompanied by the organization of a powerful system of evaluation and analysis. From there, it becomes obvious that to each reached stage the implementation of an evaluation must correspond methodically to see the positive points as well as the weaknesses of the committed movement of reform. (MEN, 2005)

Undoubtedly it is time, at this point of the analysis, to make an observation concerning the appreciable character of the results achieved after more than ten years of the reform of education, though according to the National Survey of Opinion (2002) some persistence recriminations of the public opinion denote a problem of communication. Are these recriminations the effect of incomprehension of the non-associated actors or are they the expression of simple resistance to change?

2.5 Quality and Relevance of Teaching in Reform

This globalization has an impact on the design of education and the orientations of the reforms undertaken. The most visible translation of this impact lies in the increased importance tied to the question of the quality and the relevance of education. Indeed, the international speech on "Education for All" was re-orientated from an almost exclusive attention on the question of the

access to basic education towards an increasingly large taking into account to the quality of education.

The world Declaration of 1990 referred to the insufficiency of the quality of education and the need to improve the relevance of the processes of training. The Framework of Action of education for all adopted in Dakar in 2000 is much more explicit. Indeed, the 6th objective of education for all for 2015 stipulates engagement to improve all the aspects of the quality of education.[6]

2.5.1 Quality Education

The improvement of the quality of education is a challenge of current international patent issues: a challenge which is expressed most explicitly by the weakness of the acquisition of learning and the non-acquisition of the basic competences. Indeed, in many areas of the world, an enormous variation remains between the number of the pupils who finish the school and the number of those who, among them, control a minimum of cognitive competences.

It is also the case for the Arab world. According to the Arab Report of Human development (2003), the decline of the quality of education constitutes the most important challenge which arises for the development of education in the Arab world. The deterioration of the quality of education in the Arab world represents a major obstacle for the human development process in the area:

> …a process which aims at improving the quality of life of the individuals and the communities and to increase the capacities of the national societies in a context of globalisation

(UNDP[7], 2003: 52).

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[6] Cadre d'Action de l'Education Pour Tous (Dakar, 2000).

[7] United Nations Development Programme (UNDP): is the United Nations' global development network. Founded in 1965, it advocates for change and connects countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life. It provides expert advice, training, and grant support to developing countries.

2.5.2 Aspects of Quality Education

There are many definitions to define the quality of education. Each design proposes dimensions of the quality which correspond best to the goals assigned to the education system, goals going from the cognitive development of learning at the reinforcement of social cohesion; from the increase in the productivity of the workers and integration in the society to the development of a responsible and active citizenship. According to the assigned goals and objectives, the adopted definition may concern a category of actors (learners, teachers, parents, inspectors, decision makers, etc.)

The World report of Education for All (2005), devoted to the quality of education proposes a comprehensive framework to apprehend the multiple prospects and approaches. This framework is based on five dimensions which are:

1. Acquisition of learning (ability to read, write and count, basic competences necessary to the everyday life, social values, respect of diversity and cohesion, and the social development.)

2. The process of teaching and training (pedagogy and styles of teaching, the effective time of training, methods of evaluation, size of classes, languages of instruction, strategies of management of the class.)

3. Characteristics of learning.

4. The facilitators (the equipment, programmes, textbooks and other materials of teaching, the qualification and the motivation of the teachers, head of schools, the inspectors and the administrators.)

5. Social and economical context of education (structure and requirements of the job market and globalization, socio-cultural and religious factors, strategies of management, infrastructure of support, public resources allocated to education.)

The first of these dimensions - acquisition of learning - is at the level of psycho pedagogy and represents the most important tenet and the most explicit of the educational process. The factors which affect the second dimension, related to the processes of teaching and learning, are of a didactic nature and are located at the centre of the reform. Three other dimensions, those of the characteristics of learning, the facilitators, as well as social and economical context of education influence the processes of teaching and learning. For this reason, these three dimensions represent possible fields of intervention aiming at the improvement of the quality and the relevance of the processes of teaching and learning.

2.5.3 Paradigm Change of the Educational Processes

Whatever the definition of the quality given or the framework of analysis adopted, the recent changes on the quality of education represent a change of paradigm as for the design of the educational processes.

This change of paradigm has important implications at the levels of pedagogy and management of the education systems which are reflected in the adopted approach. It results in a change of the methods going on from a traditional focus on the process of' teaching towards an increased attention to the processes of more participative teaching and more learner-centred method.

Previous methods focused firstly on memorizing and the transmission of the knowledge, and then it moves towards the construction of knowledge and the development of the capacities of analysis, synthesis and application. It goes from almost exclusive importance attached to only knowledge towards a concern for the development of basic competences.

As regards evaluation, this change results in an evolution of the methods from an evaluation centred almost exclusively on a formative evaluation[8]

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[8] The Formative evaluation, according to Scriven, is: "typically conducted during the development or improvement of a programme (or person, and so on) and it is conducted, often more than once". (Scriven, 1991: 56)

towards a more important place to summative evaluation[9]. Finally, on the level of the curricula, we note an evolution of a traditional design in terms of knowledge categorized towards a more integrated design of the contents. (See table 2.1 below)

Beyond pedagogy, this change of paradigm also has implications on the level of the methods of management of the education systems. Indeed, of an almost exclusive attention to the questions of access, the designers are more closely interested in the questions of quality and the relevance of the learning.

Table 2.1: Change of Pedagogical Paradigm

From	To
Teacher centred	Learners centred
transmission of the knowledge	construction of knowledge
memorizing	analysis, synthesis and application
Knowledge based	Competency based
Formative evaluation	Summative evaluation

This evolution of a quantitative approach towards an integrating approach of qualitative dimensions translates a more important taking into account of the demand of the society as a whole and not only education. The decision makers and the planners are interested more in the acquisition of the learning, the results and the impact of the processes of education.

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[9] Summative evaluation therefore is the evaluation of learners' achievement of specific outcomes at the end of the instruction.

2.6 Main Points in the 2003 Reform of the Educational System

After a period which was described as a civil war in Algeria, a process of peace and reconciliation was initiated in early 2000 in the hope of bringing back stability to the country. Therefore, a series of political and economic reforms were consequently launched to meet these objectives of the process of reconciliation. These reforms involved the sector of education.

2.6.1 Context

Algeria knows a period of rapid political, economic and social transformation. In this context of fast transformation, the education system as a whole has to be adapted. Unsuited contents and methods, low level of success to the baccalaureate exam, high school rate of pupils' loss, increasing unemployment of the young population are as many indicators which required a reform of the education system in an economic context of globalization and acceleration of the technological advancement. The need for an educational reform, was felt at the beginning of the 1990s, unfortunately could not be concretized because of the situation of instability which marked this period of the history of Algeria.

It is in May 2000 that the president of the Algerian State could set up an ad hoc committee for the reform of the educational system, consequently translating his will to open the country "with categories of intellectual and social modernity" and definitively to turn the page of the black years of the recent history of Algeria.

In July 2002, the National People's Assembly voted the reform of the education system aiming at a qualitative change of its educational system in order to better answer the needs for the preparation of the young generation at a new context of civic, social and economic participation. This reform of the Algerian educational system is based on the recommendations of the World

Report on Education (Dakar 2000) for the starting of the educational action plans at the end of 2002.

2.6.2 Challenges of Quality Education

The diagnosis, which was done before the implementation of the reform, made the report of a certain number of failures of the Algerian educational system and identified the main issues which arose for the challenge of the quality of education. First of all, on the level of compulsory teaching, the low level of success to the exam of fundamental teaching (BEF), the rate of grade repetition at different levels of education which was increasing in compulsory teaching, as well as the high rate of pupils who quit school highlighted a need for a rapid change in the educational system.

With regard to post-obligatory teaching, the analysis highlighted an important imbalance between the general secondary schools which accommodated the majority of the pupils, and the technological secondary schools which posed the problem of the insufficient information and the orientation at the end of fundamental teaching and which was reflected on the orientation at the end of the secondary level towards the university. Moreover, rate of success of the baccalaureate exam was too weak, being between 25-35 percent. Finally, higher education suffered from deficiencies accumulated by the students in the preceding levels as it faced a strong demographic pressure (MEN, 2003).

2.6.3 Main Axes of the Algerian Educational Reform

The reform of 2003 was implemented to face these challenges which arose with the quality and the relevance of education in Algeria. Planning, teaching and the contents and methods constitute the three principal levels of the reform of 2003. The figure below summarizes the main axes for each one of these levels:

Planning
- The implementation of pre-schools.
- The reorganization of the duration of the fundamental teaching (5 years at the primary school and 4 years at the middle school.
- The restructuration of the secondary school in three sections : the general and technological teachingThe professional and technical teaching and the vocational teaching

Teaching :
- the evaluation of the pedagogical comtepence of the teaching staff.
- the evaluation of the teaching.
- The implementation of technologies of information

Methods and Contents
- the implementation of new curricula at all the different levels of education.
- the introduction of a new teaching approaches .
- The introduction of new textbooks, new evaluation methods.

Figure 2.2 Main Axes of the Algerian Educational Reform

2.6.4 Reform in Pedagogy

The transformation of the process of teaching and learning represents the essential dimension of the reform of 2003 aiming at improving the relevance and quality of learning. This shift in pedagogy represents a new vision of education, a vision which is defined by an approach based on the acquisition of some competences and which places learning at the centre of the teaching learning process.

The competences to be acquired by learners and the exit profiles at each level have become the main principles of the school programmes, the textbooks and the reference frames of evaluation. The focus on the development of qualified individuals requires a new conceptualization of teaching less directed towards the knowledge to acquire and more towards the improvement of the capacity of each one to react to new requests and to adapt to new situations.

The three principals of the reform of 2003 thus represent three axes of intervention:

(1) The renewal of the curricula, the textbooks and other materials of teaching;

(2) The qualification and the motivation of the teachers through trainings; and

(3) The reorganization of the length of the streams of teaching and learning.

The renewal of the Algerian school programmes and textbooks was an essential vector of the efforts of improvement of the quality and the relevance of education were thus initiated in 2003 in a climate of national political reconciliation and an extremely constraining amount of time (MEN, 2003).

2.6.5 UNESCO Support to the Reform

Following the request of the Algerian government to have an international expertise and the support of UNESCO in the installation of the reform, a cooperation programme was defined and a cooperation agreement signed in Paris in October 2003 by the Algerian Minister of Education and the Managing Director of UNESCO.

This agreement constitutes the official base of the Programme of support to the reform of the Algerian Education System (PARE). This programme of support during the period 2004-2006 concentrated on the three main axes of the reform which are planning, training, and the curricula. The initial structure of

PARE answered four main aims and was organized around eight components (see figure 2.2).

As that was underlined in a first booklet from the programme PARE (MEN-UNESCO 2005): The main interest of PARE lies in its capacity to create a new reflection and action on the new pedagogical approach and teachers training, and that in order to propose "an open window on the international experiments". In fact, and in spite of its relatively modest budget, the programme was allowed to intervene in the reform in order to accompany the installation by the strategic directions and the national teaching choices.

Since the launching of the programme of the Algerian educational reform in 2003, other partners such as the French Agency of Development, the European Union or the USAID joined the efforts of this reform.

2.6.6 Activities within the Framework of Pare 2004-2006

The four aims and the eight components were gathered according to four main roads of activities: Programmes and textbooks; training of teachers; ICT; support planning.

increase the quality and relevance of teaching

Strengthening the continuing training of the teachers

review and update the curricula and textbooks to strngthen education quality

reform of the post compulsory education

reform of the different fields of higher education

strengthening capacity of pedagogical and administrative management

support to the regulation of students flows

creation of a simulation model for the regulation of flows in the Algerian Educational System

Enhancement of the information and orientation system

implementing new technologies

implementation of ICTs

valuation of the use of ICTs

Figure 2.3: The Main Aims and Components of PARE

2.6.6.1. Renewal of the Programmes and the School Textbooks

The activities of support to the renewal of the programmes and the school textbooks were led jointly by UNESCO and the Office of Engineering in Education and Training.[10] BIEF as follows we states the mains steps that have been undertaken in the renewal of the curricula and the textbooks :

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[10] BIEF is a consulting company with specialists working in the field of education, training, and project management.

- **Capacity Development**

    In order to enhance the abilities of the programme, some fifteen seminars in Algiers were organized for approximately fifty members of the National Commission of Programmes (CNP), seventy programme developers and fifty assessors of school textbooks at the National Research Institute in Education (INRE), at the National office of the school publications (ONPS) and the inspectors of fundamental and secondary educational level. (MEN, 2005)

    These seminars allowed the reinforcement of the capacities of the developers and the assessors as regards determination of the exit profile of the pupils for the various levels of education, evaluation of the curricula and the textbooks in terms of the Competency-Based Approach and evaluation of the acquisition of the pupils according to the principles of the pedagogy of integration.

- **Tools Development**

    Beyond the reinforcement of the capacities, this first line made it possible to develop and end a series of strategic tools for the design and the evaluation of the new programmes and textbooks. Indeed the first axis has allowed:

    - The achievement of the general methodological reference frame of the programmes;

    - The improvement and the establishment of the evaluative grid of the new school textbooks;

    - The production of a booklet on the CBA and its practical applications in the Algerian school;

- The development of a preliminary version of a teacher guide entitled: "The Evaluation of the Acquisition of the Pupils within the Framework of the Competency Based Approach".

(Idem)

- **Relevance of the Support Actions**

The evaluation of PARE by an international expert underlines the strong relevance of this axis on the level of the renewal of the programmes and the textbooks:

> The actions undertaken led to tangible results on knowledge basis and the production of tools. They were thus very efficient, taking into account time and the means available. That does not exclude the need from reinforcement, and follow-up actions. The results were effective since concepts, and the produced tools made it possible to work out curricula and textbooks and to analyze them.
>
> MEN (2006: 23)

Indeed the actions of this axis had positive immediate effects since they contributed to the implementation of the reform.

2.6.6.2. Teacher Training

The creation of a core of trainers of teachers to accompany the process of renewal of the programmes and school textbooks was necessary. Indeed, teachers' training answers a request of the government and a pressing need for change. Thus, the programme put in place actions of support for teachers training through the creation of a "hard core" of sixteen (16) inspectors, that is to say two per discipline. These inspectors would be then in charge of training the inspectors

of the 48 "wilayas[11]" and then to establish measures of information and training networks on a permanent footing for the future.

Although conceived from a disciplinary point of view, these trainings in teaching were largely directed towards the CBA, an approach that must be well understood by the inspectors in order to transmit it to the teaching core. The creation of the core of trainers of teachers led to the following results.

- **Results**

• A better control of the notions and implications of the CBA by the inspectors and the disciplinary specialists;

• Training 16 inspectors and identification of the competences necessary for the teaching using the CBA.

• It is however necessary to specify that the objective of the creation of this "hard core" of inspectors had been only partially achieved. Indeed, some variations did not allow the consolidation of a true hard core of trainers which can be the effective engine of a strategy of training at the level of the different "wilayas" of the country.

- The training organized within the framework of this axis of the programme PARE was useful and relevant though it remains insufficient to allow the trainers to control the application of the teaching approach on which the reform in progress is based.

Thus, it is important to stabilize the body of the formative inspectors composing the "hard core" and to discharge them from other tasks during all the time as they are devoted to the training .

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[11] Algeria is divided into 48 "wilayas" (provinces), and according to the Algerian constitution, a "wilaya" is a territorial collectivity enjoying economic and diplomatic freedom.

2.6.6.3 Reinforcement of the Use of ICT

The reform in education has faced a significant challenge in preparing the pupils and teachers for the challenges of the future. Information communication technologies (ICT) are influencing every aspect of our lives. They are changing the way we work, make research, teach, and learn. In Watson's (2001) description, ICTs have revolutionized the way people work today and are now transforming the education systems. This is a sufficient reason for ICTs to win areas of recognition and attention from the programme PARE.

- **The Benefits of ICTs in Education**

The impacts of ICTs on the pedagogical approaches in the classrooms and their contribution to the changes in teaching practices, school innovation, and community services are considerable. ICTs are essential components of the programme of reform; it is of paramount importance to have a common policy in the whole of the different sectors of education; general, professional training and higher education. Moreover, one approach is essential for the design of an ICT system which:

> adequately meets the national educational needs and which is truly at the hands of the educational authorities and not at the ministerial authorities that propose (if they do not impose) complete models, often complex, expensive and not very adaptable.

(MEN, 2005: 46)

The ICT policies of the programme illustrate the search for an approach to respond to the rationales for introducing ICT in education. According to the MEN, The concern of the government is to build frameworks and strategies to promote the educational use of ICT. The question is to what degree teachers integrate ICT in their teaching and learning the way the national authorities have proposed.

Unfortunately, the requirement that ICT should be developed across the curricula is not seen in the actual use of ICTs. Although the coordination and the implementation are not easy to follow the actions of support within the framework of PARE, a study of 2006 reports that teachers are gradually starting to integrate ICTs into their teaching strategies.

- **Main Activities for the Reinforcement of the Use of ICT**

This axis comprised the following actions: the organization of three seminars on the topic "developing the use ICTs in the 21st century" which made it possible to identify the needs of the Algerian education system as regards ICTs. On the other hand, four engineers followed training in (Cairo, 2005). The principal results of these actions of support can be summarized as follows:

- The reinforcement of the capacities of about thirty national experts as for the definition of strategies with regard to the ICTs, the learning and the use of them.

- The identification and the development of proposals for three possible projects corresponding to the national needs:

1. professional training;

2. teachers training;

3. the installation of a bank of teaching resources.

- **Relevance of the Use of ICTs**

The relevance of the use ICTs in the implementation of the new education system in Algeria is of great importance. Indeed, only the remote training would make it possible to quickly form the teachers to the CBA, as well as the bank of teaching resources which is essential for the trainers and the teachers in an educational system as vast as that of Algeria.

The evaluation of the project PARE stresses that:

- The success of the reform depends mainly on the use of these computer tools;

- the decision makers are convinced of the need for building a computing system adapted to the needs of the reform;

- teachers should be consulted for any important decisions;

- the access to internet is important.

The main objective of the relevance of the implementation of the ICTs is therefore not to examine any effects, but to investigate whether the current perspectives and practices of the ICTs are in line with the new framework and to determine their use in the future.

2.6.6.4 Six Proposals for the Future

The uses of ICTs in the future were identified by the programme PARE in the form of six propositions.

1 - To set up a committee for ICTs and to write the objectives of the development of the ICTs for the education system, as well as the principles which guide the technological choices and their uses.

2 - To coordinate the implementation of the committed projects by defining the priorities and expectations of the various educational institutions, by evaluating their results and setting up a site to share information.

3- To organize common core curricula answering the priorities of management for the administration and the needs for the schools.

4- To install the possibility of contribution of the teachers to the constitution and the improvement of the teaching resources.

5 - To create a committee of the teachers in order to examine the results of these trainings and their contribution to the implementation of the reform and to direct the choices for a better synergy with the development of the uses of the ICTs.

6 - To create a technical group of support.

2.6.6.5 Planning

The Algerian government has undertaken a series of major reforms seeking the highest educational standards for all the Algerian learners. Their first aim was to improve the quality and relevance of education of our learners and to ensure that our educational institutions serve their best interests. In order to succeed, a strategy encompassing reforms to the curriculum, ICT and schools extended the choice and opportunities for young learners.

In this reform, the government made best use of the massive resources invested in learning. However, there are of course inefficiencies in the system, and the actions in this plan of the reform would seek to develop coherent policies and plans to address these lacks and release resources to ensure that teachers and support staff can deliver the learning experiences that the Algerian learners need and deserve.

- **Levels of Intervention**

The axe of planning comprised two-levels of actions.

First of all, at the national level, it was a question of developing the adequate tools, taking into account the economic situation of education, and accompanying the reform by the services of information and school orientation.

In the other side, at the local level, it was a question of training the EFL inspectors of the different cities to the techniques of planning and of helping the employees and the services of information and orientation to be adapted for better meeting the needs of the reform.

- **Control of Flows**

The technical support concerning the control of flows consisted in seminars and support of the services of planning for the adaptation of the model of simulation of flows of the education system. The training by UNESCO of the technicians of the services of planning to the use of a model of piloting allowed a relative control of the technique of simulation of flows, as well as an awakening by all of the parameters to be taken into account to make a success of the reform. The principal limitation in the exploitation of the techniques of simulation was the absence of common analysis between the three sectors of education. To be completely functional, and beyond the three sectors, the model should be supplied with data coming from the ministry of Finances, as well as ministry of the Interior and local government agencies.

The authorities are conscious of the need for piloting the flows to reverse the current trends. Indeed, by 2015, it is considered that 90% of the pupils will pass from the 5th year of primary school of education at the first year of fundamental teaching, then 75% of the middle school towards secondary level. This inversion of the tendencies should be done by an increasing flow towards the professional and, technological mainstream; and by strongly limiting those of the other streams.

- **Regional Planning**

Two regional seminars, one in Ghardaïa in 2004 and the other in Constantine in 2006, allowed to form technicians to the techniques of planning. However, according to a report established by PARE, the accompaniment of the regional planners to the techniques of planning should have been preceded by a basic improvement of data-processing.

- **Challenges and Prospects**

The common assessment of PARE established by the MEN and UNESCO (Paris, 19 June 23rd, 2006) allowed not only to give a description of the actions carried out during the period 2003-2006, but also to identify the challenges which remain in the implementation of the components of the reform aiming at the improvement of the quality and the relevance of education.

2.7 The Status of English in Algeria

The situation of foreign language teaching in Algeria is directly related to its historical and socio-political events. This is why the big changes, undergone by the Algerian state in its educational system following its independence, have given more importance to English throughout all these years. Consequently the teaching of EFL has received a great consolidation and the English language has been given the status of Second Foreign Language by the Algerian authorities and, thus, it has become a compulsory subject matter in the curriculum all over the country.

In addition to that, the process of "globalization", the opening of Algeria to the English speaking countries namely America and Britain, and the spread of communication and technologies ICT, at the end of the twentieth century beginning of the twenty first century were the most important incidents influencing the spread of English in the Algerian society.

English is thought to be a means to facilitate international communication, and to have access to the new technologies and modern sciences (National Charter, 1998) which may contribute to the development of the country. The English language is widely used all over the world and in different domains which makes its importance. According to Kitaok (1996: 01)

> English is the major language of news and information in
> the world. It is the language of business and government
> even in some countries where it is a minority language. It is

> the language of maritime communication an international
> air traffic control, and it is used even for internal air traffic
> control

The French language has for a long time dominated the scientific, educational and linguistic spheres in Algeria as it is the first foreign language which is used in media, culture, and education. Ben Ali Mohammed (1993: 26) states that:

> French in present Algeria does not seem to be losing its
> importance and prestige four decades after the
> independence of the country. It is still the language of
> science, modernism, and opening on the world

However, and despite the fact that the French language has dominated language-learning in Algeria, since its independence in 1962, Algeria has become aware of the importance the English language has in the world today. Indeed, and according to the Global Research Organization Euro-monitor International report for the British Council in April 2012 it is in Algeria where the English language is the least developed as only 7% of the population command the use of that language in comparison to our neighbours in Morocco and Tunisia where 14% and about 15% respectively of the population of these countries master the English language.

On the other part and according to the same report English will make significant progress in the following years particularly among the youths and in no small part because of an interest in American culture and investment and the growing exposure to the media, information and communication technologies. It can also be another way to diminish French interference as claimed by Miliani (2001):

> In a situation where the French language has lost much of
> its ground in the socio cultural 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 educational ones

Actually, English is the leading language in trade, science and technology. It is used in different domains either in tourism, education or for economical exchanges; this is why it has maintained a huge need to learn it as a foreign language. As it is stated by R. Huling (2004):

> having a tri-lingual culture (French, Arabic, and Berber), Algerians possess a remarkable facility for language-acquisition, which they are increasingly directing toward English**.**

The authorities have felt the need for an educational reform, which should include among other things, the reintroduction of foreign languages at an early stage. Similarly, in April 1999, the actual head of state Abdelaziz Bouteflika often repeated in public the expression "doomed schooling system" to say how the educational system needed to reinvent itself in the learning process and in foreign language learning.

Being a former French colony, Algeria has always had French language classes in its school system. Since independence (1962), the Algerian authorities have worked on redesigning the national educational system. Indeed, French is taught to our pupils from their primary education. Recently the government opted for an encouraging policy towards the teaching of foreign languages and thus French language teaching starts from the 3rd year of the primary school.

On the other hand, the paramount importance of English in the world has led many countries, including Algeria to include it at nearly all levels of the educational system. The teaching of English in Algeria begins in the first year of middle school education and is carried out till the end of the secondary school. Since September 2003 English has been taught for 7 years; four in middle school and three in secondary school, instead of 5 years; two in middle school and three in secondary school as it was the case before. It is worth noting that EFL is preceded by 5 years of Arabic instruction and 3 years of French as a first foreign language in primary education.

In addition to that, English in higher education is taught either as a major in the English Departments or as an additional subject in other departments such as: economic sciences, and technology. Therefore according to the Ministry of Education in the pedagogical instructions (2004: 06) we distinguish several aims for the English teaching policy in Algeria:

- To increase learners' communicative skill;
- To develop the exchanges of ideas across nations;
- To develop their abilities to have access to materials written in English as far as graduate or/and post-graduate students are concerned;
- Keep pace with the latest scientific and technological development.

As it is mentioned before; English is introduced in the first year of the middle school. Yet some educationists strongly recommended that English should be taught from the primary school to give learners the opportunity of acquiring a fundamental principle and also to improve their level as well as their language learning. This is why the purposes of foreign language teaching in Algeria are the same as in many countries worldwide. In fact the usefulness of studying foreign languages and in particularly English is no longer contested.

2.8 EFL in the Algerian Context

This part is intended to give insights about the status and use of the English language in Algeria, and to determine the role of English as a second foreign language, its status within the educational system at secondary level, as well as the objectives and finalities of ELT teaching at the Algerian secondary schools.

2.8.1 EFL Teaching Methodologies

Since English was first taught in Algeria, various approaches and methods have been adopted, Most of these approaches such as the Grammar-Translation

Method, the Audio-Lingual Method (ALM) during the 60's and the 70', the Notional-Functional Approach (NFA) in early 80s and the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) starting from the mid 80's till the end of the 90's, failed to produce a lasting impact on ELT in Algeria.

However, the criticism around the GT Method, and the reactions to its limitations as it did not prove to be efficient in everyday conversation were accompanied with socio- political changes that urged the introduction of new approaches and methods in ELT methodology. This gave way to the structuralists' view of language based on the principles underlying the Audio-Lingual Method.

It originated in the United States in the 1950s also called the "Army Method" because of the needs for different languages specialists in the army after WWII. It is an intensive, oral-based approach to the learning of a foreign language; it was drawing on structural linguistics in developing the method and later on behaviorist psychology for theories of language and learning.

The structural linguistic view of the language is that language is seen as "….a system of structurally related elements for the encoding of meaning, the elements being phonemes, morphemes, words, structures, and sentence types" (Richards & Rodgers, 1986: 49). However the methodology in teaching was derived from behaviorism, in which the notion of language is defined as verbal behavior consisting of stimulus-response chains.

CLT was introduced in Algeria in the 1980s, this choice was directed by the tendency that teaching is communication and to help the learners to acquire communicative competence since the focus is on communicative needs of the learners. CLT is based on the concept of communicative competence as the primary goal of language teaching and learning.

Communicative competence consists of grammatical competence (knowledge of the linguistic system of the target language), sociolinguistic

competence (an understanding of the dynamics of communication in social contexts), discourse competence (the ability to interpret individual elements of a piece of discourse in terms of their interconnectedness and their relationship to the entire discourse) (Canale and Swain 1980).

2.8.2 The Objectives of EFL Teaching

After the Algerian independence, the Algerian political class states the objectives of teaching English. According to this ordinance, the Algerian learners are supposed to communicate in the various forms, aspects and dimension of English. Four main categories of goals can be mentioned: socio-cultural, humanistic, educational and academic.

In his introduction to Teacher's handbook, Achour (2003) specifies the aims of the Algerian English teaching programme. He states that from the objectives set by the Ministry of Education to achieve the linguistic, methodological and cultural objectives; what matters most is that these finalities aim at providing Algerian pupils with the necessary pedagogical tools to develop learning.

Not surprisingly, the need to understand other cultures and languages was identified by Daniel Yankelovich as one of five imperative needs to which education must respond to remain relevant. In the context of globalization, the growing demand for English as a means of access to modern science and technology and economic development had led to interesting changes in Algerian educational system.

Accordingly, finalities, pedagogical tools and principles of teaching and learning are combined all together to reach already established goals. We should assume that teaching English or any other foreign or second language in Algerian schools is to enable learners develop the ability to communicate in the target language (Celce-Murcia: 1984; Ghour: 2003). What is more, Algerians need

English and French as languages of Wider Communication (LWC) to keep abreast with technology and science.

Indeed learning English as a foreign language can be considered as a means of communicating with those who speak the English language either as their mother tongue or as a second or foreign language. We all need to cope with people from other parts of the world whether for business or pleasure. Another point is that learning foreign languages can help to the promotion of intercultural understanding and peace. Then, the goals of language teaching are to foster negotiation in the society -outside the classroom.

2.8.3 The Finalities in EFL Teaching

The Algerian decision-makers see the teaching of foreign languages, particularly French and English as a clue to communicate with other people of the world. The study of the English language must imperatively be conceived with the objectives of helping our society to get harmoniously integrated in modernity. This means a fully complete participation in rising linguistic community of people who use English in all types of translations. This participation must be based on sharing and exchanging ideas, as well as, experiences in the fields of science, culture and civilization. This will make it possible to know oneself and the others.

Teaching foreign languages may help pupils to have access to sciences and technologies, encourage them to develop creativity in its universal dimensions and make them autonomous in exploring and exploiting materials having a relation with their field of study, and be prepared to successfully seat for examination (Chibani, 2003).

2.8.4 Teaching EFL to the 3ʳᵈ Year Secondary Pupils

Secondary schooling in Algeria lasts three years, from age fifteen to eighteen. During these three years, the pupils' workload grows exceedingly intensive from three to four hours weekly contact with the English language

depending on streams. Knowing that secondary education constitutes a thorough preparation to the baccalaureate examination (BAC for short) which held at the end of the 3AS, human and pedagogical resources and energy are deployed to this aim, which is the main diploma required to pursue university studies.

EFL is part of the curriculum for all the streams and at all levels. However both of the time allocated to ELT at secondary school and the weight (coefficient) vary according to the streams. The following table summarizes the teaching of ELT in secondary schools at third year level within the different streams of instruction as well as the weight, the time load and the textbook used.

Table 2.2: ELT in Secondary School, Third Year Level

Class Level	Streams	Weight	Weekly Time Load	Textbook
3° AS	Scientific Streams: ▪ Sciences ▪ Mathematics	2	3 H	New Prospects
	Management and Economy	2	3 H	
	Technological Steams: ▪ Civil Technology	2	3 H	
	▪ Mechanical Technology	2	3 H	
	▪ Chemistry	2	3 H	
	▪ Electrical Technology	2	3 H	
	Literary Stream: ▪ Philosophy and Literature	3	4 H	
	Literature and Foreign Languages.	3	4 H	

The textbook used in the third year secondary (3AS), remains largely functional with authentic texts and a rich lexical density that are more often beyond the learners' comprehension abilities and the teachers' pedagogical explanations. However, after more than ten years of the use of the same textbooks it is time for change.

2.9 The Teaching the Speaking Skill in the Algerian Educational Context

The recent reforms in the Algerian educational system led to re-define the aims and objectives of the teaching and learning of foreign languages in the Algerian school. In this part of the research study, the focus is on the speaking skill in the different levels of education in the Algerian context, with a view to its objectives, teaching practices and learning outcomes.

2.9.1 Teaching Speaking in the Middle School

Preceding the reform, English was given less importance then the French language in comparison to other developing countries. By the time, English has become a lingua franca, i.e., used in intercultural communication, 'English as a global language' (Crystal 2003), 'English as a world language' (2003) and 'World English' (Brutt-Griffler 2002) 'English as an international language' (EIL) becomes influencing force everywhere across the world.

Before the reform, English was taught starting from the second year in middle schools till the third year in secondary schools up to 2003   . Since then, the English language is introduced to our curricula starting from the first year Middle School (1 AM). At this level, pupils have studied the French language for three years and have some knowledge of French words and for some of them they are able to express themselves in French in a correct way, which is supposed to be of great help to them when learning the English language due to their resemblance.

The middle school consists of four years of study in which the English language is taught during all this period and for each year one textbook is designed as it is shown in Table 2.3, and are based on the principles of the CBA that emphasizes on meaningful communication as well as on form and the cooperation between learners and the teacher. Each unit or file of study is divided into three sequences where the four skills are dealt with:

Listen and speak: the priority is given to vocabulary and words followed by some expressions and phrases and at the end pupils are asked to listen to short dialogues and to perform them in pairs.

Produce: in this sequence the pupils are asked to make short dialogues using the acquired vocabulary.

Practice: pupils are asked to listen, read and understand short passages, and answer the written and the oral activities related to it.

Table 2.3 Middle School Textbooks

Years In The Middle School	Textbooks	Units of Study
1st Year	Spotlight on English Book One	Hello
		Family and Friends
		Sport
		In and Out
		Food
		Inventions and Discoveries
		Environment
2nd Year	Spotlight on English Book Two	Five units
3rd Year	Spotlight on English Book Three	Communication
		Travel
		Work and Play
		Around the World
4th Year	On the Move	It's my Threat
		You Can Do It
		Great Expectations
		Then and Now
		Dreams, Dreams….
		Fact and Fiction

During his or her learning at the middle school level the pupil is engaged in all the activities. He takes an active part in the learning process. Pupils at this level are asked to develop competencies such as to interact orally and to interpret authentic oral or written documents. He or she should be able to show his or her ability to understand oral or written messages by being able to reformulate the message, and finally the pupils are gradually led to produce simple messages in the target language.

In conclusion, learners in the Middle School educational system are introduced to the four language skills and are trained to develop the three competencies stated by the ministry of education and as of fact at the end of the fourth year of study in the middle school the Algerian pupil is supposed to

- Interact orally in English

- Identify the English phonological system.

- Use correct Grammar and lexis.

- Interpret and produce simple oral and written messages. .

2.9.2 Teaching Speaking in the Secondary School

The secondary school consists of three years of study in which the English language is taught during all this period and for each year one textbook is designed as it is shown in Table 2.4, and are based on the principles of the CBA that emphasizes on meaningful communication as well as on form and the cooperation between learners and the teacher.

One may say that at this level secondary education aims to prepare pupils for the Baccalaureate examination which is the requirement for university entrance. It should be noted, however, that pupils learn English for at least seven years before entering university and their knowledge of the English language is in general inadequate due to many factors such as overloaded programmes, insufficient teaching time, and little systematic language

practice, fewer writing tasks and limited background knowledge as regards the foreign language culture.

Learners in the secondary schools (3AS) are supposed to have an acceptable command of the main functions and be able to express themselves with sufficient fluency in English. They are exposed to different types of discourse and are to move from skill getting to skill using. That is why the (3AS) syllabus is built around themes such as (family, emigration, pollution….) not functions, as the focus will be on authentic communication than on individual functions. The language structures are to be studied, the rules drawn and then consolidated through different activities. In addition, the four language skills have to be taught in an integrated way to reach a suitable fluency.

Table 2.4 Secondary School Textbooks

Years in The secondary School	Textbooks	Files
1st Year	At the Crossroads	Getting through
		Once upon a time
		Our findings show
		EUREKA!
		Back to Nature
2nd Year	Getting Through	Signs of the time
		Make peace
		Waste not, want not
		Budding Scientist
		News and tales
		No man in an island
		Science or Fiction
		Business is Business
3rd Year	New Prospects	Ancient civilizations
		Ethics in business
		Education in the world
		Advertising, consumers and safety
		Astronomy and the solar system
		Feelings, emotions and related topics

Table 2.4 Secondary School Textbooks

2.10 Conclusion

This chapter tried to cover the vast area of the Algerian educational reform stressing its crucial role in the changes of the process of teaching and learning in EFL classrooms. It was solely devoted to describe the educational content where English is taught, and to uncover the many variables surrounding the teaching and learning of the English language.

The second chapter unveiled the Algerian educational context with the changes in language instruction since the reform of 2003 and the implementation of the CBA to language teaching. It attempts to provide a systematic description of the educational content in which the speaking skill teaching/learning takes place. The outsets of this chapter will be concerned with the teaching of the English speaking skill with a special focus on its context of teaching. It is also targeted towards uncovering the contextual variables that have influenced the teaching/learning of the speaking skill at the level of secondary school.

The second chapter deals with the pedagogical landscape of our investigation. In fact, the researcher tried to present in this chapter a bird's eye view of the methodology used by the teachers, the syllabuses they follow and the textbook at their disposal. She also attempted to shed light on the variables related to the teaching of the speaking skill at secondary school level. In fact what should be taken into consideration is that the teaching of the speaking skill should not be considered as an add-on feature of instruction but as an integral part of it.

Chapter Three
Research Design and Procedure

3.1 Introduction

This research on the evaluation of the teaching of the speaking skill at secondary school level is stimulated by the absence of previous research at this level and that different approaches are needed in order to reach a profound understanding of the importance of the speaking skill in the learning of foreign languages, and for the fact that it is the most neglected skill by our learners and teachers alike.

This chapter is concerned with the empirical phase of this study. It attempts to give a systematic description of the educational context where the research has been dealt with. In other words, the present chapter deals with the implementation of the research project. It is aimed to present the research design and data collection procedures.

Therefore, this chapter is devoted to the description of the research design and procedures, i.e., the way in which the research is conducted giving a detailed description of the design and construction of the research instruments, as well as the process of administration of the study.

It first starts by highlighting the research questions, which have been translated into three analytical research tools namely classroom observation, pupils' questionnaire and teachers' interview. The methodology of each is described in the present chapter. In addition to that the choice regarding the case study research and mixed methods approach are justified in this chapter. Moreover, the methods used for data collection and the main approaches employed for the analysis of the obtained data are described.

3.2 Research Objectives

Pupils' speaking proficiency has become one of the most important issues in language teaching since the role of speaking has become central in language

teaching with the educational reform introduced in our curricula since 2003 and in which the emphasis is on communication abilities of the pupils.

However, there are many difficulties faced by the Algerian EFL teachers when designing speaking activities. In fact, there is a great discrepancy between the predominance of the CBA approach to language teaching and the accurate teaching of the speaking skill in EFL classes. The Algerian EFL teachers find it difficult to teach the pupils' speaking proficiency in a way which reflects authentic interaction. Thus, there is a contradiction between the approach to language teaching and the teaching method.

The need for EFL teachers to be equipped with some pedagogic tools to teach pupils the speaking skill is becoming more and more important. The speaking skill has become a vital part of language teaching in all Algerian secondary schools; every school is required, by the Ministry of National Education, to perform pupils' speaking abilities.

The present thesis seeks to investigate the problems pupils face during their speaking activities, examine the actual state of teaching and learning of the speaking skill in three secondary schools in Tlemcen, namely *Ahmed Ben Zekri Secondary School, Boumechra Secondary School and Ibn Tofail Secondary School* and to find out the extent to which the newly introduced CBA is implemented in the teaching of the speaking skill in Algeria.

The study also tries to examine the speaking components of the English syllabus, the speaking materials currently used in the classrooms and the evaluation of speaking skills administered at the secondary school level.

There seems no prominent research on speaking teaching from the point of view of the researcher. In particular, the perceptions of Algerian EFL teachers in conducting speaking activities which remain largely unexplored. Thus, this study focuses on Algerian secondary school English teachers' perceptions of teaching

speaking as well as on the congruence between the teaching approach and the methods used in the Algerian EFL classrooms.

3.3 Research Methodology

Research methodology is the systematic, theoretical analysis of the procedures applied to a field of study (Kothari, 2004). It involves procedures of describing, and explaining phenomena so as to solve a problem.

This section is devoted to the description of the research design method and the research instruments involved for collecting data. Research tools will be presented and discussed to present the advantages of each one of them. In addition to that the researcher will explain the choice of the target population and the sampling size as well as the description of the way in which the research is conducted i.e. the research procedures. Moreover, decisions regarding the choice of case study research and mixed methods approach are justified in the present chapter.

3.3.1 Research Design

A research design is the heart of any study. According to Kothari, 2004, it is a plan, a roadmap and blueprint strategy of investigation conceived so as to obtain answers to research questions. The present study is positioned in the holistic embedded multi case studies using quantitative and qualitative research tools. (See figure 3.1)

A multiple case study enables the researcher to explore differences within and between cases. The objective being to draw comparisons so that the researcher can predict similar results across cases, or predict contrasting results based on a theory (Yin, 2003). In addition to that the combination of a qualitative and a quantitative paradigm can produce a fuller portrait of the phenomenon under focus.

Our research is based on a case study research method, which is one of the most widely used approaches of research. According to Odum,

> The case study method is a technique by which individual factor whether it be an institution or just an episode in the life of an individual or a group is analyzed in its relationship to any other in the group.

The case study research starts from the desire to derive a close understanding of a single case, set in its real-world contexts and hopefully resulting in new learning about real-world behaviour and its meaning. (Bromley, 1986:1)

Yin (2009: 18) defines the case study research as

> An empirical inquiry about a contemporary phenomenon, set within its real-world context..........especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident.

Thus, examining the context and other conditions related to the case being studied are integral to understanding it. The case study research method covers a wide range of contextual conditions and topics in order to represent the meanings that individual actors in the situation bring to that setting (Yin 2009) . In this sense, case study research goes beyond the study of isolated variables, and the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches, in combination, provides a better understanding of the research problem than using each approach alone (Creswell and Plano Clark 2007).

The use of the case study method as a research method has been determined by the descriptive questions (e.g. what are the difficulties faced by Algerian EFL teachers.....?) and explanatory questions (e.g. How do Algerian secondary school teachers..........?) that the study addresses. (Shavelson & Towne, 2002). In addition to the study which has been conducted within its real-world

context which favours the collection of data in natural settings with the classroom observation tool.

The use of the case study research method has many advantages such as:

1. Involving detailed, holistic investigation of all aspects of the case under study;

2. The ability to use a wide range of measurement tools and techniques;

4. Data can be collected over a period of time and is contextual;

5. It enables the researcher to assess and document not just the empirical data but also how the subject or institution under study interacts with the larger social system;

6. Case study reports are often written in non-technical language and are therefore easily understood by laypersons.

Davies (2011)

However, according to some researchers the Case Study Method has many weaknesses such as:

1. The small sample size prevents the researcher from generalising to larger populations;

2. The case study method has been criticised for use of a small number of cases can offer no grounds for establishing reliability or generality of findings;

3. The intense exposure to study of the case biases the findings;

4. It has also been criticised as being useful only as an exploratory tool;

5. They are often not easy to cross-check.

Davies (2011)

Thus, being interested in detailed data on pupils' speaking proficiency, we have opted for case study research. The aim has been to investigate in depth the difficulties teachers encounter when dealing with speaking skill in the EFL classes and that in order to gain insights into the way to remedy and overcome these weaknesses.

A case study research method can consist of a single or multiple cases. If for example multiple experiments are required for the design of a case study research then a multiple-case study is required.

On the other hand, the case study can also be holistic; for example, the holistic case might be about how and why an organization implemented certain staff promotion policies (holistic level; Yin, 2006), or the researcher might have embedded sub-cases within a holistic case; if for example the study might include data collected about a group of employees—whether from a sample survey, from an analysis of the employees' records, or from some other source (the embedded level; Yin, 2006).

Thus, if the researcher is limited to a single organization or unit of research, he/she will have an embedded, single-case study. However, if he/she deals with two or more organizations in the same manner, then, the researcher would have an embedded, multiple-case study. The multiple-case design is usually more difficult to implement than a single case design, but the ensuing data can provide greater confidence in findings. (Yin, 2009)

Yin (2003) describes how multiple case studies can be used to predict either similar results or contrasting ones. This type of a design has its advantages and disadvantages. Overall, this type of study is considered reliable, but it can also be extremely time consuming. The following figure shows the different types of case study designs.
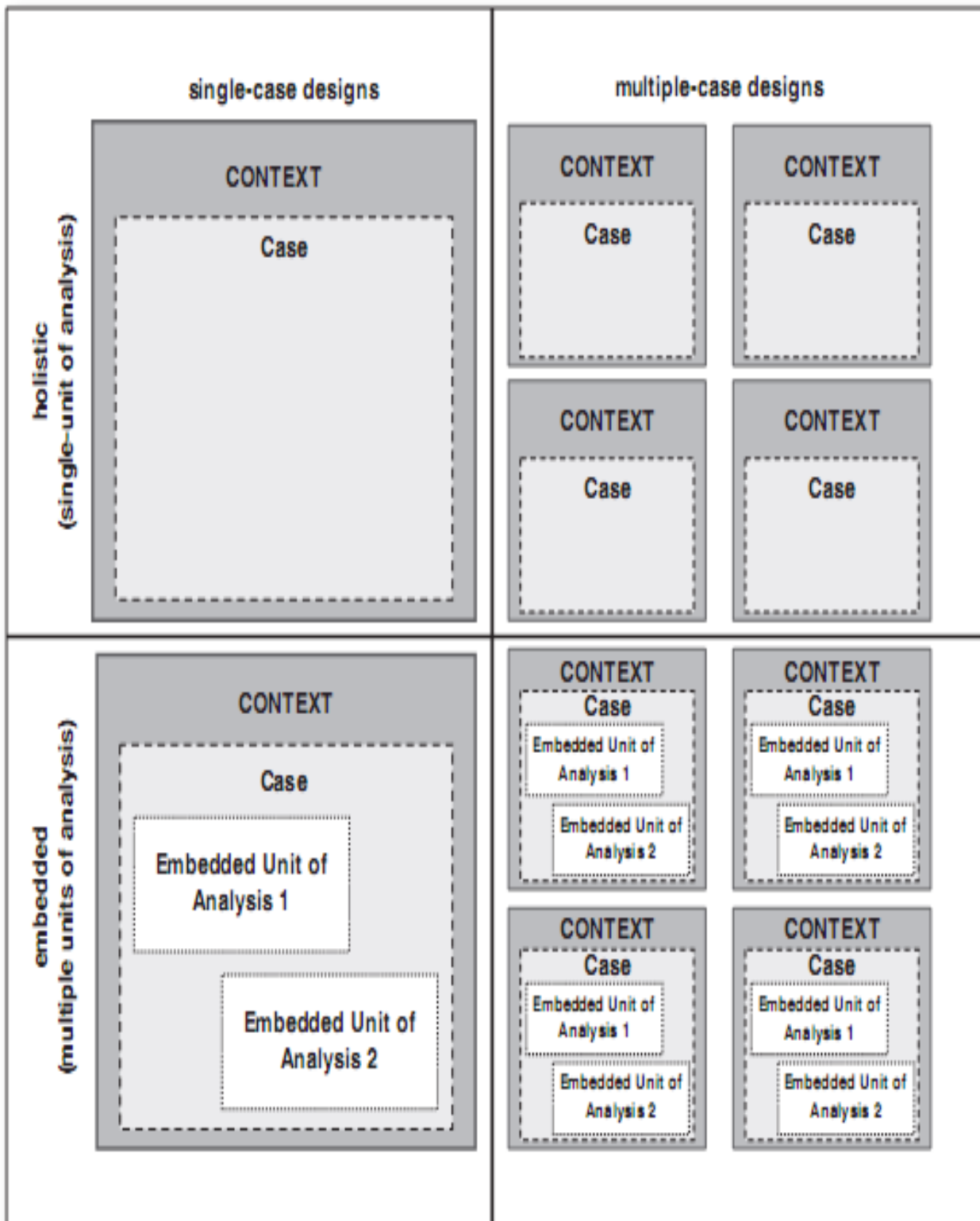
Figure 3.1 Different Types of Case Study Designs (Yin, 2003: 46)

As far as the present research study is concerned an embedded multiple-case study is required. Indeed, the research deals with an evaluation of the teaching of the speaking skill in three different secondary schools in the Wilaya of Tlemcen. Thus a multiple case study will allow the researcher to analyze within each setting and across settings. The researcher makes experiments in three secondary schools in the same manner and using the same research tools to be able to understand better the teaching of the speaking skill within the framework of the CBA and then to examine the results of the different cases trying to understand the similarities and differences in the implementation of the new approach to EFL teaching.

3.3.2 Sampling

The participants in any research constitute the key pillar of the investigation. The study participants were 10 EFL teachers from three secondary schools in Tlemcen and their third year Scientific Stream pupils. The following sub-sections are devoted to the description of these two groups of participants and the three secondary schools where the research took place .

3.3.2.1 Secondary Schools Profiles

The three secondary schools, where the study took place, are: *Ibn Tofail, Miloud Boumechra, and Ahmed Benzekri*. The researcher was first asked to seek permission from the teaching academy in order to be authorized to enter these three secondary schools, to speak with the EFL teachers, to attend their English courses for the classroom observation and then to be able to display the questionnaires, and conduct the interviews.

These three secondary schools were chosen on the basis that they are all located in the city of Tlemcen and then easy to reach for the researcher. The choice was done on purpose, because as it was stated before it is a multi case study research, and then, it is time consuming and the researcher was not allowed to stay more than a week in each secondary school. On the other hand, the three

secondary schools are considered to be among the schools which obtain the best results in the city of Tlemcen.

3.3.2.2 Teachers' Profile

Ten EFL secondary school teachers, also known as PES in the Algerian educational context, were interviewed in this research study in order to try to elicit information about the way they handle the teaching of the speaking skill under the CBA, the difficulties they face and the pedagogical change that could be brought to improve the teaching of this skill in the Algerian school.

The researcher considered maximum variation in informants' age, gender, and teaching experience. Therefore, the ten EFL teachers: three from *Ibn Tofail, four from Miloud Boumechra, and three from Ahmed Benzekri* (see table 3.1), who took part in this study, were working at three different secondary schools in Tlemcen. Among these ten teachers there were three men and seven women, all of them hold a licence degree in the English language, and they all had been recruited through a competitive process. Some of them have been recently promoted as permanent teachers. The informants' age varied between 32 and 58 years old, with the majority in their 40s. The participants' experience in teaching English ranged from four to thirty-one years. At the time of the data collection, all were teaching third year secondary school pupils.

It is worth noting that all of the existing EFL teachers in the Algerian secondary schools receive a theoretical training but not a practical one. In other words, there is a gap between what they learn at the university preparing their "licence" Degree and what they actually have to do with their pupils at secondary schools.

Moreover, the English language is a foreign language for these Algerian EFL teachers who were taught by non native teachers. In addition, they receive no specific training either in Algeria or in an English speaking country to improve their speaking skills and then to teach that skill to their young learners.

3.3.2.3 Pupils' Profile

The subjects of this study were 150 third year secondary school pupils (see table 3.1) enrolled during the academic year 2013-2014, and they were from *Ibn Tofail, Miloud Boumechra, and Ahmed Benzekri* secondary schools which count more than 600 pupils in the Scientific Stream.

The pupils were preparing their baccalaureate exam and learnt English for seven years throughout the four years in the middle school and the three years of the secondary school at a rate of three hours per week for each year, and during which teachers followed the CBA principles. The subjects were the pupils of the EFL teachers who participated to the research study. During this phase of research, the pupils kindly accepted to participate in the current study.

These pupils, who are in the age group of seventeen to nineteen years old, have almost identical learning backgrounds. Their Mother Tongue (MT) acquired at home is the Algerian Dialectal Arabic, and for some of them the French language. Modern Standard Arabic is taught in schools, and it is the official language of Algeria since 1962. Modern Standard Arabic and French are respectively the first language (L1) and FL1 while English is the pupils' Second Foreign Language (L2).

The present research study worked with pupils who were enrolled in the Scientific Stream. Then, the researcher wanted to determine how after many years of English learning, Algerian pupils were not able to communicate in the target language. The second reason was determined by the fact that most of those pupils will follow scientific fields of study at the university and even if 95% of undergraduate and post-graduate courses in sciences or in medicine are taught in French language (Miliani, 2000), the role of English in the Algerian educational system became a controversial issue and its teaching is in competition with the French language at all levels of education and that from the first grade level of middle school. In fact, the Algerian learners are

becoming aware of the importance of the English language mainly for those who want to pursue their studies at a higher level.

Table 3.1 Participants

IBN TOFAIL Secondary School				MILOUD BOUMECHRA Secondary School				AHMED BENZEKRI Secondary School			
Teachers		Pupils		Teachers		Pupils		Teachers		Pupils	
A.F	R.F	A.F	R.F	A.F	R.F	A.F	R.F	A.F	R.F	A.F	R.F
3	30%	60	40%	4	40%	65	43.33%	3	30%	25	16.66%

3.3.3 Research Instruments

the research instruments or research tools are the different ways a researcher uses to collect data for his or her investigation such as classroom observation, questionnaires, interviews, think aloud protocols, etc., In this section, a detailed account of the research instruments and tools will be presented. The researcher will present the advantages and the drawbacks of each research instrument used in the research, and justify her choice for data collection methods and the objectives behind the use of each tool.

The current study is an embedded multiple case study involving ten EFL secondary school teachers and 150 third year secondary school pupils from three different secondary schools in the city of Tlemcen. Three research tools were employed in order to answer the research questions set at the beginning of the study and to obtain qualitative and quantitative data. According to Wiersma (1995),

> A qualitative research investigates the complex phenomena experienced by the participants by examining people's words and actions in descriptive ways....it uses the researcher as the data collection instrument and employs inductive analysis.

In the same line of thought, McDonough and McDonough (1997: 53) say, "qualitative research usually gathers observations, interviews, field data records, questionnaires, transcripts, and so on". On the other hand, a quantitative-oriented research is used to "exploit the potentialities of social observation" (Reiss, 1968: 360).

There is a distinct tradition in the literature on social science research methods that advocates the use of multiple methods. This form of research strategy is called "triangulation" (Webb et al., 1966). These various notions share the conception that qualitative and quantitative methods should be viewed as complementary rather than rivals (Denzin, 1978) .Thus, one way of ensuring validity in the present research is to use triangulation.

Triangulation is broadly defined by Denzin (1978: 291) as "the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon." In other words, triangulation refers to the use of more than one data collection and method to the investigation of a research in order to enhance confidence in the findings. The reasons to triangulate are that a single research method can never shed light on a phenomenon. Using multiple methods can help facilitate deeper

understanding (Creswell & Clark 2007). Denzin (1978) and Patton (1999) identify four types of triangulation:

1.   Data triangulation, which entails gathering data through several sampling strategies, so that data at different times and social situations, as well as on a variety of people, are gathered;

2.   Investigator triangulation, which refers to the use of more than one researcher to gather and interpret data;

3.   Theoretical triangulation, which refers to the use of more than one theoretical position in interpreting data;

4. Methodological triangulation, which refers to the use of more than one method for gathering data. In this type it is common to have qualitative and quantitative data.

In the current research, methodological triangulation using quantitative and qualitative research methods is used to provide a more complete set of findings. Using a single method gives the researcher only a partial view of a complex situation Cohen and Manion (1994). However, by using multiple methods, the researcher will gain confidence, and obtain more valid results.

Because it is the researcher's belief that triangulation is a valuable tool for the validity of any research study, the researcher has used the following tools to gather data: the classroom observation method which is one of the most distinctive features in doing case studies. This instrument was used to answer the two first research questions that revolved around the way Algerian EFL teachers handle the speaking skill under the CBA, and the difficulties they face in the implementation of this newly introduced approach.

For the third research question, whose main purpose is to find more about the pupils' response and willingness to learn to speak under the CBA, a questionnaire was addressed to secondary school learners. Then, in order to

answer the research questions dealing with the pedagogical changes that might be brought to improve the teaching of the speaking skill in the Algerian secondary schools, an interview was conducted with the teachers because:

> the interviews were considered as a method of triangulation, a checking out of the consistency of the data obtained from the questionnaire and the classroom observation responses.

(Patton, 1990: 464)

Furthermore, structured interviews can collect a lot of quantifiable data and can work well in situations where the interviewer cannot record the interview in full. The following points provide an overview of the key advantages of a structured interview:

- Standardised questions make the process efficient. All respondents answer the same questions so that answers can be easily compared and trends observed.
- The structured interview can be easily repeated to check the reliability of the data.
- The interview can expand his line of questioning. The respondent can give more detailed responses.
- Structured interviews offer a richer, more comprehensive view of an issue.
- The trained interviewer can rephrase questions or alter tone or manner to suit the interviewee.

Hence, the data gathered via this triangulation procedure was; interpreted quantitatively and qualitatively. Practical conclusions were then drawn at the end of each investigative procedure, hoping that the findings would ultimately illuminate the path to be followed to tackle the problem of the teaching of the speaking skill in EFL classrooms under the CBA. Below, figure 3.2 summarizes the research methods used for each research questions.

3.3.3.1 Classroom Observation

The researcher who collects observational data plays the role of an "outsider" collecting information from all respondents in a situation that is not part of the normal daily life of the school. The assumption is that since the researcher is external to the school, stays only a short time, thus, respondents will answer honestly, as the results are not perceived as affecting them personally. (Chesterfield, 1999)

There is a certain number of strategies that a researcher can use in carrying out classroom observations. The strategy chosen depends on the kind of data to be collected to answer the research questions. Chesterfield, (1999: 8) states several role management strategies that have proved effective for researchers:

- Have a clear picture ahead of time of how you are going to explain your role as a field researcher;

- Recognize the role of school staff and pupils as experts in what happens at the school;

- Be careful not to be insensitive, rude, inconsiderate, or unhelpful;

- Become part of the scenery by "hanging around" and interacting with the teachers, aides, and parents during their free time;

- Do not play the role of evaluator, as this has a negative connotation in many schools;

- Model the role of an observer;

- Keep a diary to record personal feelings and impressions.

Indeed, classroom observation is a very helpful method for this research study as it provides an opportunity to study a situation in its natural context and gives the researcher the chance to gather "live data" from "live situations" that she cannot perceive using other research tools. (Cohen et al., 2000). Classroom observations have always been regarded as superior to other methods in a qualitative research, and are seen as:

> Methods of generating data which involve the researcher immersing [him or herself] in a research setting, and systematically observing dimensions of that setting, interactions, relationships, actions, events, and so on, within it.

> (Mason, 1996: 60. qtd. in Mackey and Gass, 2011: 165)

Four features of observation in a qualitative research are considered:

- participant versus non-participant observation;

- overt versus covert observation;

- open versus closed settings; and,

- structured versus unstructured observation

Gold 1958 classifies the observer as being a:

- Complete participant

- Participant-as-observer

- Observer-as-participant

- Complete observer.

The "complete participant" is someone who is inherent in the situation and a full participant; the "participant- as-observer" is a full participant of the observed group but the members know his/ her status; "observer-as-participant", the researcher is mainly concerned with asking participants questions and the "complete observer" is a non-participant and he/ she is not involved in the observed setting.

The second feature in observation is overt versus covert observation. The former observation means that it is an open observation and that the individuals know that they are observed. On the other hand, a covert observation is an

observation carried out "under cover" and the researcher does not inform the observed group of the research that is taking place.

The observation can also be done in an open or a closed setting. A closed setting can be defined as a place, such as schools in our case, which are not open to the "public" and that the researcher needs some consents from the target authority. The process of gaining access can be lengthy and complex but Bryman (2008) lists a number of strategies that can be followed in order to gain access to closed settings, such as:

- Winning the support of someone in the closed setting;

- Contacting higher authorities;

- Offering something in return, e.g. a report; and

- Providing a clear explanation of your research aims and methods and being honest about how much of the participants' time you are taking up.

Finally, the observation can be structured or unstructured. The structured observation is prepared in advance where the objectives and the hypotheses as well as the grid of observation and the checklist or a rating scale are defined and prepared before the observation setting. In the other side, the unstructured observation is less clear as it means observing before deciding what objectives have to be elicited from the observation. Thus, it does not involve any specific preparation rather completing narrative field notes while observing.

Classroom observation is an important tool of research in the current study as it enables the researcher to obtain the data related to the teaching of the speaking skill in the EFL classes and how the teachers handle the teaching of that skill within the framework of the CBA.

With this research tool, the information is collected by the researcher's structured observation. The main advantage of the classroom observation tool is

that in it, subjectivity is eliminated as the investigator will be as neutral and factual as possible. One of the other advantages is that in this method of research is independent of respondents' willingness to respond because it does not demand any active co-operation from the respondents.

To collect the necessary data, the investigator sat at the end of the classrooms and took notes about the following criteria: learners' interest and participation, teacher's methodology and used materials, learners' strategies, as well as teachers' teaching strategies. The investigator used an observation grid (see appendix A) during three to four successive sessions in each secondary school.

However, the first limitation of this method is that it is time consuming, mainly because the research deals with three secondary schools. Secondly, the information gathered was very limited as the observer was allowed to deal with the classroom observation for only one week for each secondary school, then unforeseen factors may interfere with the observational task, and it is a strong obstacle to collect data effectively.

The classroom observation is used in this research as an exploratory tool to determine how the principles of the CBA are implemented in teaching the speaking skill and how the Algerian learners are responding. It is important to observe a maximum of classrooms to determine the degree of implementation on the newly introduced approach and then the impact of it on our EFL pupils. The classroom observation can be conducted in a qualitative or a quantitative methodology. A quantitative approach numbers, rating scales, counting protocols or rubrics, however, a qualitative approach is more open ended and descriptive in nature (Wragg, 1994)

For the purpose of this study, mixed methodology techniques have been used. The classroom observation was conducted in a quantitative methodology where a pre-established checklist (see appendix) was developed from the theory

using a formal observational instrument and then noting, rating, and reporting the observational evidence under the different classes specified by the instrument to determine the instructional settings directed by the teachers or the learners themselves as well as to determine the type of teaching and learning is taking place in the EFL classroosms. At the same time the researcher was ready to record unexpected events following the qualitative methodology.

3.3.3.2 Questionnaire

One of the most popular methods of collecting data is the questionnaire. A questionnaire is a series of questions with spaces for their replies to be filled in by the respondents. The researcher does not go for the collection of information but through the help of a set of questions or items the required information is collected (Schutt: 2001), thus the information is gathered directly from the respondents who are active participants in this case. The response quality depends on the trust the respondents feel for the research, the topic, and the manner in which the questions are worded and arranged (Laws: 2003)

The form of questions in a questionnaire may be either closed, i.e., Yes'/ 'No' or multiple point type questions, or open-ended i.e. inviting free responses from the respondents. The closed-ended or closed format questions restrict the choice for the respondents among any of the given choice answers. One of the main advantages of including closed questions in the questionnaire design is the ease at performing preliminary analysis. Closed ended questions can also be asked to different groups at different time. (Mackey and Gass 2005)

On the other hand, the open ended questions give the participants an opportunity to express their opinions. These questions don't have predetermined set of responses and the respondent is free to answer whatever he/she feels right. By including open format questions in the questionnaire, the investigator can get true, insightful and even unexpected suggestions. An ideal questionnaire would

include an open-ended question at the end of the questionnaire that seeks feedback and/or suggestions for improvements from respondents. (ibid)

In fact, this method is thought to be the most commonly used technique to collect data. Indeed, the questionnaire research is popular among educational researchers in general and ELT researchers in particular. McDonough and McDonough (1997:) state the advantages of questionnaires as follows:

- The knowledge needed is controlled by the questions; therefore it affords a good deal of precision and clarity;

- Questionnaires can be used on a small scale, in-house and on a large scale, requiring little more extra effort than photocopying and postage;

- Data can be gathered in several different times lots: all at once in a class, in the respondents' own time as long as it is easy to return, at convenience when a suitable respondent happens to come along, and in different locations at different times; but in all of these the data is comparable, the questions are the same and the format is identical;

- They ensure the anonymity of the respondents and give them sufficient time to think, fill in it and send it back.

- Self-completion questionnaires allow access to outside contexts so information can be gathered from colleagues in other schools.

- It is less time consuming than the interview.
- It is a method that can be conducted at a low cost even when the number of respondents is large.

- Uniformity of questions - Each respondent receives the same set of questions phrased in exactly the same way. Questionnaires may, therefore, yield data more comparable than information obtained through an

interview.

- It is free from the bias of the researchers.

- Respondents have adequate time to give well thought answers.

- Reluctant respondents can be easily approached.

- The result of this method is more dependable and reliable as the research is conducted in a large scale.

Referring to my research project, a questionnaire (see appendix B) was administered to 150 third year secondary school pupils from the three secondary schools mentioned before. This process took place during the week the researcher was allowed to attend the English lectures with the help of the teachers sometimes. The explained clearly the purposes of administering the questionnaire which were to find the pupils' speaking problems, the factors affecting their performance and to find ways to improve the pupils' speaking skills. Then the researcher instructed the pupils to complete it.

3.3.3.3 Interview

The interview involves, according to Kothari (2005), presentation of verbal stimuli and recording of verbal responses. This method is conducted through personal interviews which allow the interviewer to collect information by asking questions to the respondent personally. She went, met the respondents and administered the interviews during the week she was allowed to stay in the respective secondary schools.

The Interview method has some remarkable advantages: interviewers can collect more information in greater depth; they can record verbal answers and use them later; they can collect the interviewers' personal information related to the survey. Moreover, there is greater flexibility under this method. However, this method has some weaknesses, too. It is not only an expensive but also a more "time-consuming" method. Moreover, there is a probability that the interviewers' reactions may affect the proper outcome of the interview.

A structured interview (see appendix C) was conducted with ten EFL teachers because "the interview is a very good way of accessing peoples' perceptions" (Punch, 1998: 174). Thus, one purpose of the structured interview was to clarify the researcher's initial interpretation of the information collected from the classroom observation. The interviews lasted 15 to 20 minutes. The interviews were and took place at a convenient time for the respondents. Then, we tried to ensure a carefully elicited and interpreted interview under the form of open and closed questions. Like the questionnaire, unclear questions were avoided. In addition, the interviewer tried to pay great attention to the interviewees' answers and behaviours.

On the other hand, "the interviews were considered a method of triangulation, a checking out the consistency of the data obtained from the questionnaire responses." (Patton, 1990: 464) McDonough and McDonough (1997: 184) remark that 'a structured interview' is regarded as "being closer to the qualitative paradigm because it allows for richer interaction and more personalized responses".

Hence, Data gathered via this triangulation procedure was as mentioned before interpreted quantitatively and qualitatively. Practical conclusions were then drawn at the end of each investigative procedure, hoping that the findings would ultimately illuminate the path to be followed to tackle the problem of the evaluation of the speaking skill in EFL classrooms.

3.3.4 Research Procedure

To obtain the empiric information for the current research work; three research methods were used: a questionnaire was administered to pupils, an interview was conducted with EFL teachers, and a classroom observation was undertaken. Firstly, in an attempt to develop appropriate survey instruments for this study, a pilot questionnaire was administered to five pupils with the help of an EFL teacher. The pilot questionnaire served to identify those items which

were unclear, repetitive, and unnecessary. Preparing a questionnaire and an interview is not an easy task as this activity requires much care and objectivity. The researcher wanted to be as accurate and concise as possible in formulating her questions in order to avoid confusion and also not to influence the informants when answering. Indeed, it is generally assumed that the manner in which a question is put influences the answer. For this reason the researcher preferred to pilot both questionnaire and the interview prior to their administration. The same thing for the classroom observation as the researcher designed the classroom observation sheet before it took place.

3.3.4.1 Pilot Study

Before the final form of the questionnaire, it is useful to conduct a pilot study to determine if the items are yielding the kind of information that is needed. The term pilot study is used in two different ways in social science research. It can refer to the so called feasibility studies which are small scale version done in preparation for the major study. It is also used to refer to the pre-testing of a particular research instrument or research procedure.

Pilot studies are a crucial element of a good study design. Conducting a pilot study does not guarantee success in the main study, but it does increase the likelihood. Pilot studies fulfil a range of important functions and can provide valuable insights for other researchers. There is a need for more discussion amongst researchers of both the process and outcomes of pilot studies.

A pilot study can be used as a small scale version or trial run in preparation for a major study (Polit, et al. 2001:467) Baker (1994: 182-183) notes that " a pilot study is often used to pre-test or try out a research instrument". Baker found that a sample size of 10-20% of the sample size for the actual study is a reasonable number of participants to consider enrolling in a pilot. Although a pilot study does not guarantee success in the main study, it greatly increases the likelihood.

Before administering the questionnaire survey, a pilot study was conducted. The purposes of the pilot survey were to develop the standard of the questions in the questionnaire and interview to make the questions easily understood to the respondents who are meant to answer them, 5 pupils were selected and asked to answer the questionnaire. As a result, the questionnaire was edited and modified in the light of the problems the respondents faced in answering, and the responses got from them. Thus the survey was finalized for the fieldwork as the researcher omitted unnecessary questions and clarified ambiguous ones to obtain the needed information.

3.3.4.2 The Study Proper

The researcher started with a classroom observation in EFL classrooms at the secondary schools in the city of Tlemcen. The researcher was allowed to attend the classrooms for three weeks, one week in each school as she was asked not to use tape or video recorders. Thus, the Classroom observation necessitated a total attention from the researcher on what was happening in the setting. The investigator was constantly making observation, during and after the class. The researcher attended one to two sessions with each teacher.

As a second instrument, the researcher addressed to 3rd year secondary school pupils a questionnaire meant to determine the way they respond to the teaching of the speaking skill under the CBA. The general aim of this questionnaire was to identify the difficulties they encountered when interacting orally in the target language, and to have their viewpoints concerning the present teaching of the speaking skill, its relation to academic needs, and its assessment.

After the two first procedures, it was time to interview the EFL teachers at the secondary schools. Designing the structured interview, the researcher was to prepare to record data, no record tape was used and no dictaphone. Having the interview plan in hands, the interviewer asked the

questions and the teachers answered. The choice was made on the structured interview as there were rigorous set of questions to follow and to which we are bound to respect thus it was a quite closed discussion with the teachers. Finally and after ending up the structured interview, the researcher transcribed the collected data.

3.3.4.3 Data Analysis

Brown points out, that "collecting the necessary data is half the battle", thus, researchers need to tackle the other half which encompasses the analysis of these collected data. In fact, the researcher needs to edit, simplify, analyze and summarize these data. In the current research study the data analysis can be broadly categorized as consisting of qualitative and quantitative analysis since the chosen research instruments were carefully designed to obtain quantitative and qualitative information.

Quantitative and qualitative research are commonly considered to differ fundamentally. Yet, their objectives overlap in numerous ways.

- The Quantitative analysis is considered to have as its main purpose is to convert data to numerical forms and analyze them in a statistical way. It has been employed in this research in order to provide a clear and objective overview of the data. This may allow generalizations of results from a sample to an entire population. The quantitative analysis in the present work relies on quantified data which can tell us what third year secondary school pupils lack to be successful in speaking tasks, the causes behind their weaknesses and the strategies needed to overcome the difficulties they encounter when expressing themselves in the target language. The data are summarized in tables in which the numerical data are converted into percentages to allow comparison. Given (2008) claims that the analysis of quantitative data is useful in enhancing the validity, and credibility of the research results. Yet, quantitative research is not

infrequently followed by qualitative research which then aims to explore select findings further.

- Qualitative analysis is considered to be particularly suitable for gaining an in-depth understanding of reasons and motivations. It provides insights into the setting of a problem. In highlighting the main characteristics of qualitative data analysis, Dörnyei (2007) states that it is a language based analysis because most of the qualitative findings are transformed into a textual form. It is defined by Dawson (2009: 116) as, "a very personal process, with few rigid rules and procedures". In this research study, the qualitative analysis is based on the researcher's observation and interpretation. It is exploratory and descriptive oriented in purpose.

To close this chapter, a figure that summarizes the present research design is provided.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS	RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS	SAMPLING

How do Algerian secondary school teachers handle the speaking skill under the CBA?

Classroom observation

What are the difficulties they face when teaching the speaking skill under the CBA?

3RD year secondary school pupils

How do Algerian 3rd year secondary school pupils respond to learning to speak under the CBA?

Questionnaire

What is the pedagogical change that can be brought to improve the teaching of the speaking skill under the CBA in Algerian secondary schools?

EFL teachers

Interview

Figure 3.2 Research Design

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter was concerned with the description of the research design, and then presented the research instruments. It has been devoted to the empirical phase of this research. The data collection tools used for testing the research hypotheses have been introduced. They consist of questionnaires for learners and structured interviews for teachers and classroom observation. The questionnaire is considered as a data collection tool of a soft category (McDonough, 1995), it helped in this case for collecting relevant information on the learners. The application of triangulation research tools helped to uncover and report salient patterns in teachers beliefs and underlying teaching assumptions, in the subjects of pupils' speaking performance as well as in the pedagogical inadequacies.

On the light of what has been said, the data are gathered and some interpretations are drawn from the information collected and the obtained results have been exposed and discussed in the next chapter. The fourth chapter will analyse and discuss the findings of each research instrument in addition to the interpretation of the main results according to the research questions and hypotheses formerly raised.

Chapter Four

Data Analysis and Interpretation

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the data analysis in terms of absolute and relative frequency counts. It shows the present level of the pupils' speaking skill, their range of problems, the teachers' activities and their role in teaching the speaking skill the Algerian secondary school in the "Wilaya" of Tlemcen.

To reach the objectives of the research, this work was designed as a quantitative and qualitative study which produces both exploratory and descriptive explanation (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006). More specifically, this research used a case study method in order to contextualize the research within the real life environment of Algerian secondary school classrooms. Additionally, it allowed different data collection tools such as the questionnaire, the interview and the classroom observation.

The collection of data in three secondary schools in the city of Tlemcen gave a wide view to how the Algerian EFL teachers implement the teaching of the speaking skill, and how the pupils respond to that teaching as well as the strategies used in the teaching and learning of the oral skill. This chapter, therefore, stands for the practical part of the study which involves the combined use of both quantitative and qualitative data analysis techniques.

Finally, the main results drawn from this study are summarized in this fourth chapter to state to what extent the questions raised by this research study have been answered. In other words, it tried to make a correlation between the stated hypotheses and the real state of art that is pictured in the obtained results.

4.2 Classroom Observation

The following section is concerned with the description of the design of the classroom observation and the quantitative and qualitative analyses of the

results obtained. This observation technique was used in order to evaluate how the speaking skill was dealt with in the Algerian EFL classrooms at the secondary school level, and the way the pupils respond to the teaching of this oral skill.

Therefore, the researcher directly looked, listened and observed the target situation rather than asking people about their attitudes and views of the studied setting. Then, the classroom observation instrument helped the researcher to gather data on the physical environment, the people or individuals being observed, the relational as well as the interactional setting and the activities or the resources used.

4.2.1 Design

In this case study, the researcher first designed the classroom observation sheet. The Class observation took place during three weeks thus, the researcher made the investigation in a short period of time, as she was not allowed to attend the EFL sessions more than a week for each secondary school. The observation went on during the 2013/2014 academic year.

After asking for permission from the concerned authorities and the teachers who were in charge of the classes, the researcher observed each class in one to two periods. During these sessions of observation, the researcher used a variety of techniques to collect information. In fact, the pupils were informed by their teachers that they are observed and they knew the purpose of the research.

The observer used a structured observation though she took notes while observing using an unstructured observation. For the structured observation grid, a rating scale was used for the target phenomenon called "Likert scale"[1] where a range of responses were proposed for a given statement. The Ratings is on a five-point scale (never, rarely, sometimes, very often, and always). The different

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[1] Likert scale named after his inventor, Rensis Likert, 1932

points are classified in a table and the researcher points out by putting a tick. (See appendix A).

Table: 4.1. Example of Likert Five-Point Scale Rating

Question	never	rarely	sometimes	Very often	always
Does the teacher provide opportunities to the pupils to interact orally in the classrooms?			✓		

The classroom observation for this research study took place in three different secondary schools in the city of Tlemcen with 10 EFL teachers. The observer attended one to two sessions with each teacher. During these sessions, the researcher was sitting at the back of the classroom, pupils were facing their teachers in order not to draw the pupils' attention and to minimise their spontaneity. However, the presence of the researcher may affect the behaviour of the individuals being observed which is described as   the "observer effect" (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992)

The researcher aimed at providing a careful description of the teaching of the speaking skill within the framework of the CBA and for such purposes, an observation grid was prepared for the classroom observation. The grid consisted of nineteen questions which were divided into different sections.

The classroom observation grid was designed and divided into different sections:

- The first section is meant to determine if there are any oral interactions in EFL classrooms or if the EFL teachers provide opportunities to their pupils to use the target language and thus perform their speaking skill.

- In the second part the questions are related to the role of the teacher during an oral interaction followed by a question related to the use of the mother tongue or to the use of the French language during the English sessions.

- The following questions in the grid are designed to observe if the teachers arrange the class in pairs or in groups during the speaking activities.

- The next sections are related to the teaching techniques, regarding the aspects of teaching speaking in the class.

- The questions are also designed to see how the teachers teach the pupils to encounter the speaking difficulties when interacting orally in the class, and the materials the teachers use in teaching the speaking skill.

4.2.2 Results and Interpretation

The data gathered through classroom observations will be analysed and discussed in this part of the dissertation. The classroom observation was meant to obtain a complete and careful evaluation of the teaching of the speaking skill in the Algerian EFL classrooms at the secondary school level. The researcher was not allowed to use a tape recorder or a video tape during this observation which would have been quite helpful. In the following sub-sections, the main results obtained from the collected information through the different observation sessions in the three secondary schools, concerning the teaching of the speaking skill have been compared analyzed as follows:

- **Oral Interaction in EFL Classrooms**

Regarding the oral interaction in the EFL classrooms to determine if the Algerian EFL teachers provide and create opportunities for pupils to use the

target language orally in the classrooms for the sake of developing the pupils oral production skill, are mainly positive in the three secondary schools. Concerning the teacher –pupil interaction, the observed EFL teachers present and brainstorm the activities they have to deal with trying to create a kind of discussion between him/her and the well receptive pupils. However, the observer noticed that the EFL teachers did not create many opportunities for the pupils to interact orally in English between the pupils themselves.

Classrooms should be filled with talk mainly when the approach of teaching focuses on interaction and communication as it is the case for the CBA. One of the issues which were investigated in this study was to do with how much pupils use the target language in the classroom. The classroom observation revealed, unfortunately, that the talk was dominated by the teachers themselves giving fewer opportunities to learners to interact in English. Scrivener, 1998: 16 states that:

> The more a teacher talks –the less opportunity there is for
> the learners..... They need time to think, prepare what they
> are going to say and how they are going to say it.

The observer noticed that the learners in EFL classrooms in the three secondary schools did not have the opportunity to use the English language with their peers during the English sessions, and that the pupils talk could be summarized to their answers to the teachers' questions. The EFL learners did not have enough time to develop their speaking abilities, as the more the teacher talks the less opportunity was left for the learners. EFL pupils needed time to develop their thought into words and then to process information and develop their own sentences. An idea that is clearly defined by Vygotsky (1962 qtd in Fisher et al., 2008: 5) stating that:

> thinking develops into words in a number of phases,
> moving from imaging to inner speech to inner speaking to
> speech. Then, it is time to realize that learners have to use

the language if they have to become better speakers of the
target language.

On the other hand, the observer noticed that not all the learners participated actively during the English sessions, those who were at the back of the classrooms participated less than those who were sitting at the front, and this was due to the "whole-class" seating arrangement in most of the EFL classrooms. The teachers did their best to encourage all their pupils to participate and interact, but it was quite impossible to make sure that all their pupils interact orally during the sessions, the huge number of pupils and time constraints did not allow that.

- **Teachers' Role during the Oral Interactions**

In this part, the researcher is interested in the teacher's role during the oral interactions. Four questions were designed to determine if the EFL teachers played an active role during speaking activities. The role of the EFL teachers in the classroom is mainly to provide pupils with English speaking opportunities.

During the observed sessions, the researcher noted that the teachers in all the secondary schools, where the investigation took place, were active partners while interacting orally to the exception of one of the secondary school EFL teachers who tried not to intervene while the pupils were responding, giving them the chance to think, reformulate if they were in need to do so. Though, it could also be explained by the pupils' high proficiency level of English in this classroom.

The observed teachers presented the activity, and then the pupils were generally asked to talk about the topic. Teachers started to ask questions to the whole class and pupils were told to raise their hands and waited for the teacher to let them speak. Then while answering some of them had difficulties in finding words or the right expressions to convey what they wanted to say. It was also noted that all the EFL teachers provided the missing vocabulary to help the pupils to pursue their thoughts.

In the EFL classrooms teachers asked questions to their learners brainstorming the topic and the latter answered questions about the subject matter, then, discussions were held between the teachers and their pupils. The teachers stood at the front of the classrooms, whereas the pupils were sitting on their chairs listening to their teachers' questions and raising their hands to answer. The oral interaction was a teacher-learner interaction only, the teachers initiated the discussions, guided the conversation by asking questions and helped the learners at any time they lacked vocabulary in addition to the feedback provided after the answer given to him/her. According to Harmer (1991), the teachers' intervention should be avoided as much as possible and the learner-learner interaction fostered in communicative activities which is not what the observer noted during the sessions where the pupils do not interact orally between them.

- **Teachers' Use of the Mother Tongue**

The target language in EFL classrooms must be used as much as possible. The learners need to be exposed to the foreign language taught in the classroom, to understand its meaning and to practise it. When the teachers speak in English, pupils will be familiar with the language and they will be able to produce new sentences themselves as the classroom is the only environment where the pupils make use of the target language. This question is designed to know if the Algerian EFL teachers use the mother tongue or the French language in the classrooms.

The observer noted that all EFL teachers introduced, explained, and talked in the target language most of the time. However, it happened that the teacher used the mother tongue or French to explain a difficult word that the learners could not understand even if the teacher gave an example and used non-verbal language i.e. gestures to introduce the word.

Sometimes, the pupils themselves asked the teacher to give them the meaning of the English word in the mother tongue or in French. Or as noticed in an EFL classroom in one of the secondary schools, the pupils gave the translation of the word to the teacher asking him/her if they were right or wrong. Others used their pocket or mobile dictionaries to have the meaning of a word.

Therefore, the use of the mother tongue by the EFL teachers remained of occasionally use in all the EFL classrooms where the observation was carried out by the researcher. The mother tongue and the French language were used as facilitating teaching tools. On the other hand, it was noted that the teachers used the mother tongue when the pupils made too much noise not following the lesson or when they were not doing their activities.

- **Group and Pair Work in EFL Classrooms**

In any communicative learning task, the teachers are encouraged to use pair or group work during their lessons. The question is designed to see if the EFL teachers organize or split the class in pairs or in groups in order to foster learner-learner interaction. Pair or group works are, indeed, excellent tools to promote learners interaction, in fact it is up to the teacher to arrange the pupils in individual, pair or group work depending on the activities dealt with and the goals of the activities.

During the time that the researcher was attending the EFL classrooms, none of the teachers split the pupils into groups or pairs. Byrne (1989:31) says that:

> …… unless you have a very small class, you will never be able to give your students enough oral practice through whole class work. If you divide your students into pairs for just five minutes, each student will get more talking time during those five minutes than during the rest of the lesson.

At a first glance, pair or group work might seem time consuming for the teachers as it needs a certain preparation at the beginning mainly if the learners are not accustomed to work using this technique, but by the time the pupils will become more and more efficient. In using the whole class interaction the teachers are not able to make sure that all their learners take part in the oral interaction. However, the pair or group works will give opportunity to the teacher to walk around the classroom offering each of the learners the possibility to discuss the encountered problems or difficulties.

On the other hand, the pair or group works interaction give more opportunities to the learners to practise the language, to become more confident for the shy learners who do not want to talk in front of the whole class but prefer to work in smaller groups, it may help the pupils to pool their knowledge when dealing with the activities which may increase the pupils motivation using the target language as they will take responsibility for their own learning without even the supervision of the teacher.

- **Learning Communicative Strategies in EFL Classrooms**

According to the new reform in education, language teaching aims at making the Algerian learners gain autonomy in promoting the pupils' learning strategies as well as to develop their communicative skills to be able to interact in a creative way in a natural setting. Thus, it is necessary for the Algerian EFL teachers to teach them how to develop their English communicative skills by teaching them learning and communicative strategies in order to cope with the speaking skills difficulties they face in oral interactions in the target language.

The data collected through classroom observation showed that the oral interaction was deficient compared with the other language skills. Most of the time, the EFL teachers focused on teaching grammar, vocabulary, and reading and writing skills rather than teaching speaking. The teaching of the speaking

skills could be summarized to the teacher brainstorming activities or when the pupils' answered the teachers' questions.

The observation revealed that during the teacher-learner oral interaction, the pupils came to face some deficiencies and problems expressing themselves in the target language, and the questions in this part were designed to see if after seven years of studying the English language, Algerian EFL learners were able to express themselves in English and how they coped with their speaking difficulties. At the same time the researcher wanted to see what were the learning and communicative strategies used by the learners to overcome their speaking problems.

Faerch and Kasper (1983a: 36) define Communicative Strategies as: "potentially conscious plans for solving what to an individual presents itself as a problem in reaching a particular communicative goal". In the same line of thought, Towell (1987: 97) states that CSs are:

> the means used by a speaker to overcome a difficulty encountered whilst attempting to communicate in the foreign language. Therefore, the learners need to be taught the learning and communicative strategies that could help them to encounter communicative problems.

Moreover, it was noticed that the teachers tended to guide their pupils in oral interaction supplying vocabulary when necessary; however they did not teach their pupils how to cope with the speaking problems. This was due to the lack of time and the overloaded curricula in addition to the number of the pupils in each classroom according to the interview with the EFL teachers.

- **Communication Difficulties**

The classroom observation was very useful to allow the researcher to determine the communicative difficulties that the Algerian EFL learners face

using the English language. During the different sessions that the researcher attended the EFL classrooms, the observer noticed that the majority of the pupils lacked the necessary vocabulary to get their message across, and then, they stopped talking or asked for the teachers' help or used their mother tongue in their English oral interaction.

The observer noticed that the weaker the pupils were the less they spoke or were less willing to participate in the classroom with their peers. In fact, because of the lack of vocabulary and the lack of knowledge of the LSs and the CSs, pupils lacked the motivation to see the need for them to learn the English language. Motivation is the engine which determines the personal involvement of the learners in foreign language learning (Oxford, 1996), then lack of motivation of some pupils presents another challenge for the EFL teachers.

In some of the EFL classrooms where the investigation took place, the pupils were so unmotivated that the observer noticed some indiscipline behaviour in the classrooms, which made the control of the whole class impossible. The EFL teachers were of course not blamed as they were struggling doing their best to accomplish the task given to them with a primary goal in mind which was the baccalaureate examination at the end of the academic year.

It is also important to mention at this stage of the research that just before the first week of classroom observation, a strike was held by teachers which disturbed the successful completion of the academic year. The teacher found themselves struggling to finish the programme and if we consider the time devoted to each single session made it impossible to satisfy each learner's needs.

- **Accuracy Vs. Fluency in EFL Classrooms**

Sessions of classroom observation revealed that teachers paid careful attention to the correct use of the target language when their pupils were using the language in oral interaction. The researcher noted that the EFL teachers

emphasized on grammar and structure correctness whenever the pupils had to answer as if they were dealing with a written production.

There is no doubt to the fact that teachers need to pay attention to the accuracy of the utterances given by the pupils. However, they have to keep a certain balance of accuracy vs. Fluency during the oral interactions. Correcting learners' errors in the EFL classrooms is an issue of concern for every EFL teacher. There is a tension between fluency and accuracy where too much desire or struggle for accuracy denies learner fluency. On the other hand, too much emphasis on fluency can result in spoken rigmarole that follows no rules at all.

- **Speaking Activities and Used Materials in EFL Classrooms**

This part is devoted to determine if the EFL teachers provide their learners with activities that promote speaking such as discussions, role plays, interviews, etc. and if the activities are in relation with real life situations. The classroom observation pointed out to the fact that the focus in teachers' methodology in the classrooms was on the reading/ writing skills and the practice of the grammatical rules, which was of great evidence that the Algerian EFL teachers tended to prepare their third year secondary school pupils for the baccalaureate examination first.

The components of the "BAC" exam are: comprehension questions on a reading passage followed by a text exploration section which consists of lexical and grammatical activities related to the text given, to end with a written production. There is no place to the listening/ speaking skills in this final academic examination. For this reason and because of the lack of time EFL inspectors recommended to drop listening and speaking sequences from third year secondary school classes in the 2008 syllabus.

Indeed, there is a clear contradiction in the Algerian EFL teaching and learning if we consider that the listening and speaking skills which constitute the hallmark of the new educational reform and of the principles of the CBA are to

some extend neglected in EFL classrooms except for the teacher- learner interaction brainstorming or answering a reading text.

In this era of communication and technology, audio-visual aids can be used in an attractive way in order to teach oral interaction in the EFL classrooms. The researcher, wanted to know if the EFL teachers used them to promote the speaking skills. The audio-visual aids are always attractive to the learners; they can draw the attention of the learners easily (Cakir, 2006).

The findings of this part of the classroom observation revealed that only one of the EFL teachers observed used audio-visual resources in their EFL classrooms such as power points slides or listening records. However, integrating technological aids in classroom sessions is even more time consuming. Teachers who used audio-visual aids in their classrooms needed to be accompanied by a technician in new technologies as they faced some difficulties in launching the media used.

4.2.3 Summary

The classroom observation research tool enabled the researcher to collect valuable amount of data concerning the teaching of the speaking skill in the Algerian EFL classrooms. The aim was to identify the way in which the teaching of the speaking skill was administered in EFL classrooms under the CBA since the educational reform.

Classroom observation allowed the researcher to conclude that the teaching of the English language in the Algerian EFL classrooms is not communicative directed. The teaching method was most of the time teacher directed. There is no pair or group work activities used. The speaking Activities are generally in a form of teacher-learner interactions and the material used was the English textbook. During the oral interactions or when the pupils tried to answer their teachers 'questions accuracy was required. The teachers were there

to correct every mistake in speaking. Thus accuracy is still dominating in the EFL Classrooms.

4.3 Pupils' Questionnaire

The present section is devoted to the analysis of the data collected from the pupils' questionnaire. As mentioned in the previous sections in the third chapter, a questionnaire was administered to one hundred and fifty third year EFL secondary school pupils from three different schools in the city of Tlemcen.

The pupils' questionnaire was designed and administered to the EFL learners to clarify some points concerning the speaking strategies they use in oral interaction as well as the difficulties they face and the teaching of the speaking skill in their classrooms.

After the analysis of classroom observation data, the pupils' questionnaire results are analyzed to bring insightful information of how the pupils respond to the teaching of the speaking skills under the CBA.

4.3.1 Design

The pupils' questionnaire (See Appendix B) was developed on the light of the results obtained from the classroom observation. The choice of the questionnaire as the second research tool relied on the fact that it is a reflective instrument of data collection.

The administration of the questionnaire was made during the last session the researcher attended the English session classes. The questionnaire contains multiple-choice questions with. The questions carefully selected and simplified according to the pupils' English proficiency level and age. Filling the questionnaire took ten to fifteen minutes with the help of the teacher in order to ensure understanding of the questions. The percentage of questionnaires completed and returned was of 80 % overall rate. Indeed the questionnaires were

displayed to about two hundred pupils in the three secondary schools and only one hundred and fifty were competed correctly and then could have been used for the study.

The pupils' questionnaire consists of seven rubrics distributed as follows:

- Language skills preference in EFL Learning. Illustrated in question 1

- The English syllabus. Illustrated in question 2

- Pupils' Speaking Skills Strategies. Illustrated in questions 3 to 9

- EFL Learners Difficulties in an Oral Interaction. Illustrated in question 10

- Preferred Learning Strategies. Illustrated in question 11

- Learner-learner interaction. Illustrated in question 12

- Teacher-learner relationship. Illustrated in question 13

- Pupils' Attitudes towards the Evaluation of the Speaking Skill. Illustrated in question 14

- Approaches and Methods Currently Used For Teaching Speaking Skills in the EFL Classrooms Illustrated in questions 15 to 20

The pupils' questionnaire was meant to elicit information from learners with the aim of bringing some change in the way EFL learners experience the learning of the speaking skill.

4.3.2 Results and Interpretation

Results of the pupils' questionnaire are presented and analyzed in terms of absolute frequency and relative frequency in different tables. The pupils' questionnaire consists of the following parts:

▪ **Language skills preferences in EFL Learning**

Question 1 focused on finding pupils' learning preferences among the language skills. The majority of the informants, about 55%, expressed their desire for improving their speaking skills. The following table shows their preferences in language skills learning. The option also contains the areas of reading and writing as well grammar and vocabulary since these are the focus in the baccalaureate examination.

Table 4.2 Pupils' Preferences in Language Skills

	A.F.	R.F.
Listening And speaking	**82**	**54.6%**
Reading and Writing	**40**	**26.6%**
Grammar and Vocabulary	**28**	**18.6%**

▪ **The English syllabus**

Question 2 (My English lessons focus mainly on improving: ……)

The data obtained (see table 4.3) revealed that 46.6% which represented the majority of the pupils asked were of the opinion that the areas of language learning which were being improved were mainly the ones of grammar and vocabulary, as the current lessons focused on that, while 40% stated that it was improving their reading and writing skills. This was the contrary of pupils' preferences in language learning as seen in the first question where they expressed their wish to improve their speaking and listening skills and the importance they attach to the latter skills as compared to grammar and vocabulary or to reading and writing. Only 13.3% of the respondents said that their speaking and listening skills improved by the current syllabus.

Table 4.3 Pupils' Language Skills Improvement

Question		A.F.	R.F.
My English lessons focus mainly on improving…	**listening and speaking skills**	20	13.3%
	reading and writing skills	60	40%
	grammar and vocabulary	70	46.6%

- **Pupils' Speaking Skills Strategies (questions 3 to 9)**

        This part of the pupils' questionnaire dealt with the pupils' knowledge of learning and communicative strategies and whether they used them in oral interaction or not. In fact when we talk about the speaking skill in EFL classrooms we cannot dissociate it from the listening skill as they depend on each other. Indeed if we gauge learners by their abilities to communicate in the target language, the listening skill provides the aural input which is the basis for language learning that enables the pupils to interact in spoken communication. The following questions reveal if the Algerian EFL learners know how to make use of speaking skills strategies starting with the strategies they use to cope with difficulties in understanding oral speech.

Question 3: how many times do you need to listen to a conversation or a talk to be able to understand it?

Table 4.4 Pupils' Listening Comprehension

	A.F.	R.F.
Once	10	6.6%
Twice	20	13.3%
Three times	65	43.3%
More than three times	55	36.6%

        This question aimed at evaluating the Algerian EFL learners' listening comprehension in speaking activities or oral interaction. The results showed that most of the respondents need to listen three times or more to be able to understand the aural text, about 80% of the learners, according to the analysis of the answers of the pupils' questionnaire. The above table showed that only 6.6 % of the pupils were able to grasp the meaning of an oral message by listening once, and only 13.3% were able to comprehend by listening twice.

Question 4: What do you do when facing some difficulties when you are listening to spoken English?

Table 4.5 Pupils' Listening Strategies

	A.F.	R.F.
Do nothing	15	10%
Ask for the teacher's help	20	13.3%
Ask to listen again	40	26.6%
try to use my previous knowledge	05	3.3%
try to listen for the main idea without focusing on other small details	40	26.6%
I make a guess to what I am listening to by interpreting the speaker's tone of voice, facial expressions, or gestures	30	20%

The above table summarized the way the pupils dealt when facing difficulties in listening comprehension, whether during an activity, when they had to listen to an aural text or when their teachers were talking to them. The pupils might not be aware of the listening strategies that they used in order to overcome their lack of comprehension in an oral interaction, nevertheless they used them unconsciously. For the majority of pupils (about 54%), they said that either they asked to listen again to an aural text or they asked the teacher to repeat otherwise they just tried to grasp the main idea without necessarily paying too much attention to the details. 20% of the respondents tried to make guess what they were listening to and 13.3% of them asked for their teacher's explanation. According to the results obtained, we may notice that 10% of the

pupils did nothing which revealed that they gave up in making efforts in understanding the target language.

Questions 5, 6, 7 and 8: Pupils' Speaking abilities

As far as the EFL learners speaking abilities were concerned, the questions related to the speaking skill were gathered and the results summarized in the table below that gave us a global picture about their competences in the speaking skill.

Table 4.6 Pupils' Speaking Abilities

Questions	Respondents' Answers	A.F	R.F
Can you answer questions in English?	Never	20	13.33%
	Rarely	55	36.66%
	Sometimes	50	33.33%
	Very often	15	10%
	Always	10	6.66%
Can you recall details of a spoken conversation in English?	Never	45	30%
	Rarely	45	30%
	Sometimes	40	26.66
	Very often	15	10%
	Always	05	3.33%
Can you give the whole idea of a spoken conversation in English?	Never	30	20%
	Rarely	30	20%

	Sometimes	58	38.66%
	Very often	22	14.66%
	Always	10	6.66%
Can you use your previous background knowledge to respond to a conversation?	Never	20	13.33%
	Rarely	30	20%
	Sometimes	50	33.33%
	Very often	30	20%
	Always	20	13.33%

According to the above results we could say that only few pupils considered that they could give answers using the target language or recall details of a spoken conversation or even give the whole idea of a spoken conversation or use their background knowledge when they had to respond in English.

The results obtained show that only 16.66% pupils said that they could very often or always answer in English, 13.33% of them could recall details of a spoken conversation, about 21% of pupils could give the whole idea of a spoken conversation and 33.33% of them used their previous background knowledge to respond in a conversation, which corresponded to about 17%, 14%, 20%, and 33% respectively. On the other side, the percentage of pupils who said they were not able to use the target language in oral interaction was very high if we refer to the table above, about 47% of them considered that they could rarely or never answer in English.

Question 9: What are the strategies that you use to cope with speaking difficulties?

Table 4.7 Pupils' Speaking Strategies

	A.F.	R.F.
Paraphrase (reformulate)	35	23.33%
Using synonyms	45	30%
Using the mother tongue or French words	50	33.33%
Avoid to interact orally	20	13.33%

This question aimed at determining the strategies used by the Algerian secondary school pupils when facing difficulties when speaking in the English language. According to the above table which summarized the results obtained, about 14% of the pupils used avoidance; they could not think to something to say or prefer not to interact in the target language.

For the others, they said that in order to overcome their difficulties in speaking, they tried to find synonyms to the missing word or they reformulated the utterance and finally some referred to the use of the mother tongue or words from the French language trying to get the message across.

- **EFL Learners Difficulties in an Oral Interaction. Illustrated in question 10**

Questions 10: What are the main problems or difficulties in oral English language interaction?

Table 4.8EFL learners' Speaking Problems

	A.F.	R.F.
Lack of vocabulary	90	60%
Grammar mistakes	55	36.66%
Pronunciation mistakes	40	26.66%
Lack of opportunities in the classrooms	30	20%

It should be noted that most pupils ticked more than one item for this question. It was revealed from the table above that 60% of pupils referred to their lack of vocabulary as the major difficulty they had to cope with when coming to an oral interaction. What was interesting from the results obtained was that 20% of the pupils considered that they lack opportunities to interact orally in the classrooms. Grammar and pronunciation mistakes could also act as a brake for about 63% of the respondents chose these answers in their response.

- **Preferred Learning Strategies.**

Questions 11: What kind of English class do you like?

Table 4.9 Teaching Method

	A.F.	R.F.
Teacher just teaching, students listening	**20**	**13.33%**
Pupils are active partners in their learning and are involved in learning activities like games group and pair work/ projects.	**130**	**86.66%**

This question intended to find out pupils' preferred learning styles and strategies. It established the pattern of pupils' preference for teaching/learning strategies. More than 80% preferred activities like role play, games, and projects as compared to passive learning.

Pupils' preference for the kind of classroom interaction which involved several activities, where pupils interacted and were involved in tasks and where the teacher relinquished his control was supported by the fact that pupils displayed a greater degree of enthusiasm and participation and thus learning would improve. Thus the pupils preferred their active role in the classroom by participating in a lot of learning activities, pair work/ group work, games and projects as compared a passive role with little activities in the classroom and the teacher in control of everything in the classroom.

- ### Learner-learner interaction.

Question 12: How do you prefer to do learning activities in the classroom?

Table 4.10 Classroom Interaction Patterns

	A.F.	R.F.
Alone	40	**26.66%**
With a friend or a group of friends	110	**73.33%**

This question investigated the preference for classroom interaction patterns. 73.33% of the pupils preferred pair or group work interaction pattern as compared to working alone activities. 26.66% of the pupils stated a preference in working alone.

- ### Role relationship. Illustrated in question 13

Questions 13: What kind of role do you like your teacher to have?

Table 4.11 Teacher's role

Questions	Respondents' Answers	A.F	R.F
Our teacher should adopt a new way in teaching his/ her pupils	▪ Disagree	15	10%
	▪ Neither agree nor disagree	50	33.33%
	▪ agree	65	43.33%

Responses to question 13, established pupils' attitude to the traditional role of the teacher (up-front and in control), and new role of the teacher

(facilitator and guide). 43.33 % agreed and 33.33% neither agreed nor disagreed that the teacher should abandon his traditional role.

- **Pupils' Attitudes towards the Evaluation of the Speaking Skill.**

Questions 14: speaking skill evaluation can help you improving your speaking performance

Table 4.12 Pupils' Responses to the Adoption of the Evaluation of the Speaking Skill

Questions	Responds' Answers	A.F	R.F
speaking skill evaluation can help you improving your speaking performance	▪ Yes	20	13.33%
	▪ I don't know	25	16.66%
	▪ No	105	70%

Question 14, elicited responses from the pupils about their belief regarding the role of a new approach to pupils' evaluation in contributing to the improvement to their English proficiency. 70% agreed that their English language learning could improve if they were evaluated differently as compared to the present evaluation methods.

▪ **Approaches and Methods Currently Used For Teaching Speaking Skills in the EFL Classrooms**

This final part of the pupils' questionnaire covered the approaches and methods currently used for teaching speaking skills in the Algerian EFL classrooms. The results were discussed in details later. The following tables reveal the results obtained from questions 15 to 17 and 18 to 20 which closed this pupils' questionnaire.

Table 4. 13 Teaching Method

Questions	Respondents' Answers	A.F	R.F
Does your teacher encourage you to speak in the classroom?	Never	80	53.33%
	Rarely	25	16.66%
	Sometimes	45	30%
	Very often	00	00%
	Always	00	00%
Does your teacher make sure that each one of you speaks in the class?	Never	80	53.33%
	Rarely	30	20%
	Sometimes	40	26.66%
	Very often	00	00%
	Always	00	00%
Does your teacher arrange the class in pairs/ groups during speaking activities?	Never	115	76.66%
	Rarely	25	16.66%
	Sometimes	10	6.66%
	Very often	00	00%
	Always	00	00%

According to the pupils' responses to the above questions, the results obtained showed that most of the respondents said that their teachers did not necessarily encourage them to speak in the classrooms.

Moreover, about 70% stated that their teachers did not make sure that each pupil in the classroom spoke in the target language. Finally, the results showed that about 90% of the informants said that their teachers of English still used the traditional method of teaching namely the whole class method.

Table 4. 14 Teaching Communicative Strategies

Questions	Respondents' Answers	A.F	R.F
Does your teacher encourage you to guess the meaning of unfamiliar words by using contextual clues?	Never	20	13.33%
	Rarely	35	23.33%
	Sometimes	85	56.66%
	Very often	10	6.66%
	Always	00	00%
Does your teacher teach you how to get information quickly from the conversation? (listening for information)	Never	87	58%
	Rarely	38	25.33%
	Sometimes	15	10%
	Very often	10	6.66%
	Always	00	00%
Does the teacher point out your problems regarding speaking skills?	Never	135	90%
	Rarely	10	6.66%
	Sometimes	05	3.33%
	Very often	00	00%
	Always	00	00%

The above questions attempted to discover further details about whether the communicative strategies were taught to the subject learners. In addition to that question 20 dealt with teachers' habits in giving feedback to the learners concerning their speaking weaknesses and the way they could make use of some communicative strategies to improve their oral proficiencies.

The EFL teachers did not teach the Algerian pupils some communicative strategies in their classrooms if we referred to the obtained results as it is seen in the table above. 90% did not point out to the problems regarding the speaking skill; more than 80% did not teach the pupils how to get information from an aural text or conversation. And only 56% of them sometimes encouraged their pupils to guess the meaning of unfamiliar words by using contextual clues.

4.3.3 Summary

The conclusions related to the interpretation of the pupils' questionnaire are presented in the core areas of present and future domains of language use, learning preferences, learning styles, classroom interaction and learning activities and teacher-learner relationship. The pupils' questionnaire tries to respond to the research questions the present study is built on, to determine if the implementation of the new approach to language teaching has succeeded in improving the Algerian learners' speaking abilities in the English language which is one of the objectives stated by the Ministry of Education.

Most pupils hold positive attitudes towards the English language and are aware of its importance at personal and international levels as well as for their present and future life. The pupils display a certain linguistic competence in the English language, though they are conscious of their weaknesses and are willing to learn it and to improve their ability to speak it.

The pupils need to learn all the four skills of the language not only grammar and vocabulary. Speaking is more preferred as compared to the skills of listening, reading and writing. Thus greater importance is devoted to the skills of

listening and speaking. Pupils need a classroom environment which is supportive to their active participation by introducing pair and groups work, and activities like games, role play and projects which will enhance their oral performance. Pupils need to learn language by solving problems and getting information for themselves and actively using the English language. Pupils need a change in role relationship and their status. They need a class where they are at the centre and the role of the teacher is that of a facilitator and guide.

4.4. Teachers' Interview

To give answers to the research questions and for the sake of triangulation a third research tool was used in this investigation. Thus, the teachers' interview addressed to the Algerian secondary school EFL teachers aiming mainly at measuring teachers' attitudes towards English education in Algeria and of course, to know more about the way they handle the teaching of the speaking skill within the framework of the CBA. It has also been done to have a perception of the difficulties that EFL teachers encounter when teaching the speaking skill.

4.4.1 Design

The teachers constitute one of the major poles in any teaching and learning context, this is why a structured interview was addressed to EFL teachers with whom the researcher conducted her classroom observation. The interview was in English and lasted 15 to 20 minutes. The teachers' structured interview consists of ten questions (see appendix C),. In what follows, a detailed analysis of all the answers is carried out so as to pinpoint the most relevant finding and offer reasonable interpretations. The results of the teacher survey are examined according to the following four rubrics:

- Experience in teaching English;

- Classroom methodology;

- Teachers attitudes towards the speaking skill;

- EFL teachers' difficulties in teaching the speaking skill.

4.4.2 Results and Interpretation

The results of the teacher questionnaire are presented following the four rubrics below:

- **Experience in teaching English**

Recorded data revealed that of the ten teachers in the sample, five had from four to ten years experience and five had from ten to thirty one years experience. The questionnaire went to be administered to teachers of varying teaching experiences in order to gather information from different types of informants: novice and experienced. Data from that kind would enable us to have an idea of the type of teachers and their teaching delivered to third year secondary school pupils.

- **Classroom methodology**

When asked to state which types of activities they use in their classrooms they generally argued that they preferred to adopt a teacher-led approach while further admitting that they rarely implemented pair or group work activities. Indeed four respondents reported that they never implemented pair or group work activities. This question dealt with classroom methodology. The aim of this question was to establish if teachers promote group and pair works which may encourage the pupils to participate actively in their learning. The teachers' responses to this question refer to the preferred teaching practices of the respondents, and also provide insights into the materials teachers consider being most appropriate for Algerian learners.

Furthermore, concerning the speaking skill evaluation, the majority of the teachers do not evaluate their pupils' speaking performance. That is, speaking evaluation is not used in EFL classrooms. One informant expressed his opinion

about it, stating that he knows teaching and evaluation are interrelated, but actually speaking evaluation tasks are not tied to the instructional goals. In other words, speaking evaluation is not conducted by the subject teachers. The interview responses of teachers indicated that they are not trained to use speaking evaluation tasks and the way they conducted them. For the five remaining teachers, they perceived that "oral interview with the pupils are the best task for evaluating pupils' speaking proficiency ". In fact, speaking evaluation is necessary for the pupils as the majority of the pupils tend to be motivated by evaluation or examinations.

▪ **Teacher attitudes towards the speaking skill**

With regard to the importance of the speaking skill, most teachers believe it is very important to teach the speaking skill but that should be from their first year middle school as for third year secondary school pupils they are bound to the BAC exam. Most of the EFL teachers recognised the importance of speaking even if they lack training in this area. However the high central tendency recorded indicated a lack of "how to" with this skill.

Most teachers believe that it is very important for their learners to develop a communicative ability to study English because it is educationally and culturally desirable to have knowledge of this language was seen as one of the most important reasons for pupils to study English – indeed, this was regarded as being slightly more important than studying in order to pass exams. As a result, when teachers were asked to state the areas which they thought are important for Algerian pupils of English, the highest central tendencies are reported within the categories of communicative skills.

Indeed, when teachers were asked to state the areas which they thought are most important for learners of English, the highest central tendencies were reported within the categories of speaking and listening comprehension. It should be noted however that no single area really stood out as being more

important than any other However, grammar is still considered to be an important part of English learning, but interestingly fewer teachers strongly agreed that it should be seen as one of the most important aspects of language study. These responses, suggested that whilst teachers recognised the importance of developing their learners' communicative skills, they are perhaps less willing in practice to use techniques which might aid that development. Inconsistencies again emerged with regards to the practice and development of speaking skills when we consider that all teachers in the sample strongly agreed that speaking was one of the most important areas for learners, yet, for the most part, continue to conduct lessons almost focusing on old approaches.

To sum up, all the teachers have positive attitudes towards the necessity of the communicative or speaking ability. The informants viewed speaking as a necessary part of curriculum and the way that it will enhance pupils' motivation to perform better in the speaking skill. On the other hand, some participants gave a different opinion to the necessity of teaching the speaking skill in the Algerian EFL classroom. Some teachers wonder if speaking is needed for the pupils of English in Algerian Secondary Schools. Though they learned English at the middle school for four years, pupils in the EFL context have very limited proficiency of English speaking. It is very difficult for a teacher to elicit pupils' response.

- **EFL teacher' difficulties in teaching the speaking skill.**

The results indicated that there were a variety of factors that affect the Algerian EFL pupils' speaking performance. A majority of the teachers said that the pupils' speaking performance was affected by their knowledge of the target language. The next important factors mentioned were listening ability and motivation to speak. Besides, the teachers' feedback during speaking activities also was also reported to affect the pupils' speaking performance.

Finally, confidence was considered to be a factor that had influence on pupils' performance.

In addition to that the following constraints are the major reasons why EFL teachers do not teach their pupils' speaking skill:

- Large classes;

- Pupils low English proficiency;

- Time constraints;

- The preparation for the BAC exam

- Speaking is not part of the BAC exam evaluation;

- Lack of adequate teaching material

For the question asking about teachers training in order to teach their pupils' speaking skill, most respondents, expressed their frustration. They wanted to learn effective and efficient methods to teach and evaluate the speaking skill. Three teachers' general perceptions were that these reforms could not meet the needs of the teachers in the Algerian EFL context. But considering the Algerian classroom situation, they can't ignore reality such as large classes and the excessive textbook.

4.4.3 Summary

The findings from the interview with the Algerian EFL teachers showed that when the pupils learn speaking, they encountered many problems. According to the teachers, the most common speaking problem was that their pupils spoke very little or nothing in classes. Most of the teachers said that the pupils could not think of anything to say. Moreover, they often had no motivation to express themselves. The following conclusions summarize the major constraints

identified by the participants for not teaching the speaking skill in their classes in the Algerian Secondary Schools.

First, all ten respondents referred to large classes as one of the principal constraints on their attempts to teach pupils' communication abilities. Each class in the three Algerian Secondary Schools were the research took place consists of 35 pupils approximately, and the teaching periods last 60 minutes. Thus, teachers have too many pupils in one class and find it very difficult to teach pupils' speaking ability. In addition to that pupils' low English proficiency is another difficulty faced by the EFL teachers as all the respondents reported that most of their pupils have very small vocabulary and limited structures, and if they consider pupils' hesitation time for appropriate responses, it will take more than just an hour to finish.

The lack of training in conducting speaking tasks was initially a deterrent for Teachers to use authentic communicative speaking task. This finding seems to indicate that additional training, particularly for those whose initial teacher training is not recent, is necessary if they are to be expected to introduce new ways of teaching and evaluating speaking in their classrooms. There is a big gap between theory and practice. Teachers feel frustrated by the reality which doesn't allow them to conduct authentic speaking teaching or evaluation for their pupils.

Another difficulty faced by the EFL teachers is that of ensuring reliability in evaluating their pupils' speaking performance, the respondents cited reliability in scoring as a constraint on their attempt in authentic speaking activities. One respondent stated that he has 38 students. So he can't assign one pupil enough time to judge his speaking ability. Teachers are just scoring after listening to pupils' two or three responses. Thus it is rather difficult to be fair and some teachers stated that they feel guilty as the speaking skill evaluation remains subjective if done at all.

4.5 Discussion of the Main Results

As mentioned earlier, this study aimed to investigate the problems that the Algerian EFL pupils experienced in speaking using the English language and the reasons affecting their speaking performance. The Algerian pupils are not good at English. They can pass exams easily but they find it difficult to use English to communicate. To help the pupils improve their speaking skills, it is necessary to find ways to help them overcome their problems. Moreover, the Algerian EFL teachers need to know the reasons that affect their pupils' speaking performance so that they can deal with these reasons to help them improve their speaking performance.

Generally speaking, there was a consistent among data from classroom observation, pupils' questionnaire, and teachers' interview. The results obtained from the collected data are discussed in this section.

With regards to the first hypothesis which stipulates that Many Algerian EFL teachers do not really understand the concept of competency based teaching; therefore, they deliver materials in the traditional way focusing on reading and writing. EFL teachers reported that the Ministry of Education has promoted curriculum reforms in order to meet the principles of the CBA. However, EFL teachers are informed to some extent about the vast reform which has been undertaken since 2003. The EFL teachers use different methods of pupils' speaking performance. According to the classroom observation it was noticed that the teachers give importance to the specified objectives of the syllabus and the factual content but they are not well aware of the competencies introduced in the CBA. At the same time they stated that there was no true congruence between teaching/learning and evaluation. The current method of pupils' speaking skill teaching and evaluation used in EFL classes does not reflect the CBA as the biggest worry for the teachers as well as for the pupils still remains the "BAC exam".

In fact, most of the teachers focus on grammatical correctness on the expense of fostering in learners a degree of oral ability. Taking charge of teaching 3rd year learners the appropriate grammar under such unsatisfactory conditions was far from being realistic, and this has urged the observed teachers to adopt a traditional way of grammar teaching that seems far from being communicatively oriented. On the light of such teaching circumstances, English language teaching is more teacher-dominated than learner-centered and communicatively-oriented.

The second hypothesis states that limited teacher training in the use of the CBA, overloaded classes, and examination system neglecting oral skills are among the major difficulties that teachers have to cope with. Indeed, the educational changes should have a significant effect on pupils' oral performance. However, it should be noted that according to the result obtained there are some difficulties encountered by the Algerian EFL teachers. Actually, the response has shown that the teachers are facing concrete problems dealing with over loaded syllabi and textbooks. In addition to that, one tendency among teachers is to teach textbook contents rather than the syllabus. Nevertheless, the main problem is that the teachers have been taken by surprise at the beginning of the reform. They have not been prepared to face such a sudden change as they still have that feeling of being disconcerted.   From the third research tool the lack of congruency between objectives of teaching English according to the syllabus and the methods, the respondents suggested more training by true specialists. Thus, teachers should be trained as they do not perceive the reasons and the objectives of the CBA quite well. The teachers should be provided by more appropriate training in order to apply them in their appropriate way. Teachers are sometimes reluctant to undertake changes for their own as they feel more confident in their routine.

As far as the pupils' speaking skill evaluation is concerned; the recent educational reform to improve teaching facilities for the attainment of

communicative goals in foreign language teaching, the idea that teachers should also improve pupils' evaluation has been neglected. Some official instructions on how teachers should evaluate their pupils' learning process have been established such as pedagogical guides which have been designed by the Ministry of Education as well as the inspectorate of English. However, on the other hand the teachers had received no adequate training to how to implement these changes in pupils' speaking teaching and evaluation tasks.

Dealing with the difficulties that could be encountered by the EFL teachers, the focus is on the lack of training, there is a lack of documentation about the CBA, as for teachers need more guidance in their everyday practice in the classes i.e. the way they should evaluate their learners' competencies, how to adapt the textbooks in order to meet their pupils' needs and then to be congruent with their levels. The EFL teachers cannot cope alone with this new approach that why they need specialized training in the new method of teaching and evaluating their learners as it requires from them new techniques.

As far as the third hypothesis is concerned, it was found that though the EFL learners are well aware of the importance of the speaking skill according to their answers from the questionnaire, it was noticed through the classroom observation that there is lack of interest of third year EFL secondary school pupils in learning to speak. Indeed and according to the results of the investigation, and after several observations of third year secondary school English classes it revealed that Algerian EFL pupils lack interest in communicative language use. Based on classroom observation data and teachers interview, we can dare to say that the EFL classes were still not fully competency based, and communicative oriented, because of the difficulties they have to face with learners' lack of motivation. For instance, When the pupils were asked to work in groups, not all of them were eager to contribute their opinions in English. Some of them participated actively but the others spoke very little or not at all. This is due to the constraints of

the   teaching   programme as well as the final examination, "BAC" which focuses more on reading and writing than speaking and listening and most learners loss of motivation have contributed to the problem, a finding that provide, hence support to this hypothesis.

With regards to the fourth hypothesis which states that to enhance the effectiveness of teaching the speaking skill; the curriculum, teaching and evaluation need to be developed in a concordant way within the framework of the CBA. Indeed, evaluation is of primary importance in every teaching/learning situation. And then teachers are the cornerstone of the evaluation of their pupils' learning and progress. According to the EFL teachers, evaluation is used to verify learning progress with a view to provide support for learning, to make precise diagnoses, to verify the level of competency development, and to recognize prior learning. Indeed, today, evaluation practices have two main characteristics. They are based on the evaluation of competencies, in accordance with the new education programme. Secondly, the emphasis is on evaluation to support learning, resulting in evaluation activities integrated into the learning and teaching processes. Hence, this is why training for teachers is essential for them in a way that the evaluation methods should be congruent with the teaching methods.

The vision presented here places speaking skill evaluation at the centre of the learning process. This constitutes a powerful factor in helping pupils learning and supporting teachers as it could guide the Algerian EFL pupils in their learning. Thus, training for EFL teachers plays a central role in every teaching /learning situation and it is for researchers to consider the purposes of language evaluation, since it cannot be denied that the first function of learning a language is for a meaningful message delivery rather than the use of language form.

4.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, an attempt to present, analyse and discuss the main findings of the different data collection tools has been made. Interesting results were achieved in this chapter. First of all it has been shown that it was evident that the third year Algerian EFL pupils encountered many problems in the speaking performance. Moreover, there were many factors that contributed to their success and failure in performing speaking tasks. On the whole, the current teaching and learning of speaking skills in the Algerian school needed to be improved.

The researcher has exposed the data collected from observing the selected sample, then moved to the pupils' questionnaire of their view points, perceptions and expectations concerning the teaching and learning of the speaking skill, and as a final point the researcher ended with those in-depth information gained from teacher's interview.

Based on the entire findings, the four hypotheses have been tested and conformed. Finally, the analysis and interpretation of the main results have given a clear idea about the teaching of the speaking skill in the Algerian EFL classrooms within the framework of the CBA.

On the light of what has been said, some suggestions will be outlined in the next chapter. Indeed, some teaching and evaluation speaking tasks will be given to bridge the gaps, which EFL teachers are seeking to improve. Even more, recommendations will be exposed related to how can the evaluation of the speaking skill be improved and developed in order to meet the objectives stated by the syllabus and to iron out learners' speaking difficulties in EFL classrooms.

Chapter Five
Perspectives for Teaching the Speaking Skill in EFL Classrooms

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapters have allowed the researcher to shed some light on the EFL Algerian learners' inability to communicate effectively in the target language, English in this case, after seven years studying the language. The ability to use a language for oral communication is very important in any foreign language teaching/ learning process as it contribute to the success of the learner in school and later in everyday life. The results obtained showed clearly that the teaching of the speaking skill is undervalued though the CBA is promoted as an approach to language teaching which supports the development of learners' abilities to use language fluently and meaningfully.

Accordingly, in this concluding chapter and for the purpose of proposing useful recommendations regarding the teaching of the speaking skill in Algeria, this chapter discusses the implication of the findings and makes some recommendation to help the Algerian EFL teachers as well as the learners tackle the problem in the light of the results for improving the state of the teaching of the speaking skill in the Algerian EFL classes.

 The objectives of the study have been to examine third year secondary school pupils' difficulties in speaking, the present state of speaking pedagogy, strength and weaknesses of the speaking components of the existing syllabus and speaking materials used at the secondary school level in Algeria.

For field data, empirical investigation was conducted in three secondary schools in the Wilaya of Tlemcen. The results showed that pupils have problems in most of the sub-skills of speaking, and it also showed that the approach to teaching and learning speaking skills, if done, are still backdated.
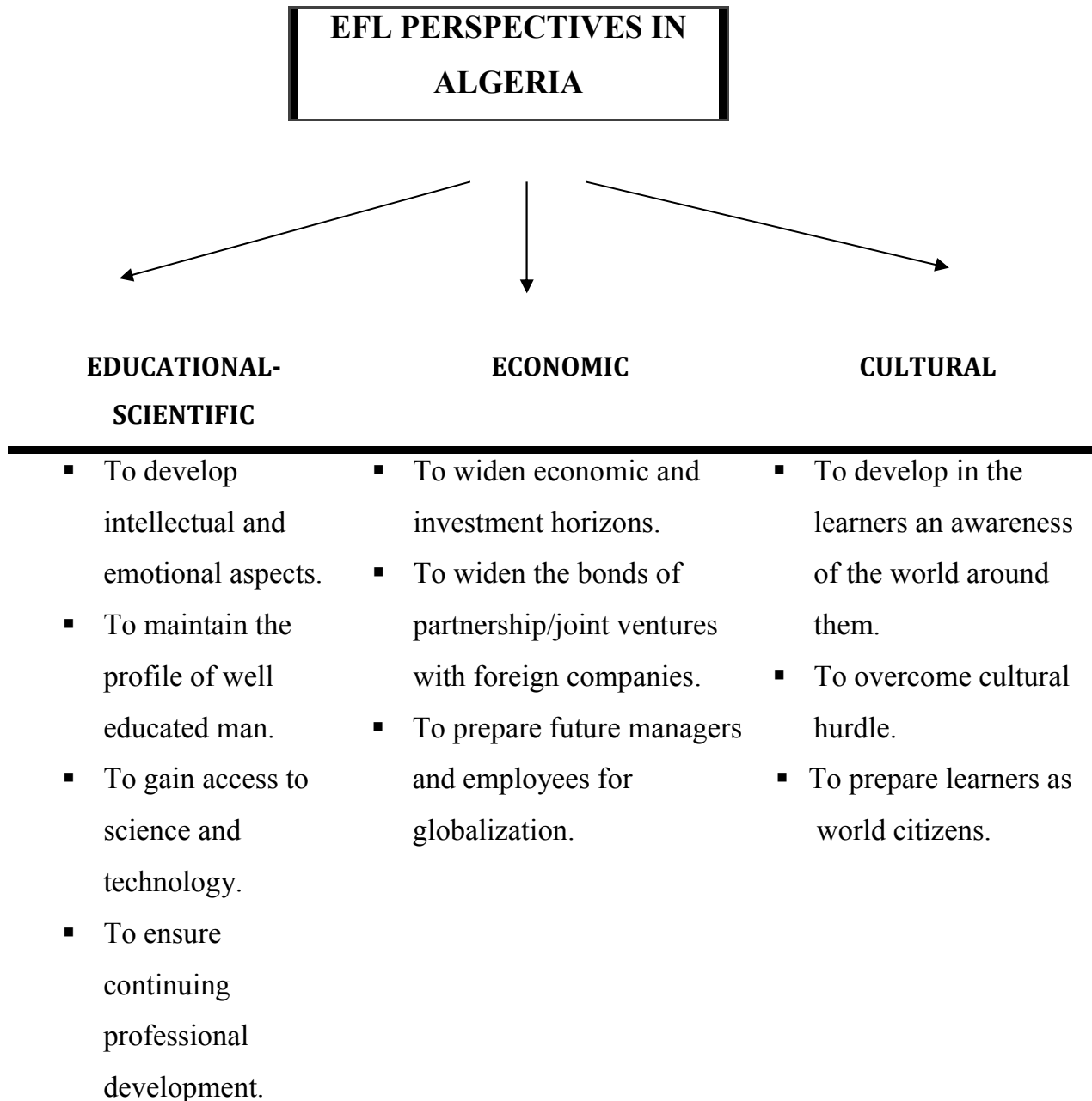
5.2 Changing Needs

A key assumption traditionally underlying EFL as being the notion that English is "simply" a subject in the school curriculum, but usually not a medium

of education generally assuming that in "EFL" contexts there is very limited use of English outside the formal classroom setting. However, in the era of globalization which started in the last part of the 20th century, the information age has replaced the industrial one. Technology, with the efficiency of wireless communication, such as discussion groups and social networking (twitter, facebook, Skype etc.) has called for the necessity of acquiring English as a tool of worldwide communication.

In addition to that, English becomes a lingua franca across many different disciplines of study and research. Indeed, the scientific growth of the new century in different areas and the use of technology such as the internet to spread information led the English language to become the language of worldwide communication. As Jenkins (2009) comments, in many contexts that would conventionally be described as EFL, the role of English is shifting, with widespread growth in the number of domains in which the language is spoken, and an expansion in terms of intra national functions, especially in institutional settings such as higher education.

In the context of a rapidly changing, global economy, governments, ministries of education and education professionals have to respond to increasing demands for improvements in the learning and teaching of English in formal education systems. Then learning English will benefit the Algerian learners in many aspects of life and work both inside and outside Algeria. Some Algerian parents and pupils have felt it necessary to start majoring in foreign languages, not least English to keep abreast of the rapidly changing world. (Benmoussat, 2003: 253) Therefore, it is of necessity for Algeria to introduce significant modifications in the school curriculum. The figure (5.1) describes the three Algerian EFL perspectives i.e. educational-scientific, economic and cultural in order that it could strive to cope with the new world requirements by keeping abreast all development and improvement.

Algeria, as the rest of the world is well aware of the importance of English as the language which dominate communication and development, and the status of English in the educational systems and settings is an important one. This is why we need to examine the extent to which the English which we teach in our schools meets the communicative needs at the international level.

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                    │  EFL PERSPECTIVES IN │
                    │       ALGERIA        │
                    └─────────────────────┘
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EDUCATIONAL-SCIENTIFIC	ECONOMIC	CULTURAL
▪ To develop intellectual and emotional aspects. ▪ To maintain the profile of well educated man. ▪ To gain access to science and technology. ▪ To ensure continuing professional development.	▪ To widen economic and investment horizons. ▪ To widen the bonds of partnership/joint ventures with foreign companies. ▪ To prepare future managers and employees for globalization.	▪ To develop in the learners an awareness of the world around them. ▪ To overcome cultural hurdle. ▪ To prepare learners as world citizens.

Figure 5.1 ELT Objectives in Algeria

5.3 Recommendations

In the light of the present condition of teaching and learning of the speaking skill in the Algerian secondary schools, this section of the study presents some pedagogical suggestions and recommendations to the teaching of the oral production in EFL classrooms with a view to improve the Algerian EFL learners' overall speaking skills.

According to the classroom observation, the investigator noticed that the teachers' speaking activities in the classroom are old-fashioned. Indeed, the EFL teachers do not follow the prescribed learners-oriented techniques; instead, they use traditional teacher-oriented methods. The teachers are active, and the pupils are rather passive learners in the class. The Algerian learners' direct involvement in the classroom activities is totally neglected in the practical setting. The speaking activities and lessons as laid out in the textbook are not followed in the class by the teachers.

As the classrooms observations show, Algerian EFL teachers have no planned activities in teaching their speaking lessons. They give lectures and explain them trying to create a discussion if the pupils are cooperative in English using sometimes the French language or the mother tongue. They do not engage their pupils in speaking activities in the classroom. Therefore, learners' speaking skills do not really develop.

The findings imply that pedagogical approaches to teaching speaking in Algeria need special attention. Since this area of teaching English is very important for the present context of the country, changes are required to ensure the Algerian pupils' engagement in the English language activities. Instead of teachers' explaining, pupils should be made to speak and discuss the meaning of a text or a given topic. The Teachers will guide them, and help them to reach the meaning a topic implies. It must be kept in mind that speaking skills will develop only if the learners are made to speak as much as possible. Therefore, it

is important to present some recommendations for the syllabus, the textbook, the materials and the pedagogy used in teaching.

5.3.1 The Syllabus

It is said that the syllabus is a roadmap to success; the success of the learners, the teachers, and the institutions. Afros and Schryer (2009), state that a syllabus has to be balanced so that it can be attractive to the learners to motivate them and to structure their learning. The syllabus is the mediator document between the learners and the teachers, between the teachers themselves as well as the teachers and the academic institutions.

The syllabus is viewed as an academic document with specific characteristics that define both its content and the manner in which this content is delivered. In the same line of thought, Mohseni (2008) states that:

> A language teaching syllabus involves the combination of subject matter (what to teach) and linguistic matter (how to teach). It actually performs as a guide for both teacher and learner by providing some goals to be accomplished. Syllabus in fact deals with linguistic theory and theories of language learning and how they are utilized in the classroom.

The choice of a syllabus is a major decision in language teaching, and it should be made as consciously and with as much information as possible. The Algerian third year secondary school ELT syllabus covers some of the lower and none of the higher order sub-skills or what we call also micro and macro skills if we refer to the teaching of the speaking skill. It has some limited option to practise discussion arguing, word meaning and vocabulary building. However, higher order sub-skills such as   transition of thought or ideas, Inferring attitude, feeling, mood using interactive strategies Summarising Paraphrasing, etc. are absent from the syllabus. The syllabus should include these sub-skills for the development of the Algerian learners' overall speaking skills.

The present syllabus does not include the higher order sub-skills of speaking. It does not emphasize on the speaking skill. So, the speaking components of the syllabus should be revised, and the higher order skills such as predicting, using contextual clues, guessing word meaning, interpreting , evaluating critically, distinguishing between facts and opinions, understanding author's tone, mood and attitude, etc. Have to be included in the syllabus. Brown (2004: 142) explains the difference between the micro and macro skills as follows:

Micro skills:

- Produce differences among English phonemes and allophonic variants.

- Produce chunks of language of different lengths.

- Produce English stress patterns, words in stressed and unstressed positions, rhythmic structure, and intonation contours.

- Produce reduced forms of words and phrases.

- Use an adequate number of lexical units (words) to accomplish pragmatics purposes.

- Produce fluent speech at different rates of delivery.

- Monitor one's own oral production and use various strategic devices pauses, fillers, self corrections, backtracking to enhance the clarify of the message.

- Use grammatical word classes (nouns, verbs, etc) systems (e.g., tense agreement, pluralization), word order, patterns, rules, and elliptical forms.

- Produce speech in natural constituents: in appropriate phrases, pause groups, breathe groups, and sentence constituents. Express a particular meaning in different grammatical forms.

- Use cohesive devices in spoken discourse.

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Macro Skills

- Appropriately accomplish communicative functions according to situations, participants, and goals.

- Use appropriate styles, registers, redundancies, pragmatic conventions, conversations rules, floor keeping and yielding interrupting, and other sociolinguistics features in face to face conversations.

- Convey links and connections between events and communicate such relations as vocal and peripheral ideas, events and feelings, new information and given information, generalization.

- Convey facial features, kinesis, body language, and other nonverbal cues along with verbal language.

- Develop and use battery of speaking strategies, such as emphasizing 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.

5.3.2 The Textbook

"New Prospects" is the third year pupils' English textbook at the secondary level. It has been designed by the Ministry of Education during the educational reform which aimed at adopting the principles of the new approach to language teaching namely the CBA. The textbook contains six units each one dealing with a particular theme which has been recommended by the syllabus.

Each unit in the textbook is divided into four parts: "language outcomes", "skills and strategies outcomes", "learners' outcomes" and "intercultural outcomes". The language outcomes section is divided in its turn into "listen and consider" and "read and consider" parts and the focus in these two parts is to work on the language dimension of a text and the emphasis is on the grammatical structures, vocabulary, pronunciation and spelling. The second section of the

textbook has been designed to develop the learners' communication skills. It is divided into two parts "listening and speaking" and "reading and writing" these two sequences focus on the primary skills and social skills. The learners' outcomes and the intercultural outcomes are made to be part of the process of teaching and learning.

Table 5.1 Units Outcomes in New Prospect

Unit	Topic	Language outcomes			Skills and strategies outcomes		Learners' outcomes	Intercultu outcomes
		Functions	Grammar	Vocabulary and sound system	Listening and speaking	Reading and writing		

The textbook currently in use at the secondary school level presents a variety of topics and themes, but they are becoming old. Topics of the contemporary issues should be included in the textbook. Topics have to be changed every five years because some of them have become outdated. In selecting topics for learners, careful attention has to be put since speaking is mainly a topic-based activity. Pupils' present linguistic and cognitive level should be considered. Interesting stories, jokes, sports and similar topics will prove interesting and motivating for the learners.

The Speaking skill in the new prospects is in each unit in listening and speaking sequence. The latter, which has been omitted from the programme

taught to the third year secondary school pupils and that since 2008, is divided into four rubrics which can be presented as follows:

Listening and Speaking

Before listening	**As you listen**	**After listening**	**Saying it in writing**
The learners are invited to look at pictures and answer questions	The learners check their answers in accordance with the listening script read by the teacher	The learners are given activities to do in pairs or in groups	The learners in this rubrics are given a written activity to read to the class

Figure 5.2: Listening and Speaking Rubric in '**New Prospects' (2007)**

Speaking activities include pair and group work and controlled communication work as well in which generally the pupils learn how to work in a collaborative situations and to respond to problem solving situations. However and despite the fact that the textbook attempts to develop communicative abilities among the learners, it can be easily noticed that most of the tasks are dealing with listening rather speaking. The activities help the learners to develop their oral comprehension however the last rubric of the listening speaking sequence is asked to be achieved in writing and not speaking in addition to that many of the listening speaking sequence are done individually rather than in pairs or in groups. From the activities that appear in the textbook, in

the listening and speaking sequence, we can gather that most of them are done individually. Most of the activities in the new textbook for the third year secondary school pupils are turned towards written activities they are task based but the speaking skill is limited even in the listening speaking sequence of the book.

5.3.3 Teaching Materials

Materials, which are one of the five language instruction components, have traditionally been used to help in language learning. For example, textbooks are used to support or guide the learning of languages, pictures are used to elicit the language, present new vocabulary and/or practice it. Video and audio recordings are used to expose the learners to listening exercises.

The learner, today, is at the center of any language learning process. The learners are more important than all the other components in language instruction. As a matter of fact, teachers, materials, teaching methods, and evaluation should all be designed for learners and their needs. The teachers' responsibility is to see whether all the elements of the learning process are targeted to the learners' needs and to adapt them if they are not. In other words, Teachers have to choose materials adapt, and elaborate on them and also observe the progress and needs of the learners and finally evaluate them, which defines the role of the teacher to help learners to learn.

Along this time, Richards and Rodgers (2001) explain that materials are related to the teaching goals, their form, and the abilities of teachers in the language and experience in teaching it. Materials influence the content and the procedures of learning. They include not only textbooks, but also video and audio tapes, computers, and visual aids.

It is important for EFL teachers to know how to choose the best materials for teaching, how to adapt materials and how to make supplementary materials for the class. Most Algerian EFL teachers are busy and do not have time to

prepare extra materials. Therefore, They refer to the textbook provided to them for teaching speaking, though we notice clearly that the amount of speaking activities in the present textbook is not adequate. Speaking materials should provide more scripts and audio visual aids in the teaching of speaking as the amount of speaking activities in the textbook can be increased. Opportunities to practise speaking should also be increased. There should be more varieties in the activities of the textbook.

5.3.4 Pedagogy

Reform in education is a long-term process that requires specific objectives, and the perseverance in the implementation of these objectives. It also requires the contribution of many agents from the educational scene, namely the teaching method, the teacher, the learner and the classroom management.

5.3.4.1 Teaching Methods

Acquiring a language is learning a skill, not a body of information. That is, the learner should not only understand the ideas and concepts, have information at hand, but should also make his mind accustomed to use that information. Today's world requires that the goal of teaching a foreign language is to improve learners' speaking skill, because, only in that way, pupils can express themselves.

Teaching the speaking skill in the Algerian school is undervalued and EFL teachers continue to teach speaking in an old fashion way just as they learned it. EFL teachers should be aware that learning a foreign language is not a matter of learning some grammar rules and memorizing some vocabulary words, rather the focus should be on the use without ignoring some fundamental aspects of usage; to use Widdowson's dichotomy (1978).

The speaking skill is not really taught in the classroom nowadays and the pupils' speaking skills will never develop without their active engagement in the

speaking process. The more they are made to speak and communicate, the better they will be able to speak. Learners must be engaged in doing tasks on all the sub-skills of speaking, and learning by doing should be encouraged in the classroom.

Learning by doing should be the focus of teaching speaking. The teaching method need to be based on controlled and free speaking practices. As pupils' speaking level is poor, guided speaking will prove more effective. Small groups or pairs should be formed for the convenience of discussing the idea of the theme, and the unfamiliar words.

5.3.4.2 Teacher Roles and Teacher Training

In the CBA, which is basically an offshoot of communicative language teaching, learner-centeredness has found a new expression. The main conceptual basis for CBA is, as Nunan (2004: 12) points out, "learning experience" or "learning by doing". In this way, CBA goes a long way in breaking down the traditional classroom because the learner's act of trying to complete a communicative task involves planning and using strategies. A communicative task is defined by Nunan (2004:4) as: "a piece of classroom work that involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language."

In this process, the teacher's role as an instructor who teaches the learners is restricted. The teacher is expected to be an advisor who advises his learners after determining their strengths and weaknesses. The teacher's role is to plan the tasks and stimulate the learners' intellect and motivate them.

The learner-centred classroom implies a totally different role from the teacher-centred classroom. In fact, the teachers may assume very different roles within their classrooms. Skilled teachers who are concerned about their work should examine "their attitudes, beliefs, assumptions and teaching practices" (Richards & Lockhart, 1994: 1) and use the resulting insights to improve their

teaching. Learners must be encouraged to see that they have begun a process when they begin learning a language.

Teachers need to guide, monitor, help and provide feedback. Their responsibility is to engage pupils in speaking discussions, and to take part of the class. In this regard, the role of an Algerian EFL teacher at a third year secondary level could be a very hard task to assume. From one part, the teacher is facing the administrative duties as he has to deal with subject matter defying the school constraints namely the overcrowded classes and the amount and scheduling of the time allotted to teaching English. On the other part, the teacher has to deal with pupils' different learning strategies, mixed abilities and low motivational drives.

It is usually maintained that there are no fixed ways for good teaching. Unlike with the traditional teacher role, the teacher no longer knows best, but pupils must be encouraged to find their best learning methodologies.

- The teacher is a classroom manager; he is in charge of organizing activities in the classroom which will allow learners to experiment with different learning styles and to try different tasks with the language they have acquired.
- The teacher is an overall organizer supplying learners with materials and methodological procedures.
- The teacher needs to be a facilitator and a supporter; he sets the experiment in motion.
- The teacher sets up learning conditions and allows the learners to discover knowledge for themselves.
- The teacher can be knowledgeable about the subject that is being taught, though he is still learning about the subject as well, there is no arrival point. The teacher still makes mistakes. In fact, mistakes are not embarrassing incidents but natural steps on the way. Pupils should not get frustrated and upset when they make mistakes. Here the teacher's role is

vitally important. If a teacher corrects every mistake, or insists on a particular grammatical point the learner may give up.

However, though the teaching learning process is deemed to be learner-centred the teacher still remains the key element in the classroom. Actually the teacher should be a P.L.E.F.E.T.E.R. as it is put forwards by the general inspectorate of English to specify the role of the teacher. The acronym P.L.E.F.T.E.R means:

o <u>Planner</u>, i.e. he sees planning and structuring of learning activities as fundamental to success in teaching and learning.

o <u>Linguistic model</u>, i.e. the teacher is seen as a model to be followed. he should maintain the quality of correct language use in the classroom.

o <u>Evaluator</u>, i.e. is the role that many teachers find the most difficult to perform, as they have to evaluate the knowledge of their pupils, being fair, objective and not influenced by the concerns of discipline, personal likes and feelings.

o <u>Facilitator</u>, i.e. the teacher should help his learners to discover their own ways of learning.

o <u>Team member</u>, i.e. the teacher and the learners alike are part of the team which constitutes the classroom, and they should interact as members of this team.

o <u>Educator</u>, i.e. the teacher serves as a model suitable for imitation.

o <u>Researcher</u>, i.e. the teacher should keep up with the latest development dealing with language teaching and learning.

A large number of teachers in Algeria are not really competent for implementing the contemporary approaches to the teaching of speaking. Though some teachers use contemporary approaches, they are not trained

and hence cannot apply the methods properly. Therefore, arrangements should be made to train teachers in the new approaches to teaching speaking.

teachers are highly to take regular opportunities to update their professional knowledge and skills and to meet their professional and their learners' needs. Such opportunities may be provided through

- **Teachers' meetings**: both experienced and novice teachers need to cooperate and collaborate to discuss the different issues arising with the teaching/learning situations.
- **Workshops and seminars:** EFL inspectors or experienced teachers can offer more workshops and seminars during the academic year. For example workshops can be organized once a week which will give the teachers the occasion to reflect on their own teaching strengths and weaknesses.
- **Teachers collaborative planning:** many teachers often work in alone. Thus, they miss the opportunity to benefit from the collective expertise of their colleagues.
- **Critical thinking:** The educational system needs teachers who think critically and always look for new teaching techniques to be effective teachers. They know how to be effective reflective teachers.

5.3.4.3 Learners' Needs and Roles

Learners' needs and roles in foreign language teaching and learning have been a favourite topic for a long time. Since the beginning of the new century, there have been lots of studies to promote learner autonomy. Learner autonomy is the fundamental topic in foreign language education, if the learners are not aware of their responsibilities, they can never be successful in learning new things.

English Language Teaching should no longer be seen as a decision-making process based solely on two elements: knowledge and skills embodied in

the teacher. The third element, the learner, should be focussed on too. We may ask ourselves some questions such as: do pupils blindly accept anything the teacher says or does? Because knowledge becomes obsolete, it is therefore the teacher's role to equip the learners to meet the needs of the future, helping them acquire the study skills that will enable them to become autonomous learners which reflect the learners' needs of tomorrow.

In the CBA, the teachers should take account of the learner's attitude towards learning and their perception of learning. "learners' role is an integral part of the teaching learning exchange" (Stevick, 1982: 82). The teachers should think of the learner in terms of "responsibility sharing" (Stevick, 1982). This would entail less teacher talk and more opportunity for the learner.

The teacher-learner relationship is to be personalised and humanised. Learners must be made aware that they live in a time where the goal of education is no longer the pursuit of static knowledge but a reliance on process where the only person who is educated is the one who has learnt how to learn. Scharle and Szabó (2000:4) state that;

> The saying goes: you can bring the horse to water, but you cannot make him drink. In language teaching, teachers can provide all the necessary circumstances and input, but learning can only happen if learners are willing to contribute. Their passive presence will not suffice, just as the horse would remain thirsty if he stood still by the river waiting patiently for his thirst to go away. And, in order for learners to be actively involved in the learning process, they first need to realise and accept that success in learning depends as much on the student as on the teacher. That is, they share responsibility for the outcome. In other words, success in learning very much depends on learners having a responsible attitude.

Indeed, the Learners should be actively involved in their learning. They have to discuss problems in pairs or small groups. They should speak more,

and discuss with other learners whenever they find anything difficult. They should also discuss their problems with teachers, when necessary. They should try to find solutions to their lack of vocabulary by themselves.

Over the last 20 years, autonomy in language learning has been a topic of widespread discussion. Learner autonomy has fast become one of the strategy of choice in EFL teaching since the 1990s. Learner autonomy is defined in many different ways by many different researchers and theorists. Holec (1981: 47), has defined it as the "ability to take care of one's own learning." This point is developed further by Wenden who summarizes the issue:

> In effect, successful or expert or intelligent learners have learned how to learn. They have acquired the learning strategies, the knowledge about learning and the attitudes that enable them to use these skills and knowledge confidently, flexibly, appropriately and independently of a teacher. Therefore, they are autonomous.

> Wenden (1991: 58)

The point is emphasized by Littlewood(1996:98) who argues that : "learners willingness to act independently depends on the level of their motivation and confidence… on the level of their knowledge and skills". Sinclair (2000) similarly suggests 13 aspects of learner autonomy which appear to have been accepted by the language teaching profession.

1. Autonomy is a construct of capacity
2. Autonomy involves a willingness on the part of the learner to take responsibility for their own learning
3. The capacity and willingness of learners to take such responsibility is not necessarily innate
4. Complete autonomy is an idealistic goal
5. There are degrees of autonomy
6. The degrees of autonomy are unstable and variable

7. Autonomy is not simply a matter of placing learners in situations where they have to be independent

8. Developing autonomy requires conscious awareness of the learning process – i.e. conscious reflection and decision-making

9. Promoting autonomy is not simply a matter of teaching strategies

10. Autonomy can take place both inside and outside the classroom

11. Autonomy has a social as well as an individual dimension

12. The promotion of autonomy has a political as well as psychological dimension

13. Autonomy is interpreted differently by different cultures

Our educational systems emphasise mostly on what and how to teach as they are based on the assumption that what is taught is what is learnt. Thus, very little attention has been given to the learner. Though these last years, specialists in EFL, in particular, have been focussing on learner-centeredness and it is very fortunate that in Algeria we are beginning to reflect on this approach to wonder whether the learner is actually learning, what he/she thinks of the syllabi and the learning materials. In other word, the learning methods we impose on him; how he views his/her role and that of his/her teacher.

As it is mentioned the implication of this approach is that it gives learners an opportunity to select and implement appropriate learning strategies in order to allow them to learn at their own pace. It also gives learners an opportunity to play a considerable role in setting the goals of learning, in organizing the learning process, and fulfilling it.

Thus, the learning and teaching of EFL maybe considered less than efficient if it is not based on learner-centred approaches and learner autonomy, as suggested by contemporary researchers. Individuals must be enabled to construct their own private learning spaces according to their needs and fill them with personally meaningful learning material.

5.3.4.4 Classroom Management

Classroom management is how the teacher delivers the programme, as well as the environment in which learners will learn. Hayden 2014 states the following classrooms management strategies to keep learners learning in a calm and good atmosphere. There are a lot of strategies that a teacher can use in order to create an optimal learning environment. Teachers with the best classroom management usually have their class working and learning seamlessly. They are as follows:

- Keep the lesson moving. If you have a forty-five minute period, plan three different activities. Try to get them up out of their seats at least once during the class period. Those learners with pent up energy will thank you for it.

- Don't lecture for the whole period. learners who are actively engaged in a learning activity are generally not disrupting the class. Hands-on activities work great for vivacious classrooms.

- Talk to your learners. If they do something nice, tell them that you appreciate their kindness. This lets them know that you really do care about them.

- When learners are being disruptive by talking, poking, pulling or crumpling paper, go stand by them. This works best with boys. I have taught from the back of the room by the orneriest boys. This sends them a direct message to stop what they are doing. Most of the time they stop and get back to work.

- When you have stood by the learners, talked to the leaner and kept them busy with lessons, and if they still are disruptive, take them in the hallway. Ask them, "Are you OK?" It has been my experience that they crumble and tell you that they had a fight with their parents, didn't get up on time or are having other issues. If they are defiant, send them on to the principal.

5.4 Suggestions for Speaking Activities

Teaching speaking is a very important part of second language learning. The ability to communicate in a foreign language, clearly and efficiently, contributes to the success of the learner in his or her academic life, and later in every phase of his or her life. Many linguists and EFL teachers agree today on that learners learn to speak by interacting and communicating. Besides, collaborative learning serve best for this communicative aim as it is based on real life situations that require communication it will allow learners to have and create the opportunity of communicating with each other in the target language. The following suggested activities will help learners to be more active in the learning process and at the same time make their leaning more meaningful and easy for them.

Traditional classroom speaking practice often takes the form of drills in which one learner asks a question and another gives an answer. The question and the answer are structured and predictable, and often there is only one correct, predetermined answer. The purpose of asking and answering the question is to demonstrate the ability to ask and answer the question. In contrast, the purpose of real communication is to accomplish a task, such as conveying a telephone message, obtaining information, or expressing an opinion. In real communication, participants must manage uncertainty about what the other person will say. Authentic communication involves an information gap; each learner has information that the other does not have. In addition, to achieve their purpose, the learners may have to clarify their meaning or ask for confirmation of their own understanding.

To create classroom speaking activities that will develop communicative competence, EFL teachers need to incorporate a purpose and an information gap and allow for multiple forms of expression. However, quantity alone will not necessarily produce competent EFL speakers. Teachers need to combine structured output activities, which allow for error correction and increased

accuracy, with communicative output activities that give learners opportunities to practice language use more freely.

There are many examples of different types of speaking activities that EFL teachers might use in their classrooms; they could get inspired by real life situations such as

- Chatting to a passenger sitting next to you during a plane journey;
- Telling a friend about an amusing week end experience and hearing him or her recount a similar experience he or she once had;
- Asking someone for directions on the street;
- Making a presentation;
- Buying something in a shop;
- Ordering food from a menu in a restaurant;
- Or, Making a telephone call to obtain flight information.

And for such purposes there is a variety of speaking activities that EFL teachers could use in their classrooms such as:

- Discussions
- Role play
- Simulations
- Information gap
- Brainstorming
- Story telling
- Story completion
- interviews
- Reporting
- Picture narrating
- Picture describing

Each activity will be explained below with the provision of examples for the two first ones to clarify to the reader how a teacher can proceed with these activities

- **Discussions**

A discussion can be held for various reasons. The learners may aim to arrive at a conclusion, share ideas about an event, or find solutions in their discussion groups. Before the discussion, it is essential that the purpose of the discussion activity is set by the teacher. In this way, the discussion points are relevant to this purpose, so that pupils do not spend their time chatting with each other about irrelevant things. For example, pupils can become involved in agree/disagree discussions. In this type of discussions, the teacher can form groups of pupils, preferably 4 or 5 in each group, and provide controversial sentences like "people learn best when they read vs. people learn best when they travel". Then each group works on their topic for a given time period, and presents their opinions to the class. It is essential that the speaking should be equally divided among group members.

At the end, the class decides on the winning group who defended the idea in the best way. This activity fosters critical thinking and quick decision making, and pupils learn how to express and justify themselves in polite ways while disagreeing with the others. For efficient group discussions, it is always better not to form large groups, because quiet pupils may avoid contributing in large groups. The group members can be either assigned by the teacher or the pupils may determine it by themselves, but groups should be rearranged in every discussion activity so that they can work with various people and learn to be open to different ideas. Lastly, in class or group discussions, whatever the aim is, the pupils should always be encouraged to ask questions, paraphrase ideas, express support, check for clarification, and so on.

EXAMPLE:

Activity: Debates

▸   Duration: 25–30 min

▸   Aim: Oral fluency practice; disagreeing

▸   Summary: A series of quick debates in pairs.

Introduction

In this activity, the teacher sets a topic and pupils debate it during two minutes in pairs. Two minutes is long enough for pupils to bring up a few key points, but short enough that they do not run out of ideas or become bored. After two minutes, the teacher sets a new topic.

Procedure

Leading into this activity, you might take the opportunity to introduce some useful expressions. For example, before the class I wrote on the blackboard:

a. I don't agree that...
b. I admit that...
c. That doesn't make sense.
d. That's beside the point.

 Woman: You must talk to our daughter! I think she wants to stop studying and leave school to start work though she hasn't yet finished the secondary school!

1. Man: stop studying is a bad choice, but _____.

Explain to the pupils that there will be some debates later in the lesson, and these four phrases are useful during an argument or debate. Ask them to discuss with their partner, and decide which word goes where (do not explain the meanings, let them try the exercise first). Afterwards, check the answers (d, a, c, b) and explain if necessary, for example explain that "beside the point" means not relevant. Mark the stress in the last two phrases, and drill them:

That's beside the point.
That doesn't make sense.

Now it is time for the first debate, a demonstration with you on one side and the pupils on the other side. To motivate them, you might promise a reward if they win, for example telling them a joke. You can get one pupil to stand at the side of the room and be the judge. Try to use the four phrases that you just taught (perhaps point to them on the blackboard as you speak them). A possible topic (write it on the board) is: "It's better to be a teacher than a pupil". I always argue the "against" case, with points like:

- pupils can make friends easily

- pupils are only responsible for themselves, not others

- pupils get a reward: a degree

- pupils learn

- pupils can skip classes!

- pupils do not have to spend the whole class standing up

Next, explain the "two minute debate" activity: pupils work in pairs, and have two minutes to debate a topic. If you think it is necessary, carry out another demonstration by choosing two pupils to stand up and debate: write a topic on

the board (some ideas are listed below), and assign one to argue "for" and one to argue "against".

Finally, begin the activity proper. Do not let the pupils decide who is for and against as that would take up too much time, instead just assign a role to each column of desks. Check with a "hands up": who is for? Who is against? Tell them not to start the debate until you say so. Write up a topic, and give them two minutes to debate. After each debate, ask for a few arguments as feedback, but do not spend too much time on this or it will interrupt the momentum of the activity. Four or five debates are enough. Some possible topics are:

- A bike is better than a car.

- Students should each have their own room.

- It's better to be a boy than a girl.

- University students should not date.

- It's better to watch a soap opera, than watch the news.

Notes

Since the pupils have no time to prepare, the topics should be fairly simple, and relevant.

The method described here is fairly lengthy. If pupils are already familiar with debating, then one or both of the demonstrations (teacher vs class, and learner vs learner) could be skipped.

An easy way to lead smoothly into the next activity or lesson focus is to make the last debate topic relate to it.

This is also a good activity to pave the way to more formal styles of debating.

In subsequent lessons, this activity could be repeated with just one or two topics as a warmer or a filler.

Variations

If you to have a class arranged in groups of three, you could get two pupils to debate a topic and have the third one act as judge, giving comments or advice after the debate.

- **Role Play**

One other way of getting pupils to speak is role-playing. pupils pretend they are in various social contexts and have a variety of social roles. In role-play activities, the teacher gives information to the learners such as who they are and what they think or feel. Thus, the teacher can tell the pupils that "You are John, you go to the doctor and tell him what happened last night, and…" (Harmer, 1984: 23)

Example:

Ask pupils to write only the other half of the conversation, then to find a partner, and to practise the new conversation.

Example of a role play activity:

Student: A

A:...

B: i'm really sorry my car broke down and i couldn't get a taxi and then I missed the train.

A: ....

B: I did, but your secretary didn't answer.

A: ....

B:The tennis? You know I could not get tickets

A: ....

B: that's funny. People always tell me they know somebody who looks like me. You know , only yesterday..........

Student: B

A:.Robin it's two o clock! Why didn't you come to work this morning?

B: ....

A: Well, why didn't you phone?

B: ....

A: You weren't watching the tennis, were you?

B:...

A: Oh? Well I saw the news on TV at lunch, and there wa a person there who looked a lot like you.

B:...

- **Simulations**

Simulations are very similar to role-plays but what makes simulations different than role plays is that they are more elaborated. In simulations, pupils can bring items to the class to create a realistic environment. For instance, if a pupil is acting as a singer, she brings a microphone to sing and so on.

Role plays and simulations have many advantages. First, since they are entertaining, they motivate the pupils. Second, as Harmer (1984) suggests, they

increase the self-confidence of hesitant pupils, because in role play and simulation activities, they will have a different role and do not have to speak for themselves, which means they do not have to take the same responsibility.

- **Information Gap**

In this activity, pupils are supposed to be working in pairs. One pupil will have the information that other partner does not have and the partners will share their information. Information gap activities serve many purposes such as solving a problem or collecting information. Also, each partner plays an important role because the task cannot be completed if the partners do not provide the information the others need. These activities are effective because everybody has the opportunity to talk extensively in the target language.

- **Brainstorming**

On a given topic, pupils can produce ideas in a limited time. Depending on the context, either individual or group brainstorming is effective and learners generate ideas quickly and freely. The good characteristics of brainstorming are that the pupils are not criticized for their ideas so pupils will be open to sharing new ideas. (See figure 5.3)
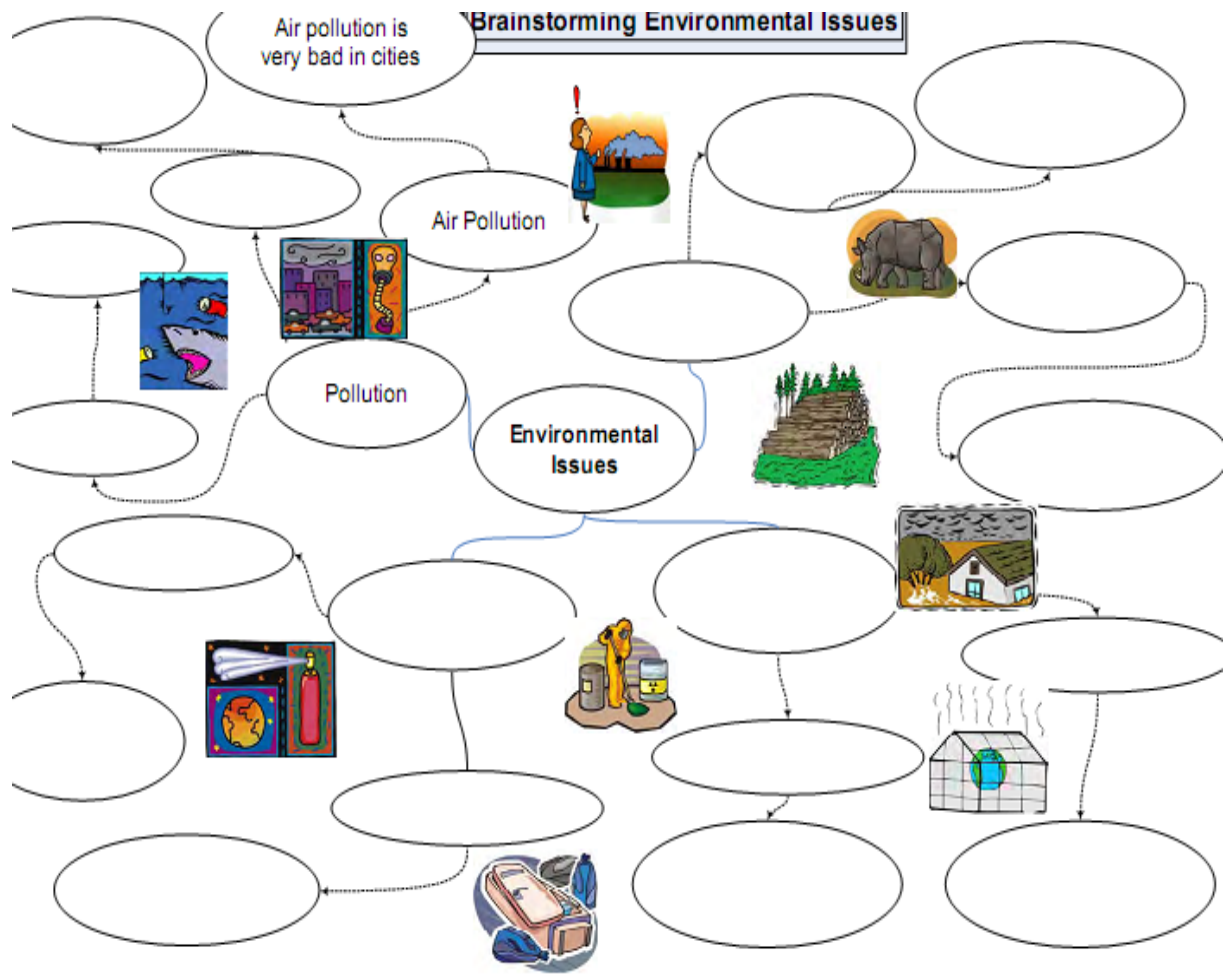
Figure 5.3: Example of Brainstorming Activities

- **Storytelling**

Pupils can briefly summarize a tale or story they heard from somebody beforehand, or they may create their own stories to tell their classmates. Story telling fosters creative thinking. It also helps pupils express ideas in the format of beginning, development, and ending, including the characters and setting a story has to have. pupils also can tell riddles or jokes. For instance, at the very beginning of each class session, the teacher may call a few pupils to tell short riddles or jokes as an opening. In this way, not only will the teacher address pupils' speaking ability, but also get the attention of the class.

- **Interviews**

Pupils can conduct interviews on selected topics with various people. It is a good idea that the teacher provides a rubric to pupils so that they know what type of questions they can ask or what path to follow, but pupils should prepare their own interview questions. Conducting interviews with people gives pupils a chance to practice their speaking ability not only in class but also outside and helps them becoming socialized. After interviews, each pupil can present his or her study to the class. Moreover, pupils can interview each other and "introduce" his or her partner to the class.

- **Story Completion**

This is a very enjoyable, whole-class, free-speaking activity for which students sit in a circle. For this activity, a teacher starts to tell a story, but after a few sentences he or she stops narrating. Then, each student starts to narrate from the point where the previous one stopped. Each student is supposed to add from four to ten sentences. Students can add new characters, events, descriptions and so on.

- **Reporting**

Before coming to class, pupils are asked to read a newspaper or magazine and, in class, they report to their friends what they find as the most interesting news. Pupils can also talk about whether they have experienced anything worth telling their friends in their daily lives before class.

- **Picture Narrating**

This activity is based on several sequential pictures. Pupils are asked to tell the story taking place in the sequential pictures by paying attention to the criteria provided by the teacher as a rubric. Rubrics can include the vocabulary or structures they need to use while narrating.

- **Picture Describing**

Another way to make use of pictures in a speaking activity is to give pupils just one picture and having them describe what it is in the picture. For this activity pupils can form groups and each group is given a different picture. pupils discuss the picture with their groups, then a spokesperson for each group describes the picture to the whole class. This activity fosters the creativity and imagination of the learners as well as their public speaking skills.

5.5 Oral Language Evaluation

Oral language has long been overlooked as a critical component of language arts (Buckley, 1992). This neglect will continue until proper evaluation procedures are facilitated by teachers (Buckley, 1995). With the current trend towards making communication the focus of a curriculum in EFL classrooms, there should be a certain congruence between teaching, learning and evaluation processes. Thus, it is the role of the teacher by adjusting his evaluation methods in helping to reduce the gap between the two.

As opposed to long-held beliefs, we now know that pupils do not acquire a language by memorizing vocabulary items in isolation and by producing limited simple sentences. Pupils who do well on grammar tests may be unable to understand the target language outside the classroom. Therefore, it is interesting to mention that to acquire a language effectively, pupils at all levels should be evaluated for their speaking ability. Researchers have determined that in order to facilitate oral language development, educators must provide a "curricula that is a thoughtfully organized, sequential set of experiences leading logically through the grades" (Stewig, 1988: 172) with practical and accessible means for documentation and evaluation (Loban, 1976).

Stewig (1988:41) declares further that to appropriate oral language into the curriculum teachers must do these three things: "1) develop rationales, 2) plan curriculum sequences, and 3) implement evaluation programs".

Thus, evaluation is an integral part of the learning process. The evaluation should be designed in such a way that it reflects real world tasks that make use of recently learned material in ways that allow pupils to express their own meaning. Pupils must know how to use the language effectively in order to exchange ideas and information with other people in an appropriate manner.

This part focuses on the rationale and validity of using communicative speaking evaluation and shows the practical constraints in conducting communicative speaking evaluation. Communicative speaking evaluation can be difficult and even may be expensive. However, teachers should always remember that it is not impossible. In any attempt to improve education, teachers are central to changes. Teachers are the end users of a classroom innovation. Teachers' perceptions are a crucial factor in the ultimate success or failure of that innovation.

5.5.1 Teachers' Views of the Oral Language Evaluation

The English curriculum was designed to move away from traditional teaching methods to communicative methods, promoting interaction among pupils and between pupils and the teacher through communicative tasks that can help pupils develop their language knowledge and skills (Ministry of Education, 2004).

The new introduced approach has influenced the way the teachers use to assess and evaluate their learners' language ability. Evaluation of learning has been strongly encouraged to shift from conventional evaluation to an authentic assessment where learning outcomes are assessed from the learners' assignments. It is generally perceived that oral evaluation is difficult and it is a perplexing problem for many language teachers. In fact, Algerian teachers also find it difficult to balance content and language when scoring an oral evaluation.

The main obstacles that the Algerian teachers face are lack of effective and efficient evaluation instruments. Accordingly, it could be difficult for

teachers to evaluate their learners' speaking ability as there are no prescribed, ready-made evaluation tools for the speaking skill. Large classes and a lack of time are also among the major obstacles to conduct speaking assessments though they had little to do with pedagogical issues.

It seems that teachers need to have assistance and encouragement in trying communicative evaluation. The accurate evaluation of oral ability takes considerable time and effort to obtain valid and reliable results. Nevertheless, where backwash is an important consideration, the investment of such time and effort may be considered necessary if we would like to reach certain congruence between the teaching method and the evaluation methods.

5.5.2 Guidelines for Conducting Oral Language Evaluation

Oral language in the foreign language classroom is the most problematic of all the skills to assess. The study of the language system itself, while useful for some learners, does not automatically result in the development of the ability to use language in real situations and to respond meaningfully in appropriate ways.

Indeed, an earlier emphasis on the learning of the language system to the exclusion of meaningful interactive activities in the classroom has led to frustration and dissatisfaction for learners. These communicative skills allow pupils to develop oral proficiency in the target language so that they can express their needs and ideas, can interact socially, and have the basic survival skills to function in the target language. Such skills allow them to participate even if on a limited basis in the life of the people whose language they are studying.

Matching the objectives of evaluation to the objectives of the approach in EFL classroom is part of the alignment to enhance pupils leaning. Thus in reality, evaluation does not necessarily match the espoused goals of teaching and pupils learn what they perceive as important for the evaluation process. In fact, there are inconsistencies between the theory and practice of pupils' evaluation, and that the objectives of curriculum, such as development of understanding and

communicative abilities, would not be achieved unless evaluation genuinely reflects the same principles. According to the Fairfax County Public School, teachers should:

1. Determine the purpose for the assessment.

2. Select the objectives of the assessment. Teachers have to reflect on what they want their learners to know or to be able to do.

3. Design the task they want to use.

4. Think about the management of the assessment. Teachers will need to select materials, determine if items are to be done individually or in small group, and for how long.

5. Establish the scoring criteria for assessing learners achievement.

6. Determine point values or grading scales for your scoring criteria. This may involve giving different weights to different criteria.

7 Interpret the results of the assessment activity according to the purpose of the assessment.

In third year secondary school classrooms, and after at least seven years of EFL learning, the pupils can be said to have an intermediate level. Thus, they are supposed to be able to combine previously learned material and be able to ask questions. They are supposed to use the language creatively, they can handle a limited number of interactive and social situations. They are able to ask and answer questions and they can initiate and respond to simple statements. They can role play in familiar situations. They can also handle basic and communicative tasks and depicting everyday situations.

The following chart (Buck, et al., 1989 in Teacher's Handbook, Judith et al. 1994) elaborates on the functions, context, content, rate of accuracy, and text types associated with different levels of oral proficiency.

Table 5.2 Speaking Proficiency: Assessment Criteria

Global Tasks/ Functions	Context	Content	Accuracy	Text Type
SUPERIOR Can discuss extensively by supporting opinions, abstracting and hypothesizing	Most formal and informal settings	Wide range of general interest topics and some special fields of interest and expertise; concrete, abstract and unfamiliar topics	Errors will virtually never interfere with communication or disturb the native speaker	Extended discourse
ADVANCED Can describe and narrate in major time/aspect frames	Most informal and some formal settings	Concrete and factual topics of personal and public interest	Can be understood without difficulty by speakers unaccustomed to non-native speakers	Paragraph discourse
INTERMEDIATE Can maintain simple face-to-face conversation by asking and responding to simple questions	Some informal settings and a limited number of transactional situations	Topics related primarily to self and immediate environment	Can be understood, with some repetition by speakers accustomed to non-native speakers	Discrete sentences and strings of sentences

NOVICE Can produce only formulaic utterances, lists, and enumerations	Highly Common, predictable daily settings	common discrete elements of daily life	May be difficult to understand, even for those accustomed to non-native speakers	Discrete words and phrases

Therefore speaking evaluation tasks must clearly assess the oral targets being measured; that is, they must be valid. Tasks must have clear scoring criteria, so that teachers can fairly, objectively, and, most important, consistently evaluate them; thatis, tasks must have reliability. Another point is that; spontaneity is a goal of all speaking examinations. Material that has been written and memorized is not a speaking evaluation. This type of activity accomplishes many of the same goals of a speaking examination-- pronunciation, fluency, etc., but lacks the ability to evaluate how well learners will handle the unrehearsed situation. A minimum of four speaking examinations should be given to each learner during the school year. These four speaking examinations may evaluate the learners at all levels in five areas: fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation, accuracy and comprehension.

Therefore there is not only the perception that pupils learning is closely linked to evaluation of pupils learning, but also strong evidence to show that pupils indeed learn strategically in order to maximise their chances of obtaining good grades. Given this situation, ensuring evaluation measures the intended learning processes and outcomes seems appropriate in order to encourage pupils to learn what we would like them to learn.

5.5.3 Oral Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation should be conducted when learners engage in their prepared conversations. Revision of the instructor's evaluation can be conducted, if necessary, during the question/answer phase of the exam. For each point of

evaluation, learners are graded on a Likert-type scale (1 being poor, through to 5 being excellent). The comments section of the exam evaluation sheet can be used to record points of feedback for each student. For example, problematic points of pronunciation, or grammar mistakes continuously employed by the learner throughout the duration of the test.

- **Fluency of Speech:** This point of evaluation should be based upon the smoothness of speech, not speed, and take into account the normal use of hesitancy in conversation. If learners cease their conversation to giggle, or if they have memorized their conversation and can not continue by relying upon their inherent communication skills then this should reflect in a lower rating. learners who speak efficiently, and without awkwardness, should in turn be granted a higher rating.

- **Grammar Use:** It is unrealistic to expect that any EFL learner will come to an exam and speak without any grammar problems; emphasis should therefore be placed on being able to understand the learners communicative intent even if grammar errors are present in sentence structures. However, continual use of the same grammar errors by a learner, such as the use of simple past for all past tense terms, should reflect in a lower rating. Alternatively, those learners who are able to recognize that they had made a grammar error, and correct it during conversation, should be provided a higher rating.

- **Listening Comprehension:** This phase of evaluation is initially tested during the prepared conversation section of the exam. As some learners will not understand what their partners are saying. In some cases, learners will remain silent and wait for their partner to repeat their statement, and this should reflect in a lower rating. At other times a learner may ask for clarification, or ask their partner to repeat what they had said, and this should reflect in a higher rating. Further more, this section of evaluation should be applied in the question/answer tasks of the exam. Some learners

may not understand the instructor's question, even after rewording, whereas other learners will understand the same question immediately.

- **Pronunciation:** As native English speakers possess a high degree of tolerance to ambiguity accent is not considered a viable point of exam evaluation, except where it hinders communicative understanding in the case of radically influencing pronunciation. In situations where continual mispronunciation occurs, or understanding is lost due to incorrect pronunciation of terminology, students should be given a lower rating. Alternatively, if students correct their mispronunciation, or recognize their mispronunciation and attempt to correct it throughout the exam, then this should reflect in a higher rating.

- **Vocabulary Appropriateness and Complexity:** Depending on the learner choice of topic, certain terms or vocabulary items can be selected from the course materials and incorporated within learner conversational presentations. If learners use higher level vocabulary, and select terms taught from the textbook then they should receive a higher rating. If learners employ very simple vocabulary terms for a complex topic, such as health, then this should reflect in a lower rating.

- The following example guidelines are based on a testing exercise worth 100 points.

Letter grade	D-	C-	C	B-	B	A-	A	A+
fluency	12	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
vocabulary	12	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
structure	12	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
comprehensibility	24	28	30	32	34	36	38	40
summary	60	70	75	80	85	90	95	100

Figure 5.4 Oral Evaluation Criteria

Adapted from Omaggio,(2012) Teaching Language in Context

- **Fluency:**

    20: Speech natural and continuous; no unnatural pauses

    18: Speech generally natural and continuous; only slight stumbling or unnatural pauses

    16:. Definite stumbling, but manages to rephrase or continue

    12: Speech frequently hesitant and jerky; sentences may be left uncompleted

- **Vocabulary:**

    20: Uses vocabulary very accurately and extensively (for given levels

    18: Uses range of vocabulary accurately

    16: Occasionally lacks needed words; predominantly accurate usage

    12: Frequently lacks needed words; frequent inaccurate usage

- **Structure:**

  20: Utterances almost always correct

  18: Most utterances correct; some minor structural errors

  16: Many utterances correct; some significant structural errors

  12: Some utterances correct; definite structural problems

- **Comprehensibility:**

  40: Entirely comprehensible

  36: Almost entirely comprehensible; no misunderstandings

  32: Some errors, but mostly comprehensible; occasionally misunderstands tester's questions

  24: Many errors, about half incomprehensible

5.5.4 Examples of Oral Language Evaluation Tasks

Oral communicative evaluation can take many forms. Evaluation instruments should reflect instruction and be incorporated from the beginning stages of lesson planning. Criteria should be clearly defined and understandable to both the teacher and learners. The communicative approach has spread into both teaching and evaluation methodology. According to Weir (1988: 82) "communicative testing is purposive, interesting, motivating, interactive, unpredictable and realistic."

In today's classroom, there are many demands placed on teacher's time for this reason he has to consider and organize carefully the new way of evaluating the learners if he would like to evaluate the learners' communicative abilities. Teachers need to select materials and determine if items are to be done individually, in small or large groups and for how long. They need to think about the specific directions required for learners to perform the assigned speaking task, and they need to ensure that learners have had adequate practice and familiarity in performing these activities. Furthermore, they need to determine

how to collect responses using for example: diaries. As they also need to provide an opportunity for learners to be familiar with the format or the style of the speaking examination.

On the other hand, it is essential to set up an easy and effective record keeping system. Otherwise a teacher who sees many different groups of learners will not be able to reply on his memory to recode pertinent comments at a later time.

There are many kinds of speaking evaluation task that can be used. In essence there are two general approaches that meet the criteria for oral language evaluation. These are interview and role play. Thus teachers can assess their learners' oral language through brief interviews or role plays while the other learners in the class are involved in writing or reading activities

5.5.4.1 Interview Tasks

Interview tasks are a direct evaluation of language use; that is, "they evaluate oral skills by having the examinees actually speak" (Turner 1998: 194). Even so, the ostensible context remains that of a language evaluation. Beyond making the student feel at ease, there is no attempt to simulate a non-evaluation setting. Interview tasks thus represent a compromise solution to the problem of how to control something that is inherently unpredictable.

Interviews are relatively easy to set up. They can be administered in the following ways:

i.   A casual chat at the beginning can help put the learners at their ease.

ii. The use of pictures or a pre-selected topic as a focus for the interview can help especially if the learners are given one or two minutes to prepare themselves in advance.

iii.   An interview can involve pupils preparing and asking a set of questions to others and then reporting their findings to the class. Lazaraton (1992)

5.5.4.2 Role Play Tasks

A role play is language use in a simulated real life situation. Unlike the interview format, role play can focus on a variety of different language functions. It is argued that: "It is a better indicator of real life performance than the interview format; although it tends to favour extroverted candidates with a degree of acting ability" (Weir 1988: 88). Role playing involves at least two learners in an oral presentation where they have been assigned a role and a task to accomplish. Judith Liskin-Gasparro in Testing and Teaching for Oral Proficiency suggests the following guidelines:

A. <u>Guidelines for creating role-play for Novice speakers</u>
1. Connect the role play to theme and language that pupils have recently learned. Reduce the need to say something that they have not yet learned.
2. Direct the conversational exchange.
3. Write the instruction, so that pupils repeat a pattern of structure several times.
4. Incorporate courtesy formulae.

Example:

Your older brother is calling home from college for the first time.

a. Greet him.

b. Ask him if he likes his roommate.

c. Ask whether he likes his classes.

d. Ask about things he does on the week-end.

e. Say good-bye.

B. <u>Role play Guidelines for Intermediate speakers</u>

1. Pick a context. First line of introduction sets the scene and is addressed to the student.

2. Write broad, open-ended instructions for the student's part. Student has to create with the language.

3. Make sure the student asks most of the questions.

Example:

Two pupils act out a role-play between a parent and a teenager who has just been offered an after school job.

<u>Pupil A:</u> You are a teenager who has just been offered a job at a local fast food restaurant for 20 hours per week. You talk to your parents.

a. Tell them about the job - where it is, the hours, etc.

b. Answer their objections, giving them your reasons.

<u>Pupil B:</u> Your teenage child tells you about an offer of a job at a local fast food restaurant.

a. Ask for details about the job - where it is, hours, etc.

b. Express your concerns about the job - homework, fatigue, etc.

5.6 Conclusion

Many factors have made the teaching and the learning of the speaking skill of the target language unsatisfactory. Therefore this fifth chapter has been primarily concerned with providing English language teachers with suggestions and recommendations regarding the teaching of the speaking skill at third year secondary school pupils, willing that such recommendations would be fruitful and help them make reflections on their own teaching methodology.

Oral production is an essential component of learning a foreign language. As such, it should have a central place in the foreign language classroom in both areas of instruction and assessment. Though, when little time is devoted to the evaluation of oral language, the underlying message that oral language is not important becomes clear. Evaluation of oral language can and should be an integral part of language learning and teaching. This chapter has suggested some tasks for doing so to enhance the current teaching and evaluation of the oral production of the Algerian EFL learners to achieve the desired communicative needs defined in the syllabus.

General Conclusion

GENERAL CONCLUSION

The teaching of the speaking skill in EFL classrooms in some parts of the world continues to be a challenging endeavour. Indeed, learning a new language is to be able to speak the target language fluently. The speaking skill is a crucial part of the language learning process, and it is also the skill which has often been neglected in EFL classrooms. In addition, oral performance appears to be one of the most difficult skills to evaluate since there are many constraints to overcome by the teachers and the learners.

Recently, many reforms have been promoted in order to meet the principles of a communicative ability in language learning. In the light of this, a great deal of attention has been devoted to revising teaching materials and curricula meant to improve teaching for the attainment of communicative goals. However Algerian EFL teachers faced many constraints when dealing with the speaking skill which led to them to concentrate on the short term objective in their teaching of the English language and neglect the long term objectives.

This dissertation tried primarily to analyse EFL teaching and learning of the speaking skill at secondary-school level, for 3rd year scientific stream pupils. It was targeted towards investigating the real causes behind this learners' failure to use the language for oral communication. Then, the investigator managed to diagnose any variable capable of influencing the teaching / learning sphere. This issue was dealt with in five interrelated chapters in an attempt to provide a clear picture of the Algerian teaching / learning context, by stressing the many variables that have directly or indirectly influenced learners outcomes in English language speaking.

In the present study, the researcher was primarily interested in finding some evidence for the lack of congruency between the stated objectives of

English language teaching by the Ministry of Education and the teaching methods of the speaking skill in EFL classrooms. The researcher has mainly focused on the teaching of the speaking skill in EFL classrooms as well as on the constraints that EFL teachers usually face when dealing with a speaking task if done. Accordingly, a case study of third-year secondary school EFL pupils was undertaken to find out the reasons behind the lack of congruence between teaching and evaluation of the speaking skill in EFL classrooms.

Raising teachers' awareness of the vast area of oral language teaching and evaluation in EFL classrooms stressing on the crucial role of oral evaluation in the process of teaching and learning, as well as the recognition of its importance to learning that should not be considered as an add-on feature of instruction but as an integral part of the teaching learning process.

Then, the first chapter has dealt with various aspects of the speaking skill as well as the principles that guide good teaching. It also strives to shed light on the "speaking skill components" of teaching and learning. The teaching/learning situation analysis was designed in the second chapter. In this context, chapter two tried to give an overview of the Algerian educational context with reference to teaching the speaking skill at secondary school level and more specifically to third year secondary students for scientific streams. Chapter three dealt with the empirical phase of this research which has aimed at finding illuminative data which guided the research. Chapter four dealt with the data analysis and interpretation. The researcher analyzed the data obtained from the instruments used in the present study. Finally, on the basis of the results obtained, chapter five tackled some recommendations and suggestions concerning the teaching of English as a whole before focusing on the speaking skill. The fundamental objective was to make EFL students improve their communicative abilities in English as the focus of foreign language education is communication, and oral language is central for the students at all levels.

The results obtained from this study provided interesting insights into the EFL students' speaking competence and enabled us to draw the following conclusions as far as our four research hypotheses are concerned.

With regard to the first hypothesis which stipulates Many Algerian EFL teachers do not really understand the concept of competency based teaching; therefore, deliver materials in the traditional way focusing on reading and writing, the qualitative and quantitative analyses of the classroom observation and the teachers' interview, they revealed that the majority of secondary school EFL teachers do not give too much importance to the teaching of oral skills which are part of the new curricula in language teaching. This is probably due as one of the informants said the teaching of the speaking skill is not tied to the baccalaureate examination which is the ultimate goal for third year secondary school pupils. EFL teachers in the Algerian secondary school still use the old way of teaching their pupils focusing on the reading and the writing skills and in this way preparing their pupils to the BAC exam. Indeed Algerian EFL teachers still focus on grammar activities and on grammatical correctness as well as on reading comprehension which are for them the keys to success to the final written exam. These results seem to confirm the first hypothesis.

As far as the second research hypothesis stating that limited teacher training in the use of the CBA, overloaded classes, and examination system neglecting oral skills are among the major difficulties that teachers have to cope with, we noted that EFL teachers are facing many difficulties trying to implement the newly introduced approach to language teaching. The following findings confirm the second hypothesis. The interview responses of teachers indicated that they are not trained to teach or even to evaluate speaking tasks and the way they have to conduct them. EFL teachers estimated that there was inadequate training for teachers on conducting speaking tasks. The lack of training in conducting speaking tasks was initially a deterrent for Teachers to use authentic communicative speaking task. This finding seems to indicate that additional training, particularly for those whose initial teacher training is not

recent, is necessary if they are to be expected to introduce new ways of teaching and evaluating speaking in the classroom. There is a big gap between theory and practice. Teachers feel frustrated by the reality which doesn't allow them to conduct authentic speaking teaching tasks or evaluation for their pupils. To sum up, speaking is not conducted by the Algerian EFL teachers. However, they pointed that speaking evaluation is necessary for the pupils as the majority of the pupils tend to be motivated by evaluation or examinations. Moreover, the insufficient time devoted to the teaching of English speaking skill shares also a part in the Algerian EFL pupils' failure in oral proficiency. According to the results obtained, we found that apart from the three hours a week allocated to English language, pupils do not have the opportunity to practise the language and make use of it outside the classroom. Besides time constraints, EFL teachers face difficulties caused by the educational system such as the overloaded classes and the absence of oral examination which are among the major difficulties that they have to cope with. Thus, these results confirm the second hypothesis.

As far as the third hypothesis which states that there is lack of interest of third year EFL secondary school pupils in learning to speak. According to the findings the pupils are pragmatic and though they stipulated, in their answers to the questionnaire, the importance of the speaking skill they are bound to prepare themselves to the final examination which focuses more on reading and writing than speaking and listening therefore, most learners lack motivation and interest in speaking tasks and prefer to concentrate their efforts on more practical activities which are related to their BAC exam, hence support to the third hypothesis.

Then, what emerges from the present study, which goes with the last hypothesis, is that the current teaching of speaking needs to be reconsidered. Teaching and evaluation need to go hand in hand to enhance the Algerian EFL pupils motivation and allow them to give due attention to the speaking skill. On the other hand, Teachers should not remain reluctant to revise their own methods. Therefore, it is always worthwhile to try new techniques in teaching to

help their pupils overcome their difficulties in the speaking skill. it is hoped that the suggestions and recommendations made in the last chapter will encourage the Algerian EFL teachers to try any idea which they think is efficient, and to develop their teaching and in turn their pupils' learning of the English language following the principles of the CBA.

This study has some limitations. First, the limited time and sample secondary school in gathering the necessary data to conduct the current investigation, the researcher was allowed to conduct her research in only three secondary schools in the city of Tlemcen and in a period of time not exceeding a week for each secondary school. It would have been interesting to attend EFL classes for a longer period of time in order to have a broad view of the teaching of the speaking skill during a whole semester at least. The second limitation to this research is the constraints the researcher faced in order to be allowed to attend EFL classes in the secondary schools, for the reason that at the time of the investigation and according to the concerned authorities there was no convention or cooperation between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. However, and after several days of negotiation, the investigator was allowed, with a limited access, to attend EFL classes. However, the use of recording means was forbidden. A third limitation relates to the fact that it was impossible to conduct a study involving third year secondary school pupils' oral production testing, which would have given the research more validity. However, this was impossible as the attendance time was limited in each secondary school.

In spite of the above limitations, the current research is believed to have brought a limited but a certain contribution to the field of foreign language teaching and learning in the Algerian context. In this case, the study could be seen as a starting point in the field of research trying to find solutions to how we can contribute to make EFL learners more communicatively competent. Indeed, the lack of investigations dealing with the teaching of the speaking skill in the Algerian EFL classrooms as well as the discrepancy between the foreign

languages teaching objectives stated by the Ministry of Education and the evaluation methods were the starting points to this research.

The present study sheds light on the current concerns and attitudes of Algerian EFL teachers and learners related to teaching and learning the speaking skill in the EFL secondary school classes. It draws attention to the fact that many of the teachers involved in the study do not have specific qualifications in the teaching of the speaking skill. Most of them do not feel being able to teach that skill effectively without receiving adequate training before, all of the teachers have never been to an English speaking country and consider that their own training do not make them adequately prepared for the task of teaching English for communicative purposes.

In a word, it is of great importance for an EFL teacher to have a clear conception of the communicative tasks design and then to be able to design appropriate speaking tasks for different teaching materials and to conduct activities to implement these tasks in appropriate ways with their pupils. Also, it is crucial for a teacher to frequently reflect on their teaching beliefs and teaching practices so that they can make continuous progresses in their teaching. In addition to that it has denoted that any teaching process is related to its testing system and that the non existence of oral proficiency testing and evaluation concerning foreign languages in the Algerian educational system is the major issue in achieving a high level of oral proficiency among EFL Algerian learners.

This thesis provides some ideas on how to design communicative tasks in EFL classrooms in order to enhance teaching, in which the following are included: what principles of communicative tasks should be based on, what components should be in the communicative tasks, what are the main problems of EFL teachers in classrooms, how to design speaking tasks to fit CBA. With the ideas suggested in this thesis, EFL teachers will find it easier and more effective to adjust their teaching to meet the objectives of the curriculum requirements.

To conclude, it would seem important to investigate the reasons for the divergence between teaching and evaluation in the EFL classroom. Finally, the researcher might state that this thesis is far from being exhaustive. It is still a tentative and modest contribution which needs much elaboration. Indeed, more practice and research need to be done to find out how it can improve the pupils' speaking skill. It is hoped that this work will provide a contribution to the work in this field and at the same time stimulate further research in the field of foreign language teaching and learning.

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Appendices

APPENDIX A

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION TOOL

N°	Questions	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Very often	Always
1.	Does the teacher provide opportunities to the pupils to interact orally in the classroom?					
2.	Does the teacher make sure that each pupil interacts orally in the classroom?					
3.	Does the teacher guide the pupils while interacting orally?					
4.	Is the teacher an active partner while interacting orally?					
5.	When the pupils have difficulties in finding Words while interacting orally, does the teacher help them by supplying the word?					
6.	Does the teacher encourage the learners in oral interactions?					
7.	Does the teacher interact with the pupils only in English or does he /she use the mother tongue?					
8.	Does the teacher organize or arrange the class in pairs or in groups during speaking activities?					
9.	Does the teacher brainstorm the speaking activity before letting them work?					
10.	Does the teacher teach the learners inference and interpreting skills?					
11.	Does the teacher teach how to paraphrase in a conversation?					

12.	Does the teacher teach the pupils to relate personal experience or background knowledge to classroom interaction?					
13.	Does the teacher teach how to interact orally even though they lack vocabulary?					
14.	Does the teacher teach the pupils to find a synonym if they cannot find the exact word?					
15.	Does the teacher emphasize on grammar and structure correctness during oral activities?					
16.	Does the teacher point out to the different mistakes during the oral interaction?					
17.	Does the teacher provide activities in relation with real life situations?					
18.	Does the teacher provide his pupils with activities that promote speaking such as discussions, role plays, interviews, etc?					
19.	Does the teacher use audio visual aids in speaking activities?					

APPENDIX B

Third Year Secondary Pupils' Questionnaire

<u>Dear Pupils:</u>

The following questionnaire aims at collecting information about you and at making your learning easier and our teaching more appropriate to your needs and preferences. You are, therefore, kindly requested to answer the following questions.

Thank you for your collaboration

1. Which of the following areas do you think English language teaching should focus on?

   ▪ Listening and speaking ☐

   ▪ Reading and Writing ☐

   ▪ Grammar and Vocabulary ☐

2. My English lessons focus mainly on improving:

   ▪ Listening and speaking skills ☐

   ▪ Reading and Writing skills ☐

   ▪ Grammar and Vocabulary ☐

3. How many times do you need to listen to a conversation or a talk to be able to understand it?

   ▪ once ☐
   ▪ twice ☐
   ▪ three times ☐
   ▪ more than three times ☐

4. What do you do when facing some difficulties when you are listening to spoken English?

   ☐

- Do nothing

- Ask for the teacher's help ☐

- Ask to listen again ☐

- Try to use my previous knowledge ☐

- Try to listen for the main idea without focusing on other small details ☐

- I make a guess to what I am listening to by interpreting the speaker's tone of voice, facial expressions, or gestures ☐

5. Can you answer questions in English?
   - never ☐
   - rarely ☐
   - sometimes ☐
   - very often ☐
   - always ☐

6. Can you recall details of a spoken conversation in English?
   - never ☐
   - rarely ☐
   - sometimes ☐
   - very often ☐
   - always ☐

7. Can you give the whole idea of a spoken conversation in English?

   - never ☐
   - rarely ☐
   - sometimes ☐
   - very often ☐
   - always ☐

8. Can you use your previous background knowledge to respond to a conversation?
   - never ☐
   - rarely ☐
   - sometimes ☐

- very often ☐
- always ☐

9. What are the strategies that you use to cope with speaking difficulties?
- Paraphrase (reformulate) ☐
- Using synonyms ☐
- Using the mother tongue or French words ☐
- Avoid to interact orally ☐

10. What are the main problems or difficulties in oral English language interaction?
- Lack of vocabulary ☐
- Grammar mistakes ☐
- Pronunciation mistakes ☐
- Lack of opportunities in the classrooms ☐

11. What kind of English class do you like?
- Teacher just teaching, students listening ☐
- Pupils are involved in learning activities like games group and pair work ☐

12. How do you prefer to do learning activities in the classroom?
- Alone ☐
- With a friend or a group of friends ☐

13. Our teacher should adopt a new way in teaching his/ her pupils
- Disagree ☐
- Neither agree nor disagree ☐
- Agree ☐

14. speaking skill evaluation can help you improving your speaking performance

- Yes ☐
- I don't know ☐
- No ☐

15. Does your teacher encourage you to speak in the classroom?

- Never ☐
- Rarely ☐
- Sometimes ☐
- Very often ☐
- Always ☐

16. Does your teacher make sure that each one of you speaks in the class?

- Never ☐
- Rarely ☐
- Sometimes ☐
- Very often ☐
- Always ☐

17. Does your teacher arrange the class in pairs/ groups during speaking activities?

- Never ☐
- Rarely ☐
- Sometimes ☐
- Very often ☐
- Always ☐

18. Does your teacher encourage you to guess the meaning of unfamiliar words by using contextual clues?

- Never ⬚

- Rarely ⬚

- Sometimes ⬚

- Very often ⬚

- Always ⬚

19. Does your teacher teach you how to get information quickly from the conversation? (listening for information)

- Never ⬚

- Rarely ⬚

- Sometimes ⬚

- Very often ⬚

- Always ⬚

20. Does the teacher point out your problems regarding speaking skills?

- Never ⬚

- Rarely ⬚

- Sometimes ⬚

- Very often ⬚

- Always ⬚

-END OF QUESTIONNAIRE-

Thank you very much for your help

APPENDIX C

Teachers' Interview

Please answer all questions as completely as possible.

1. How long have you been an English teacher?

2. Which courses and grades are you currently teaching?

3. Why do you think it is important for your pupils to study English?

4. Which of the four skills do you think is the most important for EFL third year secondary school learners?

5. How important do you think it is to teach the speaking skill?

6. What type of oral activities do you use in your classrooms?

7. How important do you think it is for your pupils to develop communicative ability in English?

8. Do you evaluate the pupils' speaking performance?

9. Which types of speaking evaluation tasks do you use?

10. What are the main constraints in conducting speaking tests?

11. Do you think that you need special training in order to develop opportunities towards teaching and evaluating the speaking skill?

-END OF QUESTIONNAIRE-

Thank you very much for your help

الملخص:
تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تقويم كيفية تدريس التعبير الشفوي للغة الإنجليزية على مستوى التعليم الثانوي لتلاميذ السنة الثالثة ثانوي شعبة العلوم التجريبية و كذلك توضيح نقاط الضعف في هذا المجال بعد سبع سنوات من دراسة هذه اللغة الأجنبية مع العلم أنه يبدأ تدريسها في السنة الأولى متوسط.
يتعلق موضوع البحث بالمقاربة بالكفاءات في تعليم اللغات التي بدأ تطبيقها في البرنامج منذ سنة 2003 علاوة على هذا حاولت الباحثة الخروج ببعض النتائج تجيب على مختلف التساؤلات التي تؤرق أساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية في أداء مهامهم التربوية البيداغوجية و على هذا الأساس تم توضيح أهمية توجيه الأساتذة في تدريس مهارة التكلم و القيام بالتطبيقات الخاصة بهذا المجال و الذي يدخل في تطوير التعبير الشفوي للتلاميذ على أساس حوارات شفوية بين التلاميذ أو بيت التلميذ و الأستاذ . كما تم توضيح أهمية التقزيم كمحفز للاهتمام من طرف التلاميذ بالتعبير الشفوي
الكلمات المفتاحية :
تعليم و تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية – مهارة التكلم في التعبير الشفوي – المقاربة بالكفاءات

Résumé :

La médiocrité des performances en production orale en anglais des élèves algériens constitue un défi à relever. Cette recherche descriptive dresse un état des lieux des pratiques d'enseignement aux élèves de 3ème année secondaire. Elle invite ainsi les enseignants de cette discipline à repenser les objectifs prioritaires et préconise de nouvelles modalités d'enseignement de l'oral qui doivent correspondre à la réforme éducative introduite par le ministère de l'éducation nationale depuis 2003. Il s'agit dans ce travail de recherche d'étudier la mise en pratique des principes du programme de la réforme (approche par compétences) et de répondre à la question de la congruence entre les instructions officielles (I.O.) et leurs applications dans les programmes. Les conséquences pédagogiques qui en découlent sont de deux ordres : orienter les enseignants en langue anglaise vers une pratique réellement communicative et former de manière plus intensive les enseignants à une évaluation suivie de cette pratique.

Mots clés: L'approche par compétences, l'enseignement de la production orale aux élèves de 3ème année secondaire.

Summary:

In EFL contexts, speaking is perhaps the most important of the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing . This study investigates the way the speaking skill is taught in the Algerian secondary schools under the CBA trying to explain the reasons behind EFL pupils' weaknesses and difficulties to express themselves in the target language even after seven years of studying the language. To enhance learners' English performance, this study has three principal objectives. First, it presents English language teaching in the Algerian context, as well as teaching English speaking. Then, it addresses major problems found in the implementation of speaking tasks for the Algerian teachers. Lastly, the paper highlights the significance of evaluation as it is the main tool to raise the learners' motivation. Some pedagogical implications are discussed for teaching speaking to Algerian learners.

Keywords: EFL learners, teaching the speaking skill, CBA, reform in the Algerian educational system.

An Evaluation of the Teaching of the Speaking Skill in EFL Classrooms within the Framework of the CBA: The Case of 3rd Year Pupils in 3 Secondary Schools in Tlemcen

DOCTORATE THESIS SUMMARY

Ms. FZ Imane OMARI

2015

Globalisation has affected the social, cultural, technological, political and economical aspects of our life, modifying our practices and changing the vision which we have of ourselves and of the society we live in. With the change of this vision is born the need to adapt and adjust the educational process which should ensure the training of future citizens on the basis of our past, the realities of the present, and the challenges of the future. The multiple changes associated with globalization are thus as many reasons which inspire the educational reforms in this beginning of the 21st century.

The importance of English in the academic and professional domains as well as the need for communication among people of different cultures and languages, triggered by travelling and globalisation, puts pressure on people to learn languages more quickly and efficiently. Indeed, learning a foreign language is a challenging effort for those whose goal is effective communication. Learning a new language, today, is also substantially different from what it used to be in the past: people are more in need to communicate orally, and we cannot wait for years before they engage in real communication.

Because of the growing importance of English as a world language and the advance of technology, there is an urgency to learn languages which is felt everywhere within societies all over the world. The search for new and more efficient teaching methods is a consequence of the requirements for fluid communication. Thus, the education reform is believed to be a key-determinant for new developments in English language teaching

English teaching in Algeria is often criticised on the grounds that it has been slow to progress. Indeed, although the English language is studied during seven years starting from the age of eleven and continuing up until graduation from secondary schools at the age of eighteen and that the primary objective of the syllabus prescribed by the Algerian Ministry of Education is to stress the importance of developing pupils' ability to use English for the purpose of oral

communication, the Algerian learners continue to experience difficulty in using the language for purposeful communication.

The teaching of the speaking skill in EFL classrooms in some parts of the world continues to be a challenging endeavour. Indeed, learning a new language is to be able to speak the target language fluently. The speaking skill is a crucial part of the language learning process, and it is also the skill which has often been neglected in EFL classrooms. In addition, oral performance appears to be one of the most difficult skills to evaluate since there are many constraints to overcome by the teachers and the learners.

Recently, many reforms have been promoted in order to meet the principles of a communicative ability in language learning. In the light of this, a great deal of attention has been devoted to revising teaching materials and curricula meant to improve teaching for the attainment of communicative goals. However Algerian EFL teachers faced many constraints when dealing with the speaking skill which led to them to concentrate on the short term objective in their teaching of the English language and neglect the long term objectives.

This dissertation tried primarily to analyse EFL teaching and learning of the speaking skill at secondary-school level, for 3rd year scientific stream pupils. It was targeted towards investigating the real causes behind this learners" failure to use the language for oral communication. Then, the investigator managed to diagnose any variable capable of influencing the teaching / learning sphere. This issue was dealt with in five interrelated chapters in an attempt to provide a clear picture of the Algerian teaching / learning context, by stressing the many variables that have directly or indirectly influenced learners outcomes in English language speaking.

In the present study, the researcher was primarily interested in finding some evidence for the lack of congruency between the stated objectives of English language teaching by the Ministry of Education and the teaching

methods of the speaking skill in EFL classrooms. The researcher has mainly focused on the teaching of the speaking skill in EFL classrooms as well as on the constraints that EFL teachers usually face when dealing with a speaking task if done. Accordingly, a case study of third-year secondary school EFL pupils was undertaken to find out the reasons behind the lack of congruence between teaching and evaluation of the speaking skill in EFL classrooms.

Raising teachers' awareness of the vast area of oral language teaching and evaluation in EFL classrooms stressing on the crucial role of oral evaluation in the process of teaching and learning, as well as the recognition of its importance to learning that should not be considered as an add-on feature of instruction but as an integral part of the teaching learning process.

Therefore, as the calls for a more communicative approach increase, there has been much debate with regard to the best way to achieve this objective and thus to improve the speaking ability of Algerian learners, which represents the one of ultimate target of the Ministry of Education. The latter has, since 2003, implemented the Competency Based Approach (CBA) methodology on a multi-level scale and part of this educational reform concerns EFL teaching and learning.

The Speaking Skill in the Algerian EFL classes remains an elusive challenge for many teachers. EFL pupils need to learn how to speak in order to be fully proficient in the target language. The teaching and learning of the speaking skill encompasses the whole language teaching process. Without a real assessment in oral proficiency, it is extremely difficult to gauge how the pupils are progressing with their studies. Along with outlining the main elements in language teaching and how they are applied to EFL classrooms, this research is twofold:

First, it identifies the way in which the teaching of the speaking skill has been administered in the EFL classrooms under the CBA since the 2003

educational reform in education; then it investigates the Algerian EFL teachers' perceptions of the practical constraints inherent to the implementation of this communicative skill in the EFL classrooms which systematically affect their teaching and the preparation of the secondary school pupils to the BAC examination.

Second, it identifies EFL third year secondary school pupils' learning needs in oral expression, and more importantly the main reasons which lie behind their poor achievement in the speaking skill after seven years of English learning, by isolating one possible cause: their lack of exposure to the language outside classrooms. The researcher will also discuss what steps can be taken to create meaningful and effective speaking evaluation for an EFL classroom.

The teaching of the speaking skill has become one of the most important issues in language teaching and learning since the speaking ability has become more central in EFL language teaching with the advent of Communicative Language Teaching. The ability to communicate in the target language can be used as a lever to motivate the learners as they will be speakers of that language. This is more likely to be accomplished when the teaching is tied to the instructional goals, i.e., language outcomes of the syllabus. However, there are many difficulties involved in the construction and administration of any speaking task. This forms the core of the present research study, which tries to investigate the following research questions:

1. How do Algerian secondary school teachers handle the speaking skill under the CBA?
2. What are the difficulties they face when teaching the speaking skill under the CBA?
3. How do Algerian 3rd year secondary school pupils respond to learning to speak under the CBA?

4. What is the pedagogical change that can be brought to improve the teaching of the speaking skill under the CBA in Algerian secondary school EFL classrooms?

The investigation throughout this work will attempt to provide arguments for the following research hypotheses:

1. Many Algerian EFL teachers do not really understand the concept of competency based teaching; therefore, deliver materials in the traditional way focusing on reading and writing.
2. Limited teacher training in the use of the CBA, overloaded classes, and examination system neglecting oral skills are among the major difficulties that teachers have to cope with.
3. There is lack of interest of third year EFL secondary school pupils in learning to speak.
4. To enhance the effectiveness of teaching the speaking skill; the curriculum, teaching and evaluation need to be developed in a concordant way within the framework of the CBA.

In order to find out to which extent these hypotheses are true, the researcher has opted for a certain methodology to evaluate the teaching of the speaking skill in the Algerian EFL classrooms. A case study was chosen to investigate a randomly selected sample of 150 third year EFL secondary school pupils from the scientific stream, and ten EFL teachers using a mixed-methods approach which includes the use of both quantitative and qualitative approaches for the sake of collecting data. Three research instruments have been utilized in order to triangulate the results including classroom observation conducted by the researcher in the studied setting, a questionnaire administered to the pupils and a structured interview prepared for the teacher.

This research work is composed of five interrelated chapters that are linked to enlighten the reader on this work.

Chapter one provides a theoretical overview of the speaking skill, its importance, its characteristics as well as the speaking skill in the different English language teaching methods. It tackles the teaching of the speaking skill in EFL classrooms, by defining the key concept related to both its teaching and learning. It also attempts to provide a theoretical basis on which the teaching/learning of the speaking skill is based on. This theoretical background attempts to explain how speaking is viewed in the field of foreign language teaching and the crucial role that it plays in language learning. It as well cites the different approaches to its teaching, and finally demonstrates the different techniques and strategies that contribute to the acquisition of oral language proficiency.

Chapter two describes the educational context of English language teaching (ELT) with reference to 3rd year secondary school learners as well as exposing the actual objectives and perspectives of teaching English in Algeria, in the light of the newly adopted reform. It first gives an overview of the Algerian educational system since its independence, it describes the EFL teaching/learning situation in the Algerian secondary school, explains how speaking is taught there and presents the syllabus used. It at the same time examines the many contextual variables shaping the teaching of ELT in general and speaking in particular, namely teachers" and learners"attitudes to the speaking skill, the current employed teaching approach, and the teaching constraints inhibiting learning oral proficiency.

Chapter three sheds light on the data collection procedures undertaken to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses. Indeed, it is targeted towards the description of the research design i.e., case study and procedures, i.e., the ways in which the research is conducted, involving the approaches utilized for collecting data (a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods), the setting of the study, the research instruments of data collection (classroom observation, students' questionnaire and teacher's

interview), sampling techniques. The third chapter includes a well organised outline of what the investigator does from defining the research problem to the presentation of the sampling population and the research instruments used to collect data.

Chapter four is devoted to the analysis of the results obtained from the different research tools. In the previous chapter the researcher has described the design of the present research work which involved the selection of a number of data collection techniques, namely classroom observation, questionnaire and interview. The main results obtained from the three data collection methods are going to be systematically analysed, discussed and interpreted in this chapter in an attempt to answer the research questions. This chapter, therefore, stands for the practical part of the study which involves the combined use of both quantitative and qualitative data analysis techniques. It is expected then that results of this investigative study would hopefully provide a thorough diagnosis of the problem under study and would also pave the way to a better testing of research hypothesis so as to propose alternative remedies to the present way of teaching speaking.

Chapter five in its turn constitutes the closing phase of our investigation, as it is mainly concerned with proposing alternative recommendations to deal with the learners' failure to express themselves in correct English. It simply tries to suggest what exactly learners need to "know" in terms of learning and communicative strategies to be able to use the language well enough for some real world purposes. It thus, moves the focus to the reconsideration of the teachers and learners roles within the reforms that have occurred at national and international levels.

The results obtained from this study provided interesting insights into the EFL students' speaking competence and enabled us to draw the following conclusions as far as our four research hypotheses are concerned.

With regard to the first hypothesis which stipulates Many Algerian EFL teachers do not really understand the concept of competency based teaching; therefore, deliver materials in the traditional way focusing on reading and writing, the qualitative and quantitative analyses of the classroom observation and the teachers' interview, they revealed that the majority of secondary school EFL teachers do not give too much importance to the teaching of oral skills which are part of the new curricula in language teaching. This is probably due as one of the informants said the teaching of the speaking skill is not tied to the baccalaureate examination which is the ultimate goal for third year secondary school pupils. EFL teachers in the Algerian secondary school still use the old way of teaching their pupils focusing on the reading and the writing skills and in this way preparing their pupils to the BAC exam. Indeed Algerian EFL teachers still focus on grammar activities and on grammatical correctness as well as on reading comprehension which are for them the keys to success to the final written exam. These results seem to confirm the first hypothesis.

As far as the second research hypothesis stating that limited teacher training in the use of the CBA, overloaded classes, and examination system neglecting oral skills are among the major difficulties that teachers have to cope with, we noted that EFL teachers are facing many difficulties trying to implement the newly introduced approach to language teaching. The following findings confirm the second hypothesis. The interview responses of teachers indicated that they are not trained to teach or even to evaluate speaking tasks and the way they have to conduct them. EFL teachers estimated that there was inadequate training for teachers on conducting speaking tasks. The lack of training in conducting speaking tasks was initially a deterrent for Teachers to use authentic communicative speaking task. This finding seems to indicate that additional training, particularly for those whose initial teacher training is not recent, is necessary if they are to be expected to introduce new ways of teaching and evaluating speaking in the classroom. There is a big gap between theory and practice. Teachers feel frustrated by the reality which doesn't allow them to

conduct authentic speaking teaching tasks or evaluation for their pupils. To sum up, speaking is not conducted by the Algerian EFL teachers. However, they pointed that speaking evaluation is necessary for the pupils as the majority of the pupils tend to be motivated by evaluation or examinations. Moreover, the insufficient time devoted to the teaching of English speaking skill shares also a part in the Algerian EFL pupils' failure in oral proficiency. According to the results obtained, we found that apart from the three hours a week allocated to English language, pupils do not have the opportunity to practise the language and make use of it outside the classroom. Besides time constraints, EFL teachers face difficulties caused by the educational system such as the overloaded classes and the absence of oral examination which are among the major difficulties that they have to cope with. Thus, these results confirm the second hypothesis.

As far as the third hypothesis which states that there is lack of interest of third year EFL secondary school pupils in learning to speak. According to the findings the pupils are pragmatic and though they stipulated, in their answers to the questionnaire, the importance of the speaking skill they are bound to prepare themselves to the final examination which focuses more on reading and writing than speaking and listening therefore, most learners lack motivation and interest in speaking tasks and prefer to concentrate their efforts on more practical activities which are related to their BAC exam, hence support to the third hypothesis.

Then, what emerges from the present study, which goes with the last hypothesis, is that the current teaching of speaking needs to be reconsidered. Teaching and evaluation need to go hand in hand to enhance the Algerian EFL pupils motivation and allow them to give due attention to the speaking skill. On the other hand, Teachers should not remain reluctant to revise their own methods. Therefore, it is always worthwhile to try new techniques in teaching to help their pupils overcome their difficulties in the speaking skill. it is hoped that the suggestions and recommendations made in the last chapter will encourage the Algerian EFL teachers to try any idea which they think is

efficient, and to develop their teaching and in turn their pupils' learning of the English language following the principles of the CBA.

This study has some limitations. First, the limited time and sample secondary school in gathering the necessary data to conduct the current investigation, the researcher was allowed to conduct her research in only three secondary schools in the city of Tlemcen and in a period of time not exceeding a week for each secondary school. It would have been interesting to attend EFL classes for a longer period of time in order to have a broad view of the teaching of the speaking skill during a whole semester at least. The second limitation to this research is the constraints the researcher faced in order to be allowed to attend EFL classes in the secondary schools, for the reason that at the time of the investigation and according to the concerned authorities there was no convention or cooperation between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. However, and after several days of negotiation, the investigator was allowed, with a limited access, to attend EFL classes. However, the use of recording means was forbidden. A third limitation relates to the fact that it was impossible to conduct a study involving third year secondary school pupils' oral production testing, which would have given the research more validity. However, this was impossible as the attendance time was limited in each secondary school.

In spite of the above limitations, the current research is believed to have brought a limited but a certain contribution to the field of foreign language teaching and learning in the Algerian context. In this case, the study could be seen as a starting point in the field of research trying to find solutions to how we can contribute to make EFL learners more communicatively competent. Indeed, the lack of investigations dealing with the teaching of the speaking skill in the Algerian EFL classrooms as well as the discrepancy between the foreign languages teaching objectives stated by the Ministry of Education and the evaluation methods were the starting points to this research.

The present study sheds light on the current concerns and attitudes of Algerian EFL teachers and learners related to teaching and learning the speaking skill in the EFL secondary school classes. It draws attention to the fact that many of the teachers involved in the study do not have specific qualifications in the teaching of the speaking skill. Most of them do not feel being able to teach that skill effectively without receiving adequate training before, all of the teachers have never been to an English speaking country and consider that their own training do not make them adequately prepared for the task of teaching English for communicative purposes.

In a word, it is of great importance for an EFL teacher to have a clear conception of the communicative tasks design and then to be able to design appropriate speaking tasks for different teaching materials and to conduct activities to implement these tasks in appropriate ways with their pupils. Also, it is crucial for a teacher to frequently reflect on their teaching beliefs and teaching practices so that they can make continuous progresses in their teaching. In addition to that it has denoted that any teaching process is related to its testing system and that the non existence of oral proficiency testing and evaluation concerning foreign languages in the Algerian educational system is the major issue in achieving a high level of oral proficiency among EFL Algerian learners.

This thesis provides some ideas on how to design communicative tasks in EFL classrooms in order to enhance teaching, in which the following are included: what principles of communicative tasks should be based on, what components should be in the communicative tasks, what are the main problems of EFL teachers in classrooms, how to design speaking tasks to fit CBA. With the ideas suggested in this thesis, EFL teachers will find it easier and more effective to adjust their teaching to meet the objectives of the curriculum requirements.

To conclude, it would seem important to investigate the reasons for the divergence between teaching and evaluation in the EFL classroom. Finally, the researcher might state that this thesis is far from being exhaustive. It is still a

tentative and modest contribution which needs much elaboration. Indeed, more practice and research need to be done to find out how it can improve the pupils' speaking skill. It is hoped that this work will provide a contribution to the work in this field and at the same time stimulate further research in the field of foreign language teaching and learning.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TOWARDS OBJECTIVITY IN THE EVALUATION OF THE ENGLISH ORAL
PRODUCTION OF THE ALGERIAN LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT

This article addresses the pedagogical principles of connecting the way the oral skill in English language is taught with the way it is evaluated. The researcher intended to suggest a possible way of providing solutions to the problem of English oral testing for students in the Preparatory School of Economics, Commerce and Management. For such purposes consideration of the students' needs, the programme, the evaluation test, and the marking system are taken into consideration. This article suggests a new way of testing students' oral performance which the researcher believes that the proposed idea of group testing on a marking sheet under the four categories: pronunciation, lexis, grammatical structures, and use can usefully and easily be implemented to give reliable and valid results to the testing of the speaking skill. In addition to this the researcher focuses on the importance for a need for guidance to the teachers in order to make English teaching, learning and testing truly communicative in nature.

KEYWORDS: Speaking Skill, Teaching and Evaluation, Higher Education

INTRODUCTION

With the global expansion of English as an international language the ability in spoken English has become more important than previously. However, the general lack of the Algerian learners in English oral ability has revealed that they are in great need of guidance on how to improve this ability. EFL researchers may ask themselves the reasons why Algerian students may not develop the speaking skill even after several years of the study of this language and why the evaluation of this ability is limited in the classrooms.

Evaluating the speaking skill in English classes remains an elusive challenge for many teachers because of the complexity of the speaking skill itself. In many classes, the evaluation of the speaking skill; if done at all; is sometimes reduced to simple informal evaluation interviews. Evaluation as it is used in the classroom involved gathering information about learners' performance in order to ascertain what they have learned. The speaking skill is probably the most difficult skill to evaluate. It involves a combination of skills. Thus, a clear need for research on beliefs and practices regarding the teaching, learning and evaluation of speaking in English classrooms has emerged these last years. And, since the issues are so deeply embedded in classroom practices, it would seem imperative to engage the teachers and learners in the research effort.

This research is concerned with the description of the evaluation process in addition to the different variables and characteristics of the learning situation of a particular population selected for this study. In other words, the present research attempts to give a systematic description of the educational context, with a close reference to the speaking skill evaluation specifically to first-year students at the preparatory school of economics in Tlemcen. This research on the evaluation of the speaking skill at the university level is stimulated by the absence of previous research at this level and on

account of its importance in foreign languages, and for the fact that it is the skill the most neglected by our learners and teachers alike.

AIMS AND PROCEDURES

Evaluating learners' speaking proficiency has become one of the most important issues in language evaluation since the role of speaking ability has become more central in language teaching with the educational reform introduced in our curricula since 2003 and on which the emphasis is on communication abilities of the learners. It is worth noting that learners' evaluation can be used to improve teaching and help students take control of their own learning. That is more likely to be accomplished when evaluation is authentic and tied to the teaching goals of the curricula. However, there are many difficulties involved in the construction and administration of any speaking examinations. There is a great discrepancy between the predominance of the communicative approach to language teaching and the accurate evaluations of students' communication abilities.

The need for teachers of English to be equipped with some evaluation tools to evaluate students' speaking skill is becoming more and more important. The speaking skill in itself has become a vital part of language teaching approaches used in all the Algerian levels of education; teachers are required to perform learners' speaking abilities. Algerian teachers, find it difficult to evaluate learners' speaking proficiency in a way which reflects authentic interaction. Thus, there is a contradiction between their approach to language teaching and their evaluating methods which do not reflect authentic speaking interaction.

There seems no prominent research on speaking evaluation from the point of view of the teachers. In particular, the perceptions of Algerian teachers in conducting speaking evaluation remain largely unexplored. Yet, teachers' perceptions of the feasibility of a speaking evaluation in a particular context are crucial in determining the ultimate success or failure of that evaluation. This study focuses on the congruence between the teaching approach and the evaluation methods used in the Algerian context as well as on the objectivity in the evaluation of the oral production or the speaking skill.

Students and Their Needs

Our concern in this research is with first year students in the Preparatory School of Economics, commerce and management in Tlemcen, and to whom the English module is a minor though important part of their studies. Those students have all studied English at the middle and secondary school for seven years. We may mention at this point that the focus in school was more on the written language than on the oral one, which give the teachers at the university level the task of developing their passive knowledge of the English language into an active one.

All the students in the preparatory school are in need of a practical grasp of the English language which they are going to use it in their future jobs and career. Indeed, we may notice the requirement in some job advertisements is on the ability to communicate in English not only in writing, but orally as well. Thus, as being students of economics, commerce and management they need to know the English spoken in formal international situations as well as the social aspect related to it.

COMPREHENSION AND PRODUCTION OF THE ORAL EXPRESSION COURSES

In this part the researcher will give a brief description on a suggested way the courses of the comprehension and

production of the oral expression have been given for the sake of this research. The first year students at the preparatory school of economics, commerce and management have been divided into groups of no more than 12 students. As a first step, the course is controlled by the teacher in order to help the students to accustom themselves to a total English language situation in order to develop their abilities to speak the language freely and without switching to their mother tongue. The teachers teach some aspects of the language that can be used in everyday language situations so that by the end of the semester they are able to hold a discussion by themselves.

As a second step of theses comprehension and production of the oral production courses, the teacher will no more control the group discussions. At the second semester the course will be controlled by the students themselves and the role of the teacher at this stage is to guide and help his/ her students with vocabulary to ensure fluency and movement in the discussions hold by the group. The students at this stage are encouraged to choose their own topics though they should be on specialized topics such as commerce, economics, business, and management. Concerning the evaluation of the oral production, the students are evaluated at the end of their first year as we can say that at this point they will have had enough experience and time to acclimatize themselves using the foreign language in group discussions covering variety of topics.

COMPREHENSION AND ORAL PRODUCTION EVALUATION

The comprehension and the oral production evaluation is part of the whole English test. The other aspects of the language which are evaluated are reading and writing comprehension. All the different parts are of equal value as the aim is to have a valid examination which is reliable for their future needs.

The Existing Methods of the Evaluation of the Oral Production

The way the comprehension and the oral production are evaluated is in the form of a teacher-student interview or a role play performance. In the first evaluation, the discussion is widely dominated by the teacher and the evaluation is based on subjective judgment rather than an objective one. As for the second method used to evaluate the students which is the role play performance, the students are asked to prepare themselves before the day of the examination they can even learn the presentation by heart and perform it in front of the teacher the day of the exam; in this case there is no realistic and assessable discussion.

The Suggested Evaluation of the Oral Production

The students are evaluated in groups of five to seven students who have already attended the courses and discussion groups during the whole university year. Each student of the group should be given about five minutes without interruption. The teachers are asked to leave the students in free discussions, the teacher can evaluate their students in different situation which should be as close as possible to a real life situation not keeping the usual classroom and educational context, and on the contrary they are encouraged to create realistic situations for the day of the exam.

The teachers can either give the topic of discussion to their students or use some supports for that such as a text or a pre recorded tape after which the main points should be discussed by the students. The teacher should ensure a wide range of topics and to be sure that the linguistic content is within his students' abilities. At this point the students are encouraged to take note after what they are given few minutes to warm-up before being under the pressure of being evaluated. The teacher has to pay attention to readymade sentences. The evaluation of the comprehension and the oral

production is very important as it shows the students practical language abilities and it puts the examiner in a better position to evaluate and judge his students as objectively as possible in a reliable and realistic context.

Arguments against Oral Examinations

The major criticism against the evaluation of the oral production concerns the marking system which is not clearly defined and the judgment is rather subjective on behalf of the teachers. However the grading system rely on error notation with some reward pluses to the most fluent ones, then we consider the suggested way of testing to be able to provide an objective record of how well the learners have been using the language.

On the other side, another criticism is that there are plenty of possible situations where language is used as a medium of communication and the teachers cannot examine all the different aspect of the language as the students may not be competent in all of them, for this reason the teacher needs to examine the future needs of his/her students before the beginning of the courses. The teacher should be aware that an arranged situation can provoke a performance from the part of the examinee.

GRADING

For the purpose of the research the students have been evaluated under four categories which are the grammatical structures, the vocabulary, fluency in speaking and pronunciation. The examiner should record the grades on a marking sheet with a space where problems can be noted for further discussion at the end of the evaluation. In the evaluation of the oral production minor and major errors should be taken into account, sometimes students may produce utterances which are grammatically correct but which are meaningless in the actual situation. The students should be evaluated according to the number of utterances produced (one utterance is about eight words). The teachers are free to add extra pluses for the students who show a certain linguistic performance and a relevant contribution during the conversation.

Major Errors

A major error is defined to be the one which causes:

- Non-comprehension of the entire utterance or a part of it;

- Misunderstanding;

- The students is unable to produce a fully and clear utterance, the examinee might stop or miss a part of the utterance.

Minor Errors

On the other hand, we may consider minor errors as when the students:

- makes some errors in speaking, but they do not impede communication;

- makes some errors of grammar;

- makes some errors of pronunciation;

- makes some errors of lexis.

CONCLUSIONS

The act of evaluation cannot be reduced to score learners or to certify studies, applying a set of rules and conditions, although these are essential; evaluation must be based on the teacher's judgment. In this respect, it can only be carried out by teachers who are specifically responsible for evaluating pupils and who have the required competencies. It is of great importance to recognize that evaluation is a major component of the curriculum. The vision presented here places evaluation at the centre of learning. This constitutes a powerful factor in helping pupils learning and supporting teachers as evaluation could guide pupils in their learning. Thus, training for teachers plays a central role in every teaching /learning situation, and it is for researchers to consider the purposes of language evaluation, since it cannot be denied that the first function of learning a language is for a meaningful message delivery rather than the use of language form.

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