

DEMOCRATIC AND POPULAR REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA
MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
ABOU BAKR BELKAID - UNIVERSITY - TLEMCEM
FACULTY OF ARTS, SOCIAL AND HUMAN SCIENCES
FOREIGN LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT
ENGLISH SECTION

Evaluation of Pupils' Learning in EFL Classrooms
-A Case Study of 3rd Year Secondary School-

Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English
in Candidacy for the Degree of
Magister in Applied Linguistics and T.E.F.L

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MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

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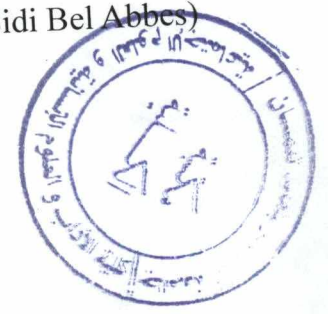
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DEDICATION

In memory of my grand-father OMARI Omar

ABSTRACT

ABSTRACT

This dissertation, has tried to report research findings and discussed EFL teachers' and inspectors' perceptions and implementation of the evaluation of the speaking skill; as well as the congruency between the teaching approach namely the CBA and the evaluation methods in EFL classrooms in the Algerian secondary school contexts. For such purposes, a case study of 150 3°AS-SE pupils, twenty in-service EFL teachers and two EFL inspectors from contextually different secondary schools in Tlemcen, has been developed from two questionnaires and a semi-structured interview.

The findings suggest that teachers are attempting to implement the new approach to EFL classrooms required by the educational reform of 2003. However, there are many difficulties involved in the construction and administration of any speaking evaluation tasks. The fact that the reform has required both teachers and pupils to develop new teaching and learning and evaluation strategies, but has not taken into account the constraints that could tackle EFL teachers if evaluating the speaking skill, thus far has made the reform objectives rather unrealistic.

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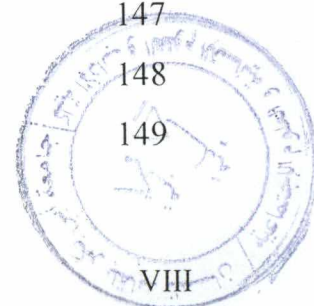
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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The world importance of English in the academic, professional and international 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. Learning a new language is also substantially different from what it used to be in the past: we have more need to communicate orally (not only in writing and reading) and we cannot wait for years before we engage in real communication. This urgency to learn languages is felt everywhere within societies all over the world. The search for new and more efficient methods is a consequence of the requirements for fluid communication.

EFL in Algeria is often criticised on the grounds that it has been slow to progress. Indeed, albeit the English language is studied through seven years starting from the age of eleven and continuing up until graduation from secondary school 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 everyday communication, the Algerian pupils continue to experience difficulty in using the language for purposeful communication. Thus, as the calls for a more communicative approach increase, there has been much debate with regards to the best way to achieve this objective and thus to improve the speaking ability of Algerian pupils, which represents the ultimate target of the Ministry of Education. The Ministry of Education has, since 2003, implemented competency based approach methodology on a multi-level scale and part of this educational reform concerns EFL teaching and learning.

The Speaking Skill in the Algerian EFL setting is often treated with great circumspection. Evaluating the speaking skill in 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 evaluation of the speaking skill encompasses the whole language learning process. Without it, it is extremely difficult to gauge how they

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AAHE	American Association for Higher Education
AFT	American Federation of Teachers
BAC	Baccalaureate Examination
CBA	Competency Based Approach
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELT	English Language Teaching
ESL	English as a Second Language
EAP	English for Academic Purposes
ESP	English for Specific Purposes
FL	Foreign Language
GTM	Grammar Translation Approach
L2	Second Language
LWC	languages of wider communication
NCFOT	National Centre for Fair and Open Testing
NCME	National Council on Measurement in Education
NCTM	Principles and Standards for School Mathematics
QEP	Quebec Education Program
STCEA	Standards for Teachers Competence in Educational Assessment of Students
3° AS-SE	Troisieme Année Secondaire- Sciences Expérimentales-

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

It is said that language and communication are at the heart of the human experience. Then, we must educate pupils to communicate successfully. The EFL syllabus in Algeria is designed to meet the needs of pupils who are living in a world of increasing global interdependence. It should be mentioned from the outset that to this end, both the teacher and the learner roles have to be defined in the light of the significant changes that are taking place worldwide. Therefore, reforms should be introduced at different levels in order to cope with the issue. This can be done by conducting an investigative study to arrive at the main problem, and then to be in a better position to establish some perspectives and suggest some recommendations for the evaluation of the speaking skill in EFL Algerian classrooms. Thus the issue, of the speaking skill will be dealt with in the present research work into four interrelated chapters.

To test the hypotheses and make the results more reliable, two research tools are used to collect data, a questionnaire for pupils and teachers as well as semi structured interviews for EFL inspectors. Thus, learners' profile, needs and difficulties have been analysed through a questionnaire at the beginning of the investigation and semi structured interviews have been conducted to analyse the perceptions of the practical difficulties of evaluating the speaking skill.

This dissertation is divided into four chapters:

The first chapter introduces a survey of the key concepts related to the most essential educational tool which is pupils' evaluation as well as describing the importance and purposes of evaluation in EFL classrooms.

The second chapter attempts to give a global picture of the Algerian educational context with reference to the officially stated EFL objectives of the new approach to language teaching and to the syllabus designed for third year secondary education.

The third chapter describes the investigative study of the research work; while the fourth chapter tackles alternative recommendations, concerning the evaluation of the speaking skill in EFL context.

CHAPTER ONE

THEORETICAL ASPECTS OF EVALUATION

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1.1 Introduction

This chapter will shed some light on one of the most essential educational tool which is pupils' evaluation for it can help teachers better understand what their pupils are learning. In fact by providing the means to gather information about what pupils know and can do; pupils' evaluation can help teachers and educators to: identify pupils' strengths and weaknesses, to monitor their learning and progress and to plan instruction. Pupils' evaluation is a crucial and pervasive issue of concern in every classroom. Traditionally, evaluation activities were used to certify or promote learners. However, currently they are recognized as a comprehensive process that should go hand in hand with the methodology used in teaching. More than that, evaluation is, now, recognized as an integral part of the teaching learning process.

This first chapter will deal first with what is meant by *evaluation*; as this term has been frequently interchanged with other terms such as assessment, testing or even measurement to design the evaluation of pupils in EFL classrooms. In addition to this, it will focus on the importance and purposes of evaluation in EFL classrooms. In fact, pupils' evaluation should be systematized into the teaching /learning process; thus teachers in EFL classrooms should be clear about the purpose in evaluating their pupils. On the other hand, this chapter will determine the process of evaluation as the latter does not take place in a vacuum, and then many factors have implications when evaluating pupils. Finally, it is worth defining the different types of evaluation used in EFL classrooms by determining the purpose of each one.

1.2 Evaluation Defined

This part is intended to give some useful information that is of high quality concerning evaluation, assessment, measurement and testing in EFL classrooms. In fact, learners' evaluation is a process basic to teaching/learning process as it is an integral part of the instruction since the information gathered by teachers will allow them to make adjustments to outcomes and teaching methods.

the value or the quality of something after thinking about it carefully". Then, according to these two definitions, evaluation refers to making a value judgment about the implications of assessment information. This process is necessary for EFL teachers' improvement planning, whereas assessment involves obtaining achievement data through a variety of means. In fact, evaluation goes a step further interpreting the data collected from assessment.

In the Standards for Teachers Competence in Educational Assessment (STCEA) of Students, developed by the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and the National Council on Measurement in Education (NCME) (1990:28), the assessment is defined as:

the process of collecting information to be used in making educational decisions about students, to give feedback to students, to make judgement regarding curriculum and instruction and to inform policy.

On the other hand and according to (Gronlund, 1985: 483) evaluation **"...puts a value upon assessment results concerning their desirability. It seeks to answer the question of what value"**. Thus, we can conclude that evaluation has a more comprehensive and inclusive term than assessment. Besides evaluation is concerned at the macro or holistic level of the learning process, taking into account the context of learning and all the factors that go with it, whereas assessment can be seen as the measurement of learners learning and is one of the elements that go into an evaluation, the micro-level. Above all, an evaluation is a designed and purposeful enquiry which is open to comment.

1.2.3 Evaluation vs. Testing

As with the term *assessment*, the term *evaluation* is frequently interchanged with the term *testing* even if both have different meanings. *Testing* has been defined by the Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary as **"the act of examining somebody's knowledge or ability."** (Nitko, 1996: 11) defined a test as **"an instrument or systematic procedure for gathering measurement."**

A test usually refers to a specific set of questions or tasks that is administered by the teacher to a learner or individual or to all individuals or members of a group of learners and measures a sample of behaviour. In addition to that, a test is generally structured thus making it highly reliable (see 1.11.2 and 1.11.3), and it requires a relatively limited period of time to administer.

As a matter of fact, a test can be defined rather as a measurement instrument that requires scored responses from the learners or the examinees. However, evaluation is the process of collecting information from multiple sources to make judgments about how well learners have learned as it gives insights about programme effectiveness. It is a more comprehensive and inclusive process.

1.2.4 Evaluation vs. Measurement

Measurement is another term with which the term evaluation is frequently interchanged even though they have distinct meanings. Nitko defined measurement as:

a procedure for assigning numbers to a specified attribute in such a way that the numbers indicate the degree to which a person possesses the attribute.

(ibid: 13)

Evaluation, on the other hand, is the use of measurement to assess the amount or quantity a learner possesses of a certain trait, and then **“making a value judgment about the worth of the student’s product or performance.”** (ibid: 11). Nitko, also pointed out that evaluation may involve quantitative descriptions i.e. measurement, and qualitative descriptions i.e. non measurement of learners, where the main emphasis is **“on the extent to which learning outcomes are achieved”** (Idem). Both types of evaluations are necessary for comprehensive learners’ evaluation.

In brief, and as it is stated by Clapham (2000), testing provides one isolated glimpse -- analogous to taking a picture with a camera -- of learner achievement (individual or group) in specific skills or knowledge at a specific time. One can say that assessment provides more comprehensive data from multiple measures

administered over a period of time or, preferably, a variety of data-gathering approaches. In sum, evaluation gives value judgments about the results of assessment.

1.3 Changing Conceptions of Evaluation

In the past, evaluation was mainly concerned with ranking and comparing learners according to their outcomes or even their achievements in quantitative terms. The teacher was assumed to give definitive statements of the learner's ability. Grundy points out that:

Every educational practice implies a concept of man and the world. Educational practices ... do not exist apart from beliefs about people and the way in which they do and ought to interact in the world.

(Grundy, 1987: 7)

Then, according to Grundy's quotation, education is concerned and should be directed towards learners' emotional, moral, social and intellectual development. This is why learners' evaluation should take direction from this multidimensional development as any system of evaluation has to be based on who learners are.

However, on the other hand, the current focus of evaluation in educational context is above all to link evaluation tasks with learning outcomes as well as with criteria of competence.

According to Boud, good evaluation:

- Is designed to assess a broader range of learners abilities, e.g. problem solving, critical thinking, effective communication, working in groups;
- Along with feedback shapes learning in positive and negative ways, e.g. promotes rote learning or learning in depth;
- Involves students in the assessment process and develops learners' capacity to monitor their own performance, e.g. by understanding the criteria used in assessment;
- Pays more attention to self-assessment as a result of concern for reflective learning;
- Assesses not only what learners know but also what they can do;

- Should reflect desired learning outcomes and have a beneficial effect on the learning process;
- Should promote search for meaning and understanding, and self-directed and independent learning;
- Should provide complex challenges not fragmented tasks;
- Should expand learning opportunities to include active collaboration with others leading to evaluation of projects produced by groups of learners.

(Boud, in Armstrong and Conrad, 1995: 97-80)

1.4 Principles of Evaluation

As a key area in English Language Teaching (ELT), the significance of evaluation and the role of the EFL teachers have grown steadily. Kellough et al (1999: 419) remind us that **“because the welfare and, indeed, the future of so many people depend on the outcomes of assessment, it is impossible to overemphasize its importance.”** Hence, evaluation must always be based on a consideration of what is best for the learners, not only for the next year, but for the rest of their lives. And as teachers are concerned with the integral formation of their learners; Kellough et al added that:

For a learning endeavour to be successful, the learner must have answers to basic questions: Where am I going? Where am I now? How do I get where I am going? How will I know when I get there? Am I on the right track for getting there? These questions are integral to a good program of assessment. (Idem)

In view of such questions, it is necessary to establish principles that will guide evaluation's implementation. Towards such an end, the American Association for Higher Education (AAHE) has established the following nine principles:

- The evaluation of pupils learning begins with educational values;
- Evaluation is most effective when it reflects an understanding of learning as multidimensional, integrated, and revealed in performance over time;
- Evaluation works best when the programmes it seeks to improve have clear, explicitly stated purposes;

- Evaluation requires attention to outcomes but also and equally to the experiences that lead to those outcomes;
- Evaluation works best when it is ongoing, not episodic;
- Evaluation fosters wider improvement when representatives from across the educational community are involved;
- Evaluation makes a difference when it begins with issues of use and illuminates questions that people really care about;
- Evaluation is most likely to lead to improvement when it is part of a larger set of conditions that promote change;
- Through evaluation teachers meet responsibilities to pupils.

(Pausch & Popp, 1997)

In the same line of thought, Noble established seven principles of evaluation which are really useful for EFL teachers to understand the importance of evaluating techniques. Thus according to Noble, *evaluation* is:

- Research: its purpose is to inform and clarify;
- Looks both ways: evaluation is a proactive forward-looking activity and, also, a reviewing backward-looking one;
- User- and situation-dependent: it is undertaken according to the objectives and criteria that are relevant to the organization and campaign concerned;
- Short term: final examination;
- Long term: at a broader level;
- Comparative: it frequently makes no absolute judgments but instead draws comparative conclusions;
- Multi-faceted: it is established as a multi-step process with a range of different evaluation methodologies required at each step.

(Noble, 1994)

1.5 Importance and Purposes of Evaluation

There have been a number of developments in recent years in the field of evaluation of learning to take into account, among other things, the shift from a

focus of teaching to one of learning. Researches in this field of study throughout the world have identified the limitations of traditional evaluation models and led to other avenues for the evaluation of pupils in EFL classrooms and this in response to changes that have taken place in most educational systems. One of the main currents of thought of the later years is that evaluation has to support learning. This perspective has changed some viewpoints about the purposes and process of evaluation. First and foremost, the evaluation of learning is defined as follows:

evaluation is the process whereby a judgment is made on a pupil's learning on the basis of information gathered, analyzed and interpreted, for the purpose of making pedagogical and administrative decisions.

(Porter, 1991: 36)

1.5.1 Importance of Evaluation

Why do we evaluate pupils' learning? This is not a simple question. There are many reasons why we need to find out what pupils know and can do. The first step to look for an answer to the latter question may be in how EFL teachers intend to use the information obtained through pupils' evaluation. Teachers need careful collection of information and a thoughtful interpretation of that information. F. Genesee, J. A. Upshur (1996: 04) elucidated that: **"information about teaching and learning is rarely meaningful by itself"**. He tried to explain that the information gathered becomes meaningful only through its interpretation. Besides, it is only through these meaningful interpretations that the teacher has to decide what decisions and changes to be made.

In addition to that, evaluation is an integral part of every teaching/learning process and should not be considered as an add-on feature of it. Actually, it is now recognized that evaluation functions are not only to evaluate learning, and to diagnose, and to provide for quality assurance of the education program but it also serves to develop pupils learning.

In the words of (Rowntree, 1977: 35): **"....if we wish to discover the truth about an educational system we must look into its assessment procedures."**

This quotation reinforces the critical function of evaluation. Evaluation tasks send learners a message about the study of the subject and the amount of work required. Learners study what they think will be evaluated, therefore for them it is the evaluation tasks and not the lists of topics or even the objectives which define the content of a unit.

1.5.2 Purposes of Evaluation

Before addressing the evaluation process, it is instructive to delineate evaluation's purposes. One can say that throughout learners' schooling, evaluation is used for many purposes and among them: to verify learning progress with a view to provide support for learning, to make precise diagnoses, to verify the level of competency development, to certify studies and to recognize prior learning. Accordingly, Kellough characterizes seven purposes of assessment:

- To assist pupils learning ;
- To identify pupils' strengths and weaknesses;
- To assess the effectiveness of a particular instructional strategy;
- To assess and improve the effectiveness of curriculum programmes;
- To assess and improve teaching effectiveness;
- To provide data that assist in decision making;
- To communicate with and involve parents.

(Kellough & al 1999: 418-419)

However, the two primary purposes of evaluation are mainly: support for learning and recognition of competencies:

- The first purpose of evaluation is support for learning in large part because of its potential for regulation and adjustment, and because it allows for continuous feedback, it is from one side associated with formative evaluation;
- The second purpose is the recognition of competencies. In fact the goal of evaluation with a view to recognize learners' competencies in EFL

classrooms is to verify if the expected level of competency has been attained.

In the same line of thought learners' evaluation can: Motivate and guide their learning. The types of evaluation tasks influence learners' approaches to learning. Then, learners quite naturally attune their learning to evaluation requirements and the standards to which they aspire are generally those necessary to achieve a passing grade. Evaluation can be used to encourage learners' interest in and commitment to the study of a subject. It can be used to help learners to develop a self-critical approach to their work and learning. It can also enhance independence and responsibility for learning. Therefore, it is essential that evaluation tasks should be aligned with learning objectives; they should provide learners with fair and reasonable opportunities to demonstrate their performances of the learning outcomes or objectives.

Second, learners' evaluation assures the school that academic standards are being maintained. It is the basis upon which the school certifies learners' achievements. It is important, therefore, that evaluation tasks should provide a valid and reliable basis for grading learners' performance (see 1.11).

Evaluation may also be used for a number of other reasons:

- To find out if the learning objectives of the unit have been achieved;
- To find out what pupils have actually learned and failed to learn;
- To identify and compare the knowledge of the weakest pupil with the brightest one in the class;
- To diagnose pupils' strengths and weaknesses;
- Provide teachers or staff with information about the effectiveness of their teaching;
- To motivate pupils to learn;
- To provide useful feedback to pupils.

1.6 Learners' Concern about Evaluation

In this part we will explore learners' concern about evaluation as they are supposed to be the major actors in the learners' evaluation process. Armstrong and Conrad summarized the learners' concern about evaluation from learners' perspective as follows:

- I don't really know what is expected of me;
- I wish that teachers would give some examples of what they think is a good piece of work;
- It's unfair that different teachers in the same subject have different standards;
- Contents of lectures seems unrelated to what is expected in assignments (duties) and examinations.

(Armstrong and Conrad, 1995: 82)

1.7 The Evaluation Process

Throughout their schooling, pupils are evaluated to enable them to learn more effectively and succeed. A number of decisions by the teacher rely on judgments about pupils' learning that are based on a numerous evaluation activities. The evaluation process is a complex process that is largely based on the teacher's professional judgment. Evaluation first requires that its goal be clearly established. It also necessitates planning, information gathering and interpretation, and the making of a judgment. Lastly, evaluation must lead to decisions and actions. Then the evaluation process is a series of stages ranging from planning to decision/action. Genesee and Upshur (1996) write that the essential components of evaluation are purpose, information, interpretation, and decision making. (See figure 1.1)

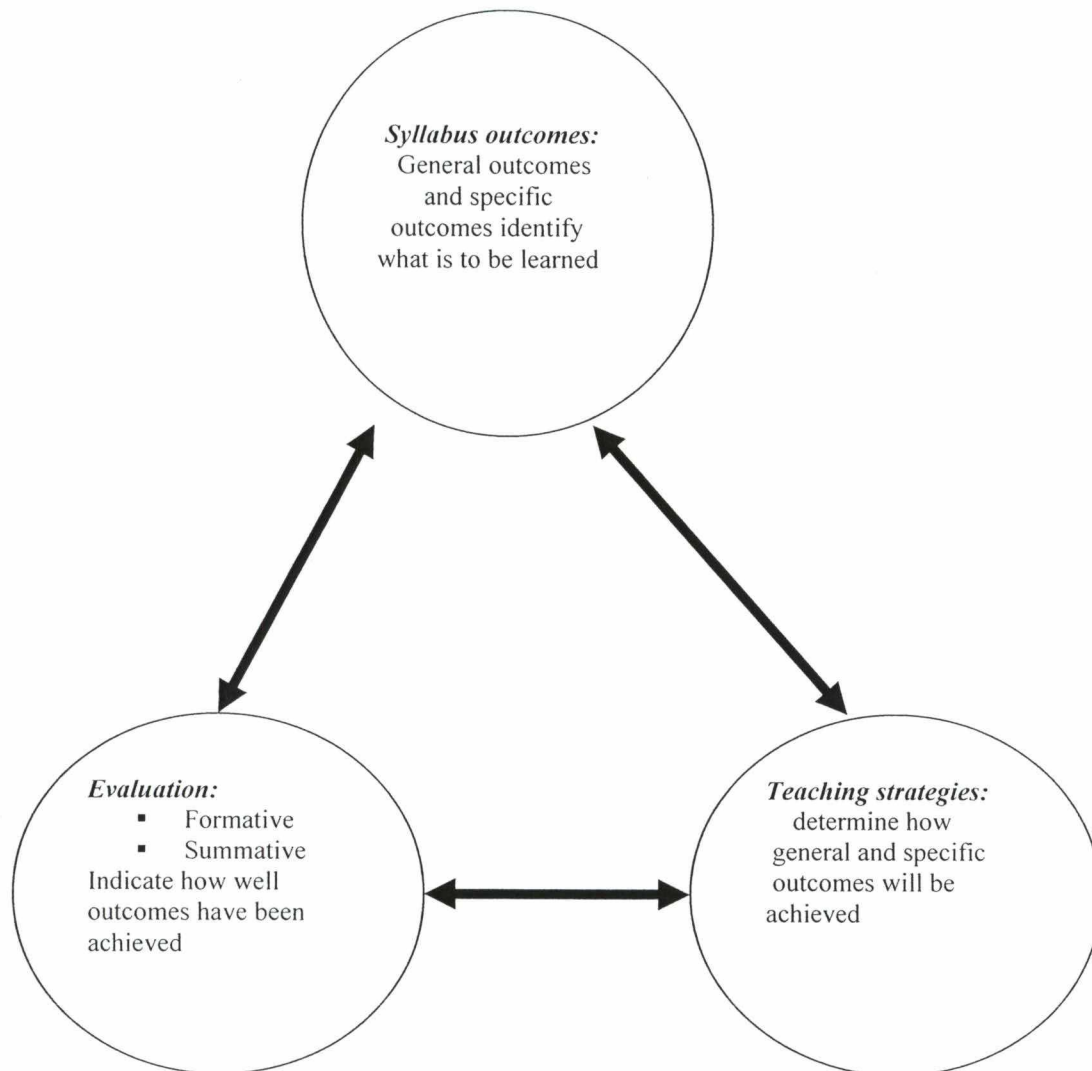


Figure 1.2: The Teaching-Evaluation Process

1.8. Formal and Informal Evaluation

Learners' evaluation can be either formal or informal. Then classroom evaluation may be of the conventional form, where the pupils are told in advance what they need to know. In fact formal evaluation usually implicates a written document, such as a test, quiz, or paper. A formal evaluation is given a grade based on student performance, whereas an informal assessment does not contribute to a pupil's final grade. An informal assessment usually occurs in a more casual manner and may include a homework which can help the teacher to find out whether the pupils have learned some language points or not.

1.9 Stages in Evaluation

The teacher should perform continuing evaluation periodically. Hutchinson and Waters stated the importance of an ongoing evaluation mainly at the beginning as it is shown:

the tone here will probably have a greater overall effect on the success of the course than what occurs later, since initial impressions are very often more enduring than later ones.

(Hutchinson and Waters, 1987: 53)

Formal ongoing evaluations may be at three weeks intervals or at least at the end of each unit in order to check on the progress of the courses (see 1.10).

On the other hand, informal evaluations may be carried out at each time the teacher thinks it is necessary to check his pupils' progress. Then according to Hutchinson and Waters, the ongoing evaluation process is divided into four stages as follows: (See table 1.1)

Stage1:

In the preparation period i.e. before the beginning of the school year, the teacher will need to have complete program documents including the curriculum, syllabus and any other related materials as well as pupils' profile. In fact the pupil personal information, language proficiencies and other psychological factors, should be collected.

Through these data including the curriculum and the pupils' profile, the teacher will have a thorough knowledge of the programme and the pupils and from this point a detailed teaching plan can be elaborated.

Stage2:

After the school year has started, informal evaluations should be carried out to measure the pupils' progress. In this case both teachers and pupils should be actively involved in collecting data and analyzing them.

Both teachers and learners will need to observe each other performance. Besides teaching, teachers should conduct studies on the pupils' learning strategies. This may include recording pupil's responses to the teacher's questions and then pupils' roles in the classroom. Pupils should receive feedback from the teacher on

corrections. The pupils need to observe the teacher performance during classroom activities as well as the teaching techniques used.

The teacher should become familiar with his pupils' learning styles in order to compare the pupils' classroom behaviour to their learning strategies, which were collected during the first stage. Also, the teacher can help the pupils in adapting their learning strategies to go hand in hand with the present programme. Conversely, the pupils can study the teaching strategy of the teacher and make comments through discussion with the latter so adjustments can be made to suit their own needs and the goals of the program.

Stage 3:

After a certain period, a formal or periodic evaluation needs to be carried out, during this period; the data previously gathered are studied to see if the goals have been achieved. At this stage the teacher can study all the data such as scores, comments and other feedback from the pupils.

Documents such as syllabi, informal evaluation results and materials can be studied and compared to the evaluation results, so as to obtain an objective view of the program progress. The teacher can then revise the plan for the coming sessions.

Stage 4:

At the end of the trimester or the year another type of evaluation should be undertaken. The teacher need to study all the data collected during the school year. The results should summarize the progress of the pupils during the whole year. Later they can be used as a reference for similar future courses.

During all the stages, feedback should be readily available to the teacher so that he can understand what adjustments he must make throughout the course.

Stage	Evaluation	Function and Explanation	Data and Document	Result
Preparation stage, before the beginning of the school year	Pre-evaluation (done by the teacher)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collect basic data 2. Analyze syllabus and textbooks 3. study and plan for the reference materials programme 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Learners' basic data 2. curriculum documents 3. Teaching materials 4. reference materials 	Teacher is able to have a teaching plan in detail.
Ongoing stage, during the school year.	Informal evaluation (conducted by the teachers and the learners)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Study procedure 2. Compare the goal and achievements 3. Analyze strategies of both teaching and learning. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notes and comments from both teacher and learners 2. Exercises and tests 3. interviews and discussions between the teacher and the learners 	The teacher reports the results and gives an immediate feedback.
At the end of the trimester.	Formal (or periodical) evaluation (done by the	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Measure achievements of the learners. 2. Analyze the 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Data of informal evaluation with analysis of 	Reports and teaching plan for the next stage.

	teacher.	<p>results and pupils learning strategies.</p> <p>3. Plan for the remainder of the syllabus.</p> <p>4. Analyze and compare the data and other reference documents.</p>	<p>these data.</p> <p>2. Tests and comments</p> <p>3. teaching notes</p>	
At the end of the trimester or the school year.	Summary (evaluation done by the teacher)	<p>1. Study the process of the syllabus</p> <p>2. Prepare for authoritative evaluation.</p>	<p>1. Examination scores or other results</p> <p>2. Class papers or learners' comments</p> <p>3. Teacher reports, plans and teaching notes.</p>	The teacher analyzes the data gathered and makes reports.

Adapted from (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987)

Table 1.1: Stages in Evaluating Pupils' Learning

1.10 Types of Evaluation

For the purpose of this part, three types of evaluation are defined: diagnostic or pre-instructional, formative and summative. Each type has a different purpose. If for example the results are used to determine appropriate starting points for instruction; then evaluation may be regarded as diagnostic. However, when data are

used to determine how well instruction is going, evaluation is formative, and if the purpose is to determine the extent to which learners have achieved the outcomes of the unit or the syllabus, evaluation is summative.

1.10.1 Diagnostic Evaluation

In the pre-instructional phase of evaluation, an attempt is made to determine what each pupil brings to the learning situation or where that pupil stands in relation to the stated outcomes. Then in an EFL classroom, the teacher can determine, in a general sense, where the pupil stands by examining the curriculum as well as where the pupil has special abilities or special needs.

Although some authors delineate diagnostic evaluation as a component of formative evaluation, most consider it as a distinct form of examination Kellough stated that:

in practice, the purpose of diagnostic evaluation is to ascertain, prior to instruction, each learners' strengths, weaknesses, knowledge, and skills...Establishing these; permits the teacher to remediate pupils and adjust the curriculum to meet each pupil's unique needs.

(Kellough *et al*, 1999: 425)

Then Diagnostic evaluation serves a number of purposes. It provides information on the level of readiness of each pupil in relation to outcomes. It may indicate the learning styles of pupils as well as the need for particular adaptations to instruction.

1.10.2 Formative Evaluation

Formative evaluation is concerned with how things are going. It is the evaluation which occurs during the teaching learning process rather than before or after it. It is considered as the most valuable type of evaluation.

The fundamental purpose of a formative evaluation is the identification of the pupils' strengths and weaknesses so that necessary adaptations and

modifications can be made as soon as possible. Accordingly, Weston, Mc Alpine, and Bordonaro, for instance, stated that:

the purpose of formative evaluation is to validate or ensure that the goals of the instruction are being achieved and to improve the instruction, if necessary, by means of identification and subsequent remediation of problematic aspects.

(Weston, *et al*,1995: 36)

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, 1991:26). Moreover, formative evaluation is an on-going evaluation in a classroom. Teachers use formative evaluation to improve instructional methods and learners feedback throughout the teaching and learning process. Therefore, a continuous feedback is a key element of formative evaluation and the results of this type of evaluation should be provided immediately to the pupils. For example, if a teacher observes that some pupils do not grasp a concept, he can design a review activity or use a different instructional strategy. Likewise, pupils can monitor their progress with periodic quizzes and tasks. The results of formative assessments are used to modify and validate instruction. On the other hand, parents as well need to know how their children are doing as opposed to how they have done. When parents know how pupils are progressing, they can take an active role in helping create a good learning environment.

In the same line of thought and according to the NCTM’s Principles and Standards for School Mathematics (2000):

evaluation should be more than merely a test at the end of instruction to see how students perform under special conditions; rather, it should be an integral part of instruction that informs and guides teachers as they make instructional decisions.

Thus, evaluation of this type should occur regularly throughout the teaching process. Furthermore: **“...evaluation should not merely be done to learners;**

rather, it should also be done for learners, to guide and enhance their learning” (idem). According to the National Centre for Fair and Open Testing (NCFOT) (1999), formative evaluation **“occurs when teachers give information back to the learners in ways that enable the learners to learn better, or when learners can engage in a similar, self-reflective process”**. In its purist form, formative tests are not graded and are used as an ongoing diagnostic tool; hence, the teacher employs the results of formative evaluation solely to modify and adjust his teaching practices to reflect the needs and progress of his learners. However, formative evaluation in its purist form is seldom used (Brookhart, 1999), a fact which led the NCFOT to conclude, **“Most teachers do not know well how to engage in such evaluation.”(1999)**

1.10.3 Summative Evaluation

The final type of evaluation is the summative evaluation. Black, 1998, as cited by Brookhart, 1999), explaining summative evaluation via analogy, stated, **“When the cook tastes the soup, that’s formative assessment; when the customer tastes the soup, that’s summative assessment”**. Succinctly, summative evaluation is an examination, usually given at the end of a term, unit, semester, year, or the like. Evaluation is used to grade, or certify pupils. It is not intended to improve current teaching methods for the benefit of those being evaluated. It measured what has happened, not what is happening. Therefore Summative evaluation is typically used to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional programs at the end of an academic year or at a pre-determined time i.e. the end of the unit. The goal of summative evaluation is to make a judgment of student competency – after that the teaching phase has been completed.

Therefore summative evaluation at the EFL classroom level is an accountability measure that is generally used as part of the grading process. Here are some examples of summative evaluation:

- End-of-unit or chapter examination;
- End-of-term or semester examination.

Summative evaluation therefore is the evaluation of learners' achievement of specific outcomes at the end of the instruction. The essential characteristic is that a judgment is made about pupils with regard to what they know and do not know. In fact, summative evaluation is used to grade or certify pupils after instruction has taken place. In this respect, summative evaluation is used for deciding who should advance to the next level or the next year. It may be used to determine the present status of the pupils, to identify factors which are responsible for and influence growth and development, and to determine potential for future growth and development.

To sum up, then one can say that the key is to think of summative evaluation as a means to gauge, at a particular point in time, pupils learning relative to the content of the syllabus. Although the information that is gathered from this type of evaluation is important, it can only help in evaluating certain aspects of the learning process. Because they are spread out and occur after instruction every few weeks, months, or once a year, summative evaluation is a tool to help evaluate the effectiveness of our educational programmes, school improvement goals, curriculum, or pupils' placement in specific streams. However, summative evaluation happens too far down the learning path to provide information at the classroom level and to make instructional adjustments and interventions during the learning process which is the task of formative evaluation to accomplish this.

On the other hand, summative evaluation results can serve to indicate areas of strength and needs and these results can be used to influence later teaching. In that sense, summative evaluation can have diagnostic and formative dimensions.

1.11 Basic Criteria in Evaluation

When designing an examination in EFL classrooms some criteria should be considered by teachers and this for the sake of providing pupils with fair and reasonable opportunities to demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways. In other words, an examination needs to satisfy some standards or qualities that are Validity, reliability; bias and fairness which are the most frequently cited criteria for

evaluating examinations. Then it is important to understand these issues in order to form policies that support high-quality of pupils' evaluation.

1.11.1 Validity

One of the most important criteria for evaluating examinations is validity. Validity addresses the question, does the examination evaluate what it is intended to evaluate? Then if the answer to the question is "yes" we can conclude that the interpretations made from pupils' learning on the examination are valid. Therefore, when discussing validity the concern is really with the interpretations made on a particular examination.

A broad concept of validity is both necessary and cogent in any attempt to improve the quality of evaluation. The opening statement of Mesick's review gave an authoritative definition:

validity is an integrated evaluative judgment of the degree to which empirical evidence and theoretical rationales support the adequacy and appropriateness of inferences and actions based on test scores or other modes of evaluation.

(Mesick, 1989: 69)

Thus, if an exam is meant to show whether or not a pupil is competent, a valid exam is the one that reaches the teacher's objectives. Then, to achieve that validity the teacher should proceed through certain stages:

- The teacher should decide on the objectives to achieve;
- The teacher has to work out how to propose to examine it;
- And then he has to analyze the type of the exam he selected to see whether it really examines what he intends to measure.

In the same line of thought, Gronlund and Linn stated that: "**validity refers to the extent to which an examination task evaluates what is supposed to evaluate**" (1990: 120). Thus for this to occur, examination tasks need to be on the same line with the learning objectives. Then questions to ask when EFL teachers consider the validity of an examination task are:

- Do the learning objectives accurately reflect what pupils are supposed to learn in this unit?

- Does each examination task align with learning objectives?

In this light, classroom evaluation has a better chance of success as the EFL teacher may be in a position to modify or redesign the examination to better it in order to reach its objectives.

However, one of the misconceptions dealing with validity is that an evaluation method simply is or is not valid in its entirety. In fact the validity is that: **“an evaluation method may be deemed more valid for certain purposes and for certain group of pupils but less valid for other purposes and for other groups”** (Gallagher, 1998: 156). In addition to that **“....an evaluation method that is valid at one point in time may not be valid in the future.”** (Idem)

There are three ways in which validity can be measured. In order to have confidence that a test is valid, and therefore the inferences we make based on the examination scores are valid, all three kinds of validity evidence should be considered.

Type of Validity	The Question it Answers	How it is evaluated
content	The extent to which the content of the examination matches the teaching objectives.	A semester exam that only includes content covered during the last six weeks is not a valid measure of the course's overall objectives -- it has very low content validity.
construct	How well does the examination evaluate the unobservable features?	Several research studies are conducted over time.
criterion	How useful is the examination in predicting pupils' performance in the future?	Administering the examination and then collecting information on a relevant outcome and then using the scores on the examination to predict scores on the teaching outcomes evaluated.

Adapted from (Gallagher, 1998: 156)

Table 1.2: Types of Validity

1.11.2 Reliability

Reliability may be the simplest of the basic criteria of evaluation to tackle with. It refers to the extent to which examinations are consistent. In fact, an examination can be reliable if one can have confidence that the same results would be obtained with a parallel examination i.e. that means having the same scores through repeated examinations. In addition to that, an examination should not make any difference whether a pupil takes it in the morning or afternoon; one day or the next. Good and Brophy defined reliability as follows: **“It is the stability or consistency of the exam scores across repeated measurements”** (1990: 356). Then a reliable test should produce similar results two or more times during a short period to the same pupils. Scores obtained during the first time should be similar to the second time if the examination task is held under the same conditions.

Accordingly, Archbald & Porter defined reliability as: **“an indication of the consistency of scores across evaluators or over time.”** (1990: 16). In other words, Reliability refers to the consistency with which the same examination task under the same conditions will produce the same results and that regardless of who administers it, regardless of which pupils complete it and regardless of who grades it. Thus, the closer the results obtained from repeated applications of an examination task, the greater the reliability.

There are many different types of reliability. Table (1.3) represents the three most common types and how they are determined:

Type of Reliability	How to Measure
Stability or Test-Retest	Give the same examination twice, separated by days, weeks, or months. Reliability is stated as the correlation between scores at time 1 and time 2.
Alternate Form	Create two forms of the same test (vary the items slightly). Reliability is stated as correlation between scores of exam 1 and exam 2.
Internal Consistency	Compare one half of the test to the other half.

Adapted from (Archbald, D., & Porter, A. C., 1990: 16)

Table 1.3: Types of Reliability

On the other hand, it has been commonly agreed that perfect reliability is not possibly obtainable. Even if the examination task is given to the same pupils they may be more stressed or anxious, for example, on one occasion than on another.

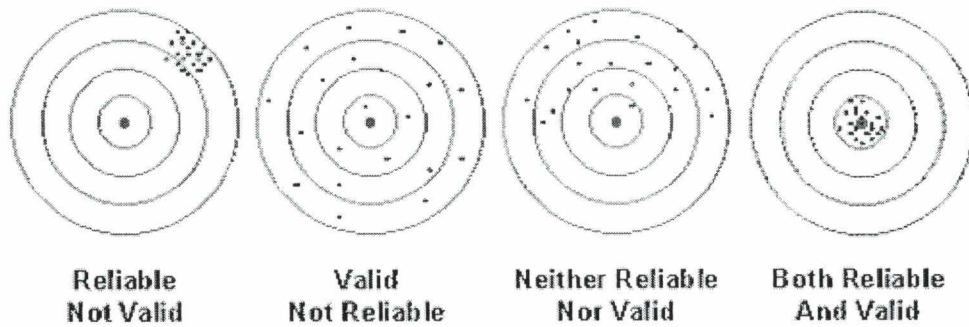
1.11.3 Reliability & Validity

It is important for teachers to set clear achievable targets as they are the starting point for creating an examination. In other words, teachers need to determine what exactly their pupils should know or be able to do. If teachers do not set clear targets, they will never know if the instruction in the classroom resulted in a "bull's-eye", i.e. the aiming point or centre of the instruction, or if they missed the mark completely.

Reliability and validity are two concepts that are important for defining and evaluating examinations before addressing them to our pupils. We often think of reliability and validity as separate ideas but, in fact, they're related to each other. In the words of William M.K. Trochim 2006, they show the relationship between validity and reliability by stating metaphor for the relationship between them which is that of the target:

think of the centre of the target as the concept that you are trying to measure. If you measure the concept perfectly for a person, you are hitting the centre of the target. If you don't, you are missing the centre. The more you are off for that person, the further you are from the centre.

(William M.K. Trochim, 2006)



(William M.K. Trochim, 2006)

Figure 1.3: Reliability & Validity

The figure 1.3 above shows four possible situations. In the first one, teachers are hitting the target consistently, but they are missing the centre of the target. That is, they are consistently evaluating the wrong value for all pupils. This examination is reliable, but no valid (that is, it's consistent but wrong). The second shows hits that are randomly spread across the target. Teachers seldom hit the centre of the target instruction but, on average. Thus they are getting the right answer for the one group of the pupils but not all of them. In this case, they get a valid group estimate, but they are not consistent. The third scenario shows a case where teachers' hits are spread across the target and they are consistently missing the centre. Teachers' examination in this case is neither reliable nor valid. Finally, we see that they consistently hit the centre of the target teaching. Then the examination is both reliable and valid.

1.11.4 Bias

Another issue of concern when examining evaluation methods involves bias in examination. It refers to aspects of the examination or task itself that are

offensive or that unfairly penalize the pupil because of gender, ethnicity, socio-economic status, religion, etc. In this respect Gipps and Murphy (1994) claimed that:

any evaluation process is an interaction between certain questions, items and/or procedures, and the pupil being examined. There are many ways in which this interaction may operate defectively, so producing bias or flaws in the results

(Gipps and Murphy 1994: 77)

Bias, however, refers to things that systematically affect entire groups of pupils rather than individual pupil.

1.11.5 Fairness

Fairness refers to ways to make the process of evaluation more equitable. Equitability in evaluation means providing all pupils with equal opportunities to demonstrate what they know and can do. Fairness means that an evaluation should

allow for learners of both genders and all backgrounds to do equally well. All learners should have equal opportunity to demonstrate the skills and knowledge being assessed.

(Laboratory Network Program, 1993)

For an examination to be fair, its content, context, should: reflect knowledge, values, and experiences that are equally familiar and appropriate to all pupils and skills that all pupils have had adequate time to acquire; then

if a task is set in the context of football and students who have knowledge of football have an advantage on the task, that knowledge is an extraneous factor” (Idem).

Thus, it is beneficial to consider some guidelines for an examination in order to be as free as possible of cultural, ethnic, and gender stereotypes. For example, and as it is illustrated by the LNP:

The context becomes a biasing factor if particular groups of students know less about football than other groups of students. For example, in this society few girls have experience playing football. If boys, in general, have experience with the game and more knowledge of its structure and rules, then the task could be biased in favour of boys. (Idem)

In other words, so that a reliable and fair evaluation can be made, the examination should be free from any stereotypes and then teachers should ensure that evaluation tasks are fair to all learners. This is why it may be important to consider whether all pupils have had similar opportunities to acquire the knowledge or skills evaluated.

1.12 Conclusion

This first chapter has tried to cover the vast area on the pupils' evaluation in classrooms stressing its crucial role in the process of teaching and learning. In fact what should be taken into consideration is that Pupils' evaluation 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 evaluation process as well as the principles that guide good evaluation. The first part has defined the concept of evaluation and has established a clear difference between evaluation, testing, assessment and measurement. Evaluation is a continuous process that could profoundly influence pupils' achievement. This is why we have tried to make clear the process of pupils' evaluation in language teaching as well as its different characteristics.

It also strives to shed light on the evaluation components of teaching and learning. In particular, the distinctions between diagnostic, formative, and summative evaluation methods used by teachers when evaluating their pupils. Teachers may use Formative evaluations which are on-going evaluations in order to improve the teaching methods and student feedback throughout the teaching and learning process. Or they can use also summative evaluations which are typically

used to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional programmes at the end of an academic year or at a pre-determined time. The goal of summative evaluations is to make a judgment of student competency.

Finally, the chapter focused also on the different criteria that the teacher should take into consideration when evaluating his pupils. Hence, it is incumbent upon the teachers to utilize evaluation in an effective manner, keeping in mind the purposes of and principles behind it.

CHAPTER TWO

THE ALGERIAN EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The world importance of English in the academic, professional and international 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. Learning a new language is also substantially different from what it used to be in the past: we have more need to communicate orally (not only in writing and reading) and we cannot wait for years before we engage in real communication. This urgency to learn languages is felt everywhere within societies all over the world. The search for new and more efficient methods is a consequence of the requirements for fluid communication.

EFL in Algeria is often criticised on the grounds that it has been slow to progress. Indeed, albeit the English language is studied through seven years starting from the age of eleven and continuing up until graduation from secondary school 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 everyday communication, the Algerian pupils continue to experience difficulty in using the language for purposeful communication. Thus, as the calls for a more communicative approach increase, there has been much debate with regards to the best way to achieve this objective and thus to improve the speaking ability of Algerian pupils, which represents the ultimate target of the Ministry of Education. The Ministry of Education has, since 2003, implemented competency based approach methodology on a multi-level scale and part of this educational reform concerns EFL teaching and learning.

The Speaking Skill in the Algerian EFL setting is often treated with great circumspection. Evaluating the speaking skill in 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 evaluation of the speaking skill encompasses the whole language learning process. Without it, it is extremely difficult to gauge how they

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are progressing with their studies. Along with outlining the main elements in language evaluation and how they are applied to EFL classrooms, this research has two fold aims:

First, identifying EFL third year secondary level pupils' needs, and more importantly the main difficulties that lie behind their poor achievement in the speaking skill after seven years of English studies, 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.

Second, identifying the types of speaking evaluation tasks used by EFL teachers and the ways in which those evaluation procedures have been administered; then to investigate Algerian EFL teachers' perceptions of the practical constraints inherent to the Algerian EFL classrooms which systematically affect the evaluation of speaking.

The evaluation of the speaking skill has become one of the most important issues in language evaluation since the role of speaking ability has become more central in EFL language teaching with the advent of Communicative Language Teaching. 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 instructional goals i.e. language outcomes of the syllabus. However, there are many difficulties involved in the construction and administration of any speaking evaluation tasks. In other words, how could we explain the existing discrepancy between the approach to language teaching and an accurate evaluation of pupils' speaking ability?

This broad question forms the core of the present research work. What is more, a set of sub-questions have to be asked in order to have a reliable answer to the aforementioned question:

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- Is there any awareness on the part of the pupils of the importance of the speaking skill and what are the causes of their speaking difficulties?
- Are the EFL teachers evaluating their pupils' speaking ability?
- In what ways do they conduct the evaluation of the speaking skill?
- And how do EFL teachers believe the evaluation of the speaking skill be handled in the classroom?
- What are their perceptions of the practical difficulties of evaluating the speaking skill?
- How can teachers of English improve pupils' speaking skill in English as a foreign language setting?

However, the investigation throughout this work will attempt to provide arguments for the research, a set of hypotheses are worth noting here:

- The lack of time, the overloaded classes, and the curriculum which may favour the written language as well as the focus on grammar rather than on oral communication may lead the EFL pupils not to be well exercised on the speaking skill.
- With the lack of emphasis on the speaking skill instruction, there may be reluctance on the part of the teachers to evaluate the speaking skill in EFL classrooms. Apart from the constraints of time; a logical explanation is that EFL teachers have not received adequate training in or efficient exposure to how to evaluate their pupils' speaking abilities.
- The existence of a set of beliefs on the part of the teachers supporting a more traditional way to language teaching and evaluation _that a reasonable way to proceed is to focus on grammar, reading and writing rather than on the speaking skill (accuracy vs. fluency) may explain the lack or the non-existence of the evaluation of the speaking skill in EFL classrooms.

2.1 Introduction

A developing country like Algeria is well aware that providing quality education for its pupils is essential to its own economic growth and social stability. Therefore, in 2003, Algeria introduced a new general education guideline requiring pupils to demonstrate foreign language competencies. This new approach to language teaching aims at preparing pupils for life as engaged global citizens, rather than satisfying a three-hour seat-time foreign language requirement as before.

The following chapter will try to give an overview of the Algerian educational context with reference to teaching and evaluating the speaking skill at secondary school level and more specifically to 3^oAS- SE pupils. The speaking skill is chosen on account of its importance in communication as it equips pupils to participate responsibly in society. The CBA aims at the development of pupils' practical language skills as the goals are mainly to prepare students to use the foreign language to make connections with the real world, and to verify that pupils are so prepared. 3^oAS pupils' *_Sciences Expérimentales_* have been chosen for this research as it is considered to be a decisive year because of the Baccalaureate examination and a door towards university.

A thorough analysis of the teaching of EFL speaking skill would, expectantly, shed light on the causes of the lack or the almost non-existence of the speaking skill evaluation as well as of the existing gap between teaching practices and evaluating practices. The ELT situation in Algeria is portrayed as well as the EFL objectives for 3^oAS- SE as stated by the Ministry of Education mentioned in syllabuses for English. Besides, this chapter includes a description and analysis of pupils' profile, the way the teacher should manage his classroom and the importance of interaction. In addition to that, an overview of the recent changes in the policy of language teaching in EFL classrooms will be dealt with.

2.2 Teaching EFL in Algeria

Why do people learn foreign languages? The answers may vary according to the persons' objectives and goals. However, the main perspective is that the target of foreign language teaching and learning is mainly concerned with the ability to

use language to communicate in different situations. In fact, the goals and objectives of teaching and learning foreign languages are nearly the same all over the world. Di Pietro (1990: 130) stated that without language: **“we could not think thoughts expressible to others, nor could we engage in the activities that commonly take place in the societies we build for ourselves.”** he continued supporting this point arguing that **“....hanks to language we are granted access to the knowledge that is accumulated in books and other publications.”** (Idem) Then, according to Di Pietro’s quotation, language comes down at one end to use it for communicating thought and information, and as such, it is considered to be principally instrumental. At the opposite end, language is understood as an essential element of a human beings thoughts processes, perceptions, and self-expressions.

Algeria has long been thought of as a francophone bastion. Even after independence in July 1962, Algeria continued to use French as a tool for modernization and development, along with progress in Arabization. However, today English is emerging as another linguistic option. Indeed, Algeria is adopting the English language as a linguistic standard for Algerians, to contribute to the development process of Algeria. And promoting the English language in Algeria may help the country to boost its economy by encouraging foreign investment, since English actually is the leading language in trade, science and technology.

The purposes of foreign language teaching in Algeria are the same as in many countries world wide. In fact the usefulness of studying foreign languages is no longer contested and Algeria has become aware of the importance English has in the world. Despite the fact that French dominates language-learning in Algeria, English has made significant progress in the last decade, particularly among youth and in no small part because of an interest in American culture and investment, and as it is stated by R. Huling:

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

(R. Huling, 2004: 05)

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 EFL teaching at the Algerian secondary schools.

2.2.1 EFL Teaching Objectives

Not surprisingly, the need to understand other cultures and languages was identified by Daniel Yankelovich (1978) 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. 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. 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: 1991). What is more, Algerians need English and French as languages of wider communication (LWC) to keep abreast with technology and science.

After the Algerian independence, the Algerian political class states the objectives of teaching English. According to this ordinance, pupils 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. 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.-

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. 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).

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.

2.2.2 The Status of English in Algeria

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. 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 i.e. four years +

three years. 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 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 of 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.

The big changes undergone by Algeria in its educational system since independence 1962 have given more importance to English. Consequently the teaching of EFL has received a great deal of reinforcement and for these reasons English has been given the status of second foreign language by the Algerian authority and, thus, it has become a compulsory subject matter in the curriculum in all schools all over the country.

2.3 Teaching EFL to the 3rd Year Secondary School Pupils

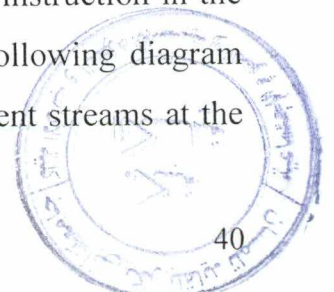
Secondary schooling in Algeria lasts three years, from age fifteen to eighteen. During these three years, the pupils' workload grows exceedingly intensive from three to four hours weekly contact with the English language

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:

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

Table 2.1: ELT in Secondary School, Third Year Level

At this stage it is worth mentioning the different levels of instruction in the Algerian educational system since the 2003 reform. Then, the following diagram summarises the different levels of education as well as the different streams at the



secondary level. General academic courses leading to the baccalaureate examination and usually to higher education are offered by general “lycée”, as opposed to the technological “lycée”. This general level of schooling offers several different areas of study. In each area, the core subjects are different according to pupils’ specialization. The first year of “lycée” is a core curriculum, during which all pupils take the same courses. There are only two streams at this level (scientific and literary streams). At the end of this year, pupils have to choose the areas in which they want to specialize for the final two years. Upon completion of the “lycée”, pupils sit for the BAC exam and go to university. In addition to the general BAC, there is also a technical baccalaureate, which contains different areas of study as clearly showed in the figure 2.1:

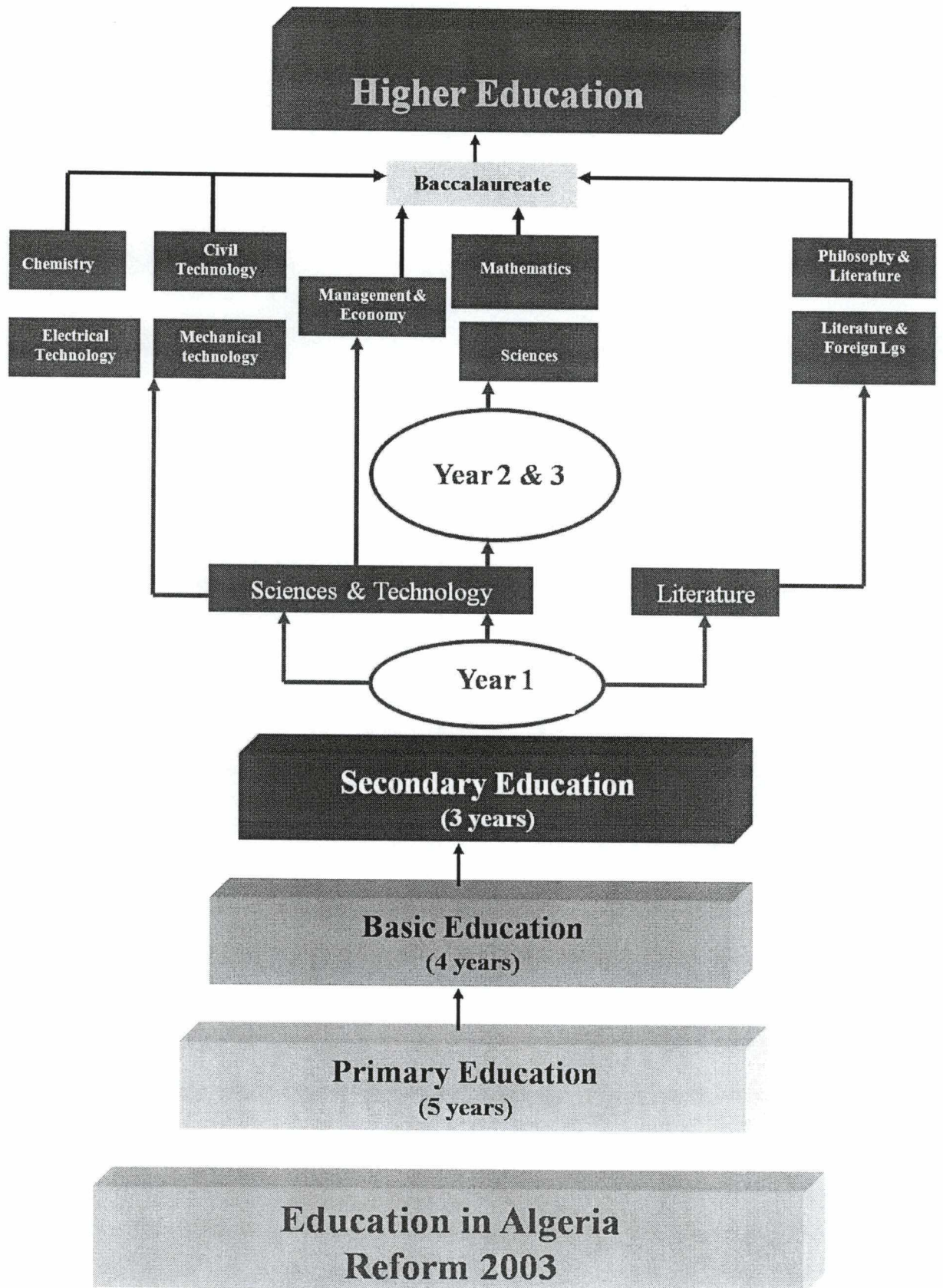


Figure 2.1: Algerian Educational Reform

(Syllabus for English, 2004)

2.3.1 Pupils' Entry Profile

At third year secondary level, pupils are supposed to master some learning strategies as they are supposed to have acquired the basic English necessary to express the four main functions of the language (see table 4.3) which are narration, description, instruction and socializing in the four fundamental linguistic skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing). Then at this stage of EFL teaching and learning, 3^oAS pupils are expected to master the basic features of the English language which are:

- Interact orally in English.
- Interpret oral and written messages.
- Produce oral and written messages.

(Curriculum for English, 2005)

Although this supposedly acquired knowledge seems to be significant, exam results show that most pupils experience greater difficulties in using English correctly and appropriately. Having theoretically, at this level, built up a repertoire of necessary communicative skills, the teacher does not only introduce his pupils to a systematic study of discourse patterns and language functions. But he has the duty of developing in his pupils' positive attitudes towards learning the EFL, raising their learning abilities and motivating them to shift from a lower level of mastery to a higher one.

In effect, at this stage, Algerian pupils still display a low level of performance in the English language whether in oral or in writing; and this despite the combined efforts of EFL teachers, inspectors and syllabus designers aiming at improving learners proficiency in English. This situation has led secondary school teachers to devote a large part of the teaching sessions to the brushing up of the previously studied linguistic stock. However the insufficient time allocated to EFL teaching does not really help, and in most case, it hinders the pupils' performances. Bearing in mind that three hours a week for the scientific classes and four hours to literary classes are just sufficient to preserve some of the acquired language, they have to restrict their objectives to the mere reactivation of basic elements seen in the previous two years. For the literary streams they have supplied a few more

functions and structures whereas for the scientific streams, the efforts have been restricted to selected functions in relations with ESP and its related structures.

2.3.2 Pupils' Exit Profile

The third year secondary level is, in effect a very decisive period for most pupils because of the Baccalaureate examination. Considering the case of our pupils at this level, both the teaching objectives and pedagogical instructions aim at having learners develop the four skills. Indeed, pupils at the end of the third-year secondary level are expected to achieve a satisfactory mastery of the four language skills. In oral expression, in fact it is expected from pupils to be able to interact with various language situations they will encounter in real life. According to the recommendations issued in the official syllabus set down by the Ministry of National Education (2004), the tasks in the textbooks are used to: **“encourage pupils to use more complex utterances, more fluently and more accurately than in previous years of education.”** In addition to that it is mentioned that:

the diversity of tasks will enable students to gradually automate their knowledge and recall the language acquired with greater control and ease during production.
(ibid)

Thus, during the third year of secondary school, the aim of teaching English is to train the pupils to:

- Raise more awareness of the complexities of the English language in terms of lexis and discourse;
- Be able to interact and negotiate meaning in real life situations;
- Be able to take part in conversations using the English language fluently and accurately;
- Move from skill getting to skill using through the interpretation of the four skills.

(Syllabuses for English, 2004:36)

2.3.3 The Pupils' Linguistic Background

Algerian pupils come from different linguistic backgrounds; both Arabic speaking and Berber speaking. Arabic is the primary language of the population. It is also the official language of Algeria as specified in the 1963 constitution. French colonialism left French as the second language of many educated Algerians and, thus, English is rarely spoken. First Algerian pupils learn modern standard Arabic in their early years of schooling. Then, the French language is part of the school curriculum as it is studied beginning from the third year in primary schools as the first foreign language (for pupils aged eight), and is widely understood by Algerians as it is widely used in media and commerce. English, because of its status as a global lingua franca, is taught from the first year of Middle School.

The situation seems a bit difficult. Yet it is not. As it was mentioned before in the section dealing with EFL teaching objectives (see 2.2.1), Algerians can learn languages easily and make use of it appropriately whatever the problems are. On the other hand, being indo European languages and with a rich historical socio-cultural heritage, English and French share many linguistic features in common which may facilitate the learning of the English language.

2.3.4 Third Year Secondary Pupils' EFL Objectives

The objectives defined for third year secondary pupils differ according to pupils' needs in each stream and so do the skills to be focused on for the scientific stream, EFL is seen to have great importance and learners will certainly need it for research purposes and experimental reporting. They will mostly need the ability to consult and exploit documents written in English.

According to the Ministry of Education and as stated in Syllabuses for English, the general objectives of EFL teaching and learning in Algeria are to:

- Enable the learners who go on further studies to use the foreign language as tool/ or a means to acquire extra information about their field of study;

- Provide the learners with the language necessary to communicate efficiently in a normal social and/ or working situation both orally and in writing;
- Enable the learners who join the job market to exploit by themselves documents, leaflets, notices related to their jobs;
- Allow the learners to be self sufficient in exploring and exploiting materials that are linked to their field of study by providing them the basic linguistic tools.

(Syllabuses for English, 2004: 06)

In accordance with the general objectives set to the teaching and learning of foreign languages in our country and which state that the learner should achieve communication in its various forms, aspects, and dimensions. Three main categories of objectives can be mentioned:

- Linguistic objectives;
- Methodological objectives;
- Cultural objectives.

2.3.4.1 Linguistic Objectives

The teaching of the English language starts from the first year of middle school instead of the second year of middle school under the previous system. In terms of content, the objectives of reform are clear: Algerian school wants to be modern and open to the world this is why it took the choice of upgrading the teaching of languages in general and in particular the one of foreign languages. The policy of Arabization which especially affected the educational system at primary and secondary education (in the 70s) during which the French lost its dominant position led to the modification of the programmes of the English language. This was done in order to equip the Algerian pupils with solid structures in such a way that they will be able to understand and actively use English, both spoken and written, in daily life, working life and for further studies. Among the linguistic objectives as stated in the syllabuses for English is to:

- Increase pupils' knowledge of the English -speaking countries;

- Be able to use English to acquire information and knowledge;
- Be able to express themselves as correctly as possible in speech and writing;
- understand clearly pronounced speech from different parts of the English-speaking world, and have some knowledge of social and regional differences in speech;
- Be able to initiate and take part in conversation, expressing their own opinions and reacting to those of others;
- Be able to use the spoken language coherently to talk about, describe and explain conditions within their own fields of interest and competence;
- Be able to read, with sound understanding, simple non-fiction within their own areas of interest and competence;
- Be able to use dictionaries, grammar books, reference materials and other aids;
- Be able to carry out and evaluate their language learning.

(Syllabuses for English, 2004: 06)

2.3.4.2 Methodological Objectives

One basic goal for education in English is to strengthen the desire of pupils to have confidence in their ability to use English actively, and maintain and develop their desire to continue to broaden their knowledge of the language even after completion of their secondary studies.

The methodological objectives at this stage are mainly to enable pupils to use the language in everyday situations. At third year secondary level considerable importance is attached to the ability to:

- Read various kinds of texts and work with different media;
- To improve and diversify their productive resources, and to develop their insight into the language's structure and function;
- to treat English as a natural medium for acquiring and communicating knowledge;

- to understand speech from different parts of the world, and to a certain extent also regional variations;
- Be able to initiate and participate in conversations and discussions, expressing and defending their own viewpoints and values and listening to and answering others;
- Be able to give both general and detailed oral presentation of ideas and experiences;
- Be able to express them-selves clearly in writing, in a formal manner, and also to be able independently to work on and improve their English;
- Be able to use grammar books, dictionaries and reference works;
- Be able to plan, carry out and evaluate their work and language-learning.

(Syllabuses for English, 2004: 26)

2.3.4.3 Cultural Objectives

The cultural objectives stated by the Ministry of National Education are that they contribute to help the pupils to open up their mind through the context of English civilisation and culture. In effect the main objectives are:

to sensitise them to the use of languages, to familiarise the pupils with other cultures through the presentation of traditions, customs, geography..., and last but not least to promote the acceptance of differences, to learn about others and to attempt to break down stereotypical misconceptions.

(Syllabuses for English, 2004:30)

The courses in the English language have to be broadened, developed further. The course of studies aims at enabling pupils to reach a level of functional and all round language skills, and broaden their knowledge about the English speaking countries and their culture. In fact, language skills, and knowledge of the culture and society of the countries where English is spoken, constitute the core of the course of studies. Various language activities - listening, speaking, reading and writing - provide the structure of the subject.

2.3.5 The Syllabus

Syllabuses of EFL teaching in Algeria are different at each level i.e. middle school, secondary school and higher education. Yet, what is meant by the term “syllabus”? According to the Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics a syllabus can be defined as: **“a description of the contents of a course of instruction and the order in which they are to be taught”** (Richards 1992: 368). Therefore, a syllabus is the list of subjects that compose a course and it provides: a description of the course; its objectives; requirements and a course outline. Thus, the syllabus is a necessary element in the teaching/ learning process, an indispensable tool for teachers as it should give the pupils a good understanding of what is expected of them and help them understand what it will take for them to be successful.

The syllabus is a nationwide official document in our country. The syllabuses introduced in the Algerian secondary educational system are selected and devised on the basis of the following criteria: learn ability, usefulness and coverage. In this respect a syllabus is designed for 3rd year SE “sciences expérimentales” as well as to the other streams. In fact third year secondary pupils are supposed to have acquired a satisfactory mastery of the main language functions. They are supposed to:

- Have acquired the ability to express them-selves with sufficient fluency;
- Dominate more than one language function at a time;
- Move from skill getting to skill using through the integration of the four skills.

(Syllabuses for English, 2006:36)

Third year secondary pupils are supposed to be able to: **“achieve a certain level of performance when using the foreign language”**. (idem) Then the 3SE syllabus will aim at:

- Developing their verbal communication skills;
- Expanding learners’ language acquisition;
- Exposing them to various types of discourse i.e. describing, advising, comparing, informing, etc. (idem)

For these reasons, the new English syllabus for SE 3 as laid out by the National Curriculum Committee of the Ministry of National Education in March 2006 is built around themes such as: education, advertising, and within each theme a great importance is given to the functional use of the language. Table (2.2) illustrates the distribution of the different themes according to each stream. In fact each stream is expected to engage with four of the six units dealing with the six main themes recommended by the syllabus. Each theme allows the use of several interrelated language functions. According to syllabus for English (2006: 04), at the end of the third year the learners are expected to be able to:

- Interact orally in English;
- Interpret oral and written texts;
- Interpret oral and written texts.

Themes	Scientific Stream/ Stream/ Economy and Management	Technological	Literary Steam
1. Ancient Civilization			❖
2. Ethics in Business	❖		❖
3. Education in the World			❖
4. Advertising, Consumers and Safety	❖		
5. Astronomy and the Solar System	❖		
6. Feelings and Emotions	❖		❖

Table 2.2: 3^o AS Themes Distribution in Each Stream

2.3.6 The 3rd Year Secondary School Textbook

Textbooks present one of the most important parts in education. It may be considered as the major material used in the classroom. The textbook is the teacher

guide, as it determines the major part of the classroom activities. It is defined by Warren (1981: 43) as:

the printed instructional material in bound form, the contents of which are properly organized and intended for use in elementary or high school curricula.

This is why the textbook is considered as an integral part in the teaching/learning process. It is equally important for both the teacher and the pupils as it is stated by Harmer (2001: 304):

good course-books are carefully prepared to offer a coherent syllabus, satisfactory language control, motivating texts.....they provide teachers under pressure with detailed teacher's guides, suggestions, and extra activities which they can have confidence in.

On the other hand, he mentioned that course books: **"provide material which pupils can look back at for revision"** (idem) as it is mentioned that pupils like course books since: **"they foster the perception of progress as units are completed"** (idem)

Textbooks may be considered as the major material used in the classroom by both teachers and pupils alike. However teachers are not compelled to follow it slavishly, regarded of what is mentioned in the syllabus for English in 2005:

it does not seek at all to get them to toe the pedagogical line; it should rather be regarded as a facilitator, the purpose of which is to make the course book user-friendly to teachers and learners alike.

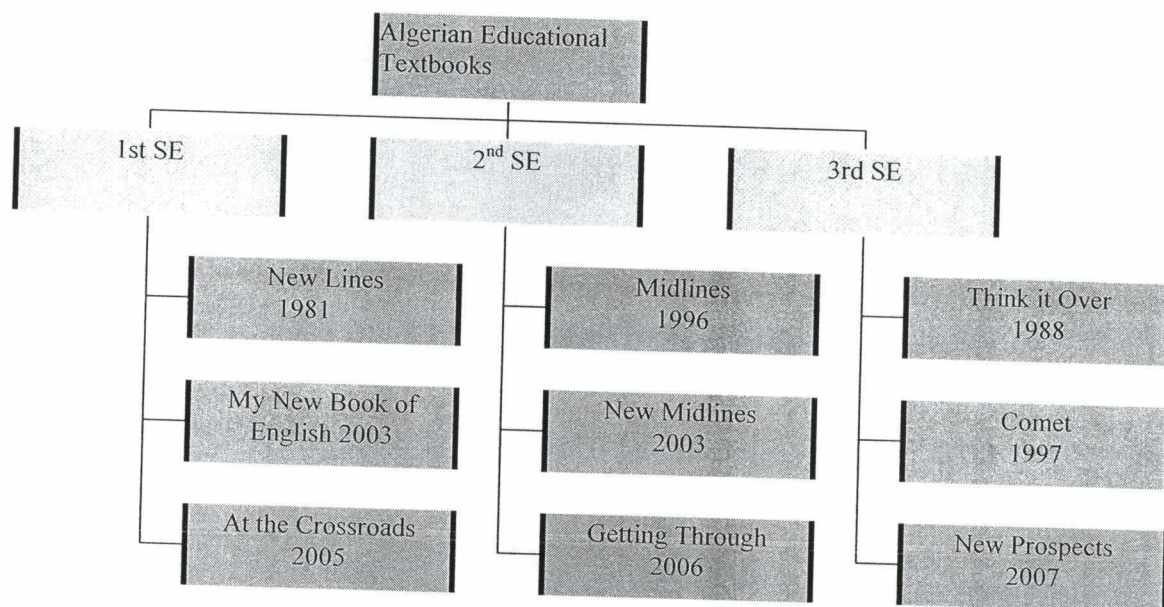
(Syllabus for English in 2005:08)

It can be adapted in according to the method and techniques used and then to suit his pupils' needs. Taking into account the changing needs of the Algerian school, the Algerian educational authorities have directed textbook commission of language specialists to design ELT classroom course books.

In fact, all the changes in the Algerian school these last years made it imperative that ELT course books be revised and up-dated. The figure (2.2) illustrates all the changes in which we have been involved for the design of the

school textbooks beginning from the 80's. Indeed these changes were made to revise the national curricula on the basis of the new approach namely the competency-based approach with functional objectives.

The three textbooks at the secondary level namely: "At the Crossroads" (SE1), "Getting Through" (SE2) and "New Prospects" (SE3) try to solve the problem of communication by creating opportunities for pupils to use the language in the classroom as a sort of halfway house before using it in real life. This section is concerned with the third year secondary pupils' textbook "New Prospects".



(Adapted from Benmoussat, 2003)

Figure 2.2: ELT Textbooks since the 80's.

2.3.6.1 The Main Characteristics of the Textbook

"New Prospects" is the last of a series of three course books designed for the teaching of English to secondary school pupils. As one would expect, the procedures followed here are similar to those adopted for the making of the first two books. They comply with the recommendations issued in the official syllabus set down by the Ministry of National Education (2006).

Moreover the two main principles remain first on communicative language teaching, which engages learners in real and meaningful communication. In addition to that, the course book is task based, which means that it provides a large

number of effective learning tasks through which pupils are brought to notice, reflect and analyse how English is used.

“New Prospects” lays stress on the learner’s practice of English in real and meaningful communication and encourages interaction. By real, it means that the learners are given opportunities to process content relating to their lives and backgrounds, and to develop both fluency and accuracy. In this textbook, language learning is viewed as a developmental process through which the learners make errors as a natural part of that process, and self-correct. However, in this textbook it also regards the mastery of grammar as the cornerstone of a good command of English. This is the reason why it has been deliberately foregrounded in this book. This being said, grammar **“hasn’t made of it an end in itself, but a means to an end”** (teacher’s guide 2005: 22) particularly through a constant ‘translating’ of grammar rules into language functions, thus ensuring the learners’ competencies.

On the other hand, the course book is task based. The tasks devised provide ample opportunities for learners to interact in the classroom and negotiate meaning. Most of these tasks involve the use of “discovery learning”, i.e. inductive learning, and are intended to enhance individual learning as well as learning with peers. These tasks are devised in such a way as to encourage pupils to use more complex utterances, more fluently and more accurately than in previous years of education. The cumulative effect of the diversity of tasks will enable pupils to gradually automate their knowledge and recall the language acquired with greater control and ease during production.

The textbook is a compilation of six thematically based units (see table 2.2) which will be geared to raising more awareness of the complexities of the English language in terms of lexis and discourse. Thus, the texts selected present language in different types and styles: radio interviews, dialogues, news reports, encyclopaedia entries, newspaper and magazine articles, excerpts from works of fiction, poems, etc. The pupils will thus be prepared to interact with various language situations they will encounter in real life.

2.3.6.2 The Organisation of the Textbook

“New Prospects” progressively develops in pupils the three competencies of interaction, interpretation and production that cover all areas of language (syntax, morphology, vocabulary, pronunciation, and spelling) through six graded units. In addition, the graded tasks are of the type to be found in the English paper of the Baccalaureate examination, and thus provide the pupils with a gradual familiarisation with the examination requirements for English. The different task types will be dealt with subsequently:

- Each unit in “New Prospects” includes the presentation and practice of grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation/spelling with the four skills. This practice is related to the theme discussed in the unit.
- Each unit is followed by an evaluation grid to check on the learner’s progress. It reviews pupils’ knowledge of the language items presented in the unit and tests their ability to use the skills and strategies through reading passages/texts that appear at the end of the textbook.

(teacher’s guide 2006)

At the end of New Prospects, we can find the following items:

- Listening scripts: this section can be used for all listening tasks in the units as it can be used by the pupils in class to correct their own work.
- Grammar reference: This is a rubric to which pupils are referred throughout the book. They should use it for revision and for checking when they are not clear on a grammar point.
- Resources portfolio: this section aims at making pupils maximise their language learning experience.

2.3.6.3 Methodology of the Textbook

Following the principles and objectives defined by the Algerian National Curriculum, and which rely on the Competency-Based Approach, the methodology for the use of “New Prospects” in the classroom exhibits the following characteristics:

- i. It is communicative: the textbook lays the stress on the learners' practice of English and encourages interaction. The designed tasks and activities are likely to meet the pupils' interests and needs to prepare them for exchanges of information, opinions through a variety of texts showing spoken English or formal written English.
- ii. It is task-based: the textbook includes a large number of tasks and activities that aim at developing both "lower-order" skills (acquiring new knowledge, understanding new facts and ideas and applying them to solve problems) and "higher order" skills (analysing information by breaking it into small parts to understand it better, synthesizing knowledge by combining it into new patterns and evaluating new information by forming an opinion and judging the quality of that new information).

The project is the final task, and is the most complex one cognitively. It requires the application of both types of cognitive strategies described above (see appendix 6); and the textbook offers plenty of opportunities to pupils to reach the objectives of the project.

New Prospects encourages cooperative learning. The textbook offers tasks and activities that encourage the learner to work with one or several partners (pair and small group-work) in order to construct new knowledge inside or outside the classroom. The project should be emphasized here. It is one of the undertakings that will promote learning skills and will help pupils to develop such social skills as designing an action plan, collecting information and sharing information.

On the other hand, "New Prospects" encourages pupils' reflection through individual works. Tasks and activities are designed to make pupils work individually so as to work out solutions by themselves before sharing them with a partner or with the group, and finally checking their findings with the teacher.

2.3.6.4 The Teaching of the Speaking Skill

The speaking skill at third year secondary level is not provided in the speaking section alone, it develops along with the listening and speaking sequence

as the speaking activities may require some prior listening (see appendix 4). In fact, the pupils interact with their classmates and their teacher through the spoken medium all through the listening and speaking sequence.

At this level, third-year secondary pupils have already acquired a certain level of competency in general interaction and social language. This enables them to take part in oral class work in preparation for the listening tasks, in doing the latter in listening and speaking sequence, and in practising the intonation and stress patterns. In fact the speaking activities suggested in the textbook are a continuation of the listening phase since the topic treated in the speaking phase is prepared beforehand in the form of class discussion in the before listening, as you listen and after listening sections.

In order to build this skill, a number of strategies are selected. These include focusing attention on the topic, dealing with unfamiliar vocabulary, brainstorming, strategies coming in bold relief in the getting started rubric; hypothesis testing, inferring, and checking understanding in the listen and consider sequence; focusing attention on intonation, stress patterns and sound and spelling relation in the say it clear rubric.

The tasks in the think, pair, share rubric represent the culminating point in the building of the speaking skill. They are generally open-ended tasks offering free speaking practice than the other sub-rubrics of the Listening and speaking sequence. They are tasks that the learners do in pairs, in groups, or individually as suggested in say it in writing. Most importantly, these tasks give the learners the opportunity to integrate functions and language forms previously introduced to their oral performance repertoire through the application of the speaking skill in carefully selected communication areas.

The overall objectives for teaching the speaking skill to third year secondary pupils are to train them to:

- express their opinions;
- express agreement and disagreement;
- describe a place, a person;
- express likes, dislikes and preferences;

- ask for and give directions;
- locate a place;
- express condition and result,
- give instructions, etc.

(Teacher's guide 2006)

2.3.6.5 Suggested Activities

Listening and speaking sequence focuses on the awareness and practise of two of the primary skills which are listening and speaking and on social skills collaborative work, peer assessment and responding to problem solving situation, inside or outside the classroom they are aimed at getting the pupils to eventually concretise in the "saying it in writing" and "writing development" rubrics what is termed in the official syllabus as "l'Objectif Terminal d'Intégration".

A "Listening and Speaking" section which deals with oral skills essentially includes a set of activities in which the pupils will listen to an input from the teacher, or an audio tape, and do various tasks (listen and take notes, listen and fill in gaps, listen and pick out the right answer to questions, and describe a process). These integrative tasks are devised to develop in the learners a number of abilities such as listening for details, for gist, paying attention to specific features in English pronunciation, paying attention to discourse when listening to a lecture, a report etc. These accuracy tasks and activities are usually performed individually, but pupils can also do them in pairs or in small groups.

Section one, "Listen and consider" begins with language outcomes, which involves no task but is a preview of the language objectives to be achieved by the end of this section. Thus grammatical structures, vocabulary items, idioms and features of pronunciation such as word and sentence stress, are meant to be understood and used, and also being assessed in the Assessment section of Sequence 2 at the end of the unit.

This first section deals with listening comprehension. Its purpose is to lead the pupils to listen intently to an aural message/text, paying particular attention to features of language use described in the "Language Outcome" preview. It will also make the pupils respond to the message orally or in writing. This type of focused

listening is meant to help the pupil develop an ability to listen for a purpose (understanding the gist of the text or the details). This is why one can say that the more acute the reception of an auditory message, the better its interpretation; likewise, the more intelligible the pronunciation the more effective the transmission of the message.

Communication in a foreign language relies crucially on a good listening ability. Discriminating between sounds in various utterances is the ultimate stage of competence before performance. Therefore, tasks such as 'listen for stress' and 'listen for syllable division' are provided to this end.

In the last rubric, "Think, Pair, Share", the pupils will work individually, then in pairs, and lastly with other peers in a group. The Think, Pair, Share tasks call for an interaction with other pupils and their teacher, and each pupil will produce a piece of writing: a dialogue, a short article, a description, a narration, a poem, etc. This will be presented orally to the class.

2.3.7 The Organization of a Teaching Unit

The EFL syllabus for 3° AS-SE caters to the needs of the major Baccalaureate examination streams. This syllabus strikes a balance between topics related to science and technology and others related to language and humanities. In each of the six units (see table 2.2.), there is a focus on an area of knowledge which develops a specific use of English.

Each unit is divided into two main parts with two sequences each. During each unit, the four skills are dealt with. As far as the speaking skill is concerned, it functions as a consolidation process for all the preceding ones mainly listening. Pupils for example will be asked to respond orally or in writing. This type of focused listening (followed by a response) is meant to help the pupils develop an ability to listen for a purpose (understanding the gist of the text or the details). It is also to help him respond to an aural message orally or in writing with accuracy and appropriateness (An example of a teaching unit can be found in appendix.)

The syllabus for 3° AS-SE is covered in only fifty hours of teaching. Part of this time is devoted to formal testing and corrections. Thus only about forty hours

are left for teaching and practising. In addition to that, the teacher should end his unit with a revision session for the purposes of reinforcing and recycling what has been taught and learnt. Therefore, teachers are asked to prepare unit plans as well as lessons plans indicating: final objectives for the unit, intermediate objectives for each section, tasks to be performed by the pupils as well as a check list of all the new teaching points to be acquired by the pupils.

2.4 Recent Changes in Language Education

The government has recently launched a series of educational reforms with the aim of developing Algeria into a knowledge-based society, which is a pre-requisite for becoming a knowledge-based economy. One of these reforms focuses on the nature of the learning process occurring in all subject areas at all levels of education, and is considered to be the heart of all the changes being implemented. In fact the world is witnessing a great change and a country that doesn't cope with this change could be left behind if it does not modernize its education system.

Therefore, reform in education is vital as it plays a central role in the development of a society. Education is critical to a nation's growth because it develops the minds of the young to be useful citizens. It must include teaching the young how to think for themselves, and how to be tolerant and open-minded. These students are to be accompanied with highly motivated teachers who are well-versed in communication. These teachers must be kept abreast with new teaching methodologies through research, self-education, training and continued learning, which has become integral parts of the school reform since 2003.

English is becoming increasingly important in all aspects of Algerian life for economic as well as academic and global communication. However, although Algerian pupils have learned English in formal education for at least seven years before they get their baccalaureate examination; the pupils' level remains weak. The new policy dealing with the new changes in the national curriculum is meant to face these weaknesses, its potential impact on English proficiency, i.e., will pupils be more proficient with the new approach to language teaching.

EFL teachers who are required to implement this learner-centred policy find themselves faced with a number of challenges in both the environment in which they work and related to the new goals they are asked to achieve. Traditionally, the Algerian educational system has focused on teacher-dominated “chalk and talk” method and rote learning. Pupils are taught to be passive, obedient and respectful to teachers. Teachers who are the products of the old educational system may find it difficult to manage the role reversal required in the new classroom where learners are the main players. Understandably, most EFL teachers still use the teaching methods they were familiar with, where lessons and tests mostly focus on grammar structures, vocabulary, and reading in order to prepare their pupils for the baccalaureate examination.

2.4.1 Historical Review

The reform of the teaching-learning of English in Algeria follows the trend in contemporary English language teaching pedagogies which have focused on developing learners’ communicative competence and on promoting learning strategies and learner autonomy in language classrooms. During 1990s the impact of learner-centeredness in language teaching was evident with the development of communicative approaches which shifted the attention of the teaching-learning processes from language form to language function, or to language use in accordance with the needs of learners (Savignon, 1997). This change in the approach to language teaching from traditional teacher-centred to more learner centred (e.g. Nunan, 1988; Tudor, 1996), which as Nunan (1988: 179) noted, the CBA is “**an offspring of communicative language learning**” requires learners to participate and negotiate actively in meaningful interaction in order to interpret and construct meaning by themselves (Breen & Candlin, 1980). Below is an overview of the methods used for ELT in Algerian EFL classrooms since its independence. With the creation of the Ministry of Education in 1963, the process of building an inclusive and open national education system was set in motion. Since then, many reforms occurred mainly in the field of language teaching.

2.4.1.1 The Grammar Translation Approach

In the 1960's, Algeria, as many other countries adopted the Grammar Translation Approach, or GTM for short, as the only method to be used in teaching English and the textbooks used at that time were French designed textbooks. Broadly speaking, this approach relied on translation and the teaching of grammar in the mother tongue. In fact, grammar was taught as a set of rules (e.g. verb conjugations); practice was done through written exercises; the medium of instruction was the mother tongue; vocabulary was learnt via translated lists, often related to the comprehension of written texts; the latter was seen as the 'real' language, superior to the spoken version; written texts were translated and composition in L2 was regarded as the apex of language ability. However speaking and listening were seen as less important and conversation classes were tagged on as extras to the main course.

2.4.1.2 The Structural Approach

In this approach the teaching of a language was based on sentence structure (Chomsky's view); the new science of linguistics suggested that language was a set of 'structures' (e.g. 'This shirt needs + washing, mending, ironing, etc.'; 'he has + washed, ironed, folded, etc. the clothes'); grammar rules were an illusion, so it was more important to focus on these 'structures'; vocabulary was seen as an adjunct to the structures; the learning method was based on behaviourist psychology – stimulus-response learning; language exercises for speaking were mostly listen and repeated (i.e. drilling). Language exercises for writing were multiple choice and gap-fill; thinking was discouraged. Therefore with the structural approach the learner, was able to write down sentences following a given sample but was rather unable to express new authentic ideas, opinions...the focus was put on writing.

2.4.1.3 The Functional and Communicative Approach

The functional approach or the communicative approach to language teaching holds that oral communication is the primary use of language and then

should be central to the mode of instruction. In fact, the key principle was the separation of classroom work into 'accuracy' work and 'fluency' work; accuracy work was for concentrating on learning new bits of language (grammar patterns, functional exponents, vocabulary, etc); fluency work was for getting the pupils to speak freely.

2.4.2 The Competency Based Approach

The recent changes in educational policy starting from 2003 made by the National Commission for the Reform of the Educational System a new approach was introduced in our curricula namely the competency based approach. In fact, like the communicative approach, the competency based approach based its teaching on interaction; it focuses on developing the language to perform different skills. It is an approach aiming at establishing a link between the learning acquired at school and the context of use outside the classroom. This approach enables the learners to learn how to learn to share to exchange and to cooperate with others. It encourages the oral performances and devotes an independent step specific to communication.

2.4.2.1 Competency Defined

The QEP defines a competency as **“a set of behaviours based on the effective mobilization and use of a range of resources.”** (2000: 11) Thus defining the term competency is not an easy task. It is difficult to explain it briefly and correctly since it involves the interaction of various components used in different ways. In this regard, and because of its global and integrating characteristics, acquiring a competency requires learning in motor, affective and cognitive fields. (See appendix 6).

In fact, whenever the term competency is mentioned, **“know-how to act”** process is implied. According to Mrowicki 1986 **“Competencies consist of a description of the essential skills, knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours required for effective performance of a real-world task or activity.”** Thus according to this definition a competency involves the necessary knowledge and capacities that a given solution requires.

A Competency may be defined as:

- The ability of a student to accomplish tasks adequately, to find solutions and to realize them in real life situations.
- An effective ability to successfully carry out some activity which is totally identified.
- A real and demonstrated capability.
- A set of behaviours based on the effective mobilization and use of a range of resources.

2.4.2.2 The CBA to Language Teaching Defined

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. 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 Competency Based Approach focuses on outcomes of learning. In fact the Competency Based Approach (or CBA for short) addresses what the learners are expected to do rather than on 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 students 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.”** (Schenck, 1978: 141)

He added 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 Competency Based Approach 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 Algerian 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.

2.4.2.3 The Characteristics of the CBA

The Competency-Based Approach which consists of organizing the content of a curriculum in terms of the development of competencies using specific pedagogical practices has been developed to respond the need for more rigor educational systems. It provides explicit training goals. The approach favours competence development acquired from authentic situations and complex problems. It encourages the development of reflective professional practice with help from mentors who provide feedback. This approach has a set of Characteristics such as:

- Making the school acquisitions viable and sustainable: The school will help the learner give sense to knowledge acquired in class and teach him how to make beneficial and relevant use of it. His learning must be reinvested not only in school contexts, but also in contexts outside the school.
- Developing the thinking process of the learner: To achieve this aim, it is vital to reinforce the cognitive function of school by establishing tight relationships between acquiring knowledge and developing thinking processes.
- Presenting learning contexts in relation to the needs of the learner: The competency-based approach makes it possible to link the development of personal resources and the meaningful situations, which call for such

- Proceed to an assessment of his progress during the activities and at the end of activities.

(Syllabus of English, 2005)

To do so, the learner will appeal to cognitive, affective and motivational strategies (see appendices) in order to set a balance between his previous knowledge and his newly acquired knowledge. The reflection the learner will operate on his own learning processes will assure the quality of his acquisition and facilitate his retention. Since learning is a challenging intellectual process, while accomplishing a task, the learner displays appropriate behaviours while doing a specific action. This is performance.

2.5 EFL Classroom Management

Classroom management is an essential element in a language classroom as it involves the efficiency of a teacher and the learning activities. In fact classroom management stands at a position of essential importance in the process of teaching and learning at school. Good classroom management creates a learning environment in which effective teaching and learning occur, while poor classroom management often damages the pupils' motivation and desire for learning and spoils the teacher's passion for teaching; no matter how well he has prepared for the class. Thus classroom management is one of the most important factors that contribute to the efficiency of the teacher and the learning activities (Harmer, 2000)

An EFL classroom success is usually linked to the way it is managed. This is why the success of a language course is mainly due to the teacher's expertise and proficiency. Thus, creating a positive climate for learning in which pupils are willing and eager to learn are essential aspects of the EFL teacher's work.

As Dunkin and Biddle (1974: 135) point out:

it seems to us that adequate management of the classroom environment forms a necessary condition for cognitive learning; and if the teacher can not solve problems in this sphere, we can give the rest of teaching away.

Classroom management certainly involves discipline, control and punishment to a great extent as in the traditional way of classroom management, the aim of it primarily means **“achieving class control and order”** (Doyle, 1979). However, the concept of classroom management has shifted to establishing a climate for learning (Everstone and Emmer, 1982). As defined in the preface to the 1979 yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, U.S.A., the term classroom management encompasses **“the provisions and procedures necessary to establish and maintain an environment in which instruction and learning can occur.”** This shift has cast a new light to the EFL classroom management.

On the other hand, it is commonly accepted nowadays that the ability to communicate is the primary goal of foreign language. Instead of as a cognitive process of learning language knowledge, EFL learning is now more regarded as a process of acquiring linguistic and communicative competences. Therefore, EFL class must inevitably be of a communicative nature. For most of pupils, the classroom is the only environment in which they can practice communicating in the target language. So an EFL teacher must bear in mind that neither control nor discipline but setting a climate appropriate for learning in the class is his most important task for classroom management.

Accordingly, 3°AS-SE learners need ample opportunities, support and encouragement of their learning efforts. Thus an effective EFL learning environment has a number of characteristics:

- The learner strongly feels a communicative need using English in the class.
- Adequate opportunities are provided for the learners to use English for personal communication. An EFL class should be student-centered rather than teacher-centered. The teacher should reduce his talk to minimum and give the students adequate opportunities to practice on the instruction and produce their own ideas.

- There is an easy climate in the class in which the learners enjoy participating in the classroom activities.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter has tried to analyse the learning and teaching situation at third year secondary school level. To analyse the situation more objectively, it is then necessary to know first more about the teaching approach to language teaching in EFL classrooms and more specifically to have a clear idea about the speaking tasks introduced in the classrooms, and what it involves as teaching and learning practices. Indeed, Variables such as methodology as far as the speaking skill is concerned, learners' characteristics, their background and difficulties have been dealt with since they are important parameters in the analysis and interpretation of the study results.

Moreover, we have 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. We have also attempted to shed light on the variables related to the teaching of the speaking skill at secondary school level which resulted in the following. The first of these variables is the textbook which represent an indispensable tool for instruction for both teacher and learners alike. The second variable discussed here is the methodology which must be followed in EFL classes. Besides, the two major poles in the educational system teachers and learners are described with respect to their profile training roles and responsibilities.

Indeed the second chapter has unveiled the Algerian educational context with the changes in language instruction since the reform of 2003 and the implementation of the competency based approach to language teaching. However for a clear understanding of what all these changes imply to language teaching in EFL classrooms and to give insights into the speaking skill task and the pupils evaluation of this skill, we thought it necessary to undertake an investigative study

that would lead from various view points, to practical evidence about the source of the discrepancy between language teaching and evaluation methods and ultimately to alternative remedies. Thus, the results of two questionnaires and a semi-structured interview are analysed, discussed and interpreted in the following chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DATA ANALYSIS

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3.1 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 EFL pupils in English oral ability has revealed that Algerian EFL learners are in great need of guidance on how to improve this ability. EFL researchers may ask themselves the reasons why Algerian EFL third-year secondary pupils may not develop the speaking skill even after seven years of the study of this language and why the evaluation of this ability is limited in EFL classrooms.

Evaluating the speaking skill in EFL 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 pupils' performance in order to ascertain what pupils 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 EFL classrooms has emerged these last years. And, since the issues are so deeply embedded in classroom practices, it would seem imperative to engage EFL teachers and pupils in the research effort.

This chapter is concerned with the empirical phase of this extended essay. It is the practical aspect of the theoretical one which describes 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 chapter attempts to give a systematic description of the educational context, with a close reference to the EFL speaking skill evaluation at the secondary level, and more specifically to third-year secondary pupils. This research on the evaluation of the speaking skill at secondary 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.

3.2 Research Aims and Procedures

Evaluating pupils' 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 pupils. It is worth noting that pupils' evaluation can be used to improve teaching and help pupils 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 CBA approach to language teaching and the accurate evaluations of pupils' communication abilities.

With the widespread adoption of the Competency-Based Approach (CBA) in EFL countries, which is for example replacing the traditional approaches to language teaching and the CLT in the Algerian secondary schools since 2003, pupils' speaking competencies are given great importance. Although, many English teachers in Algerian secondary schools are interested in CBA, the speaking evaluation has received little attention. However, if it is important to know if a pupil can speak a foreign language, then it should be important to evaluate that pupil speaking ability directly. Thus, as a matter of fact, despite the interdependence of communicative teaching and communicative evaluation, pupils' speaking evaluation in the Algerian secondary schools does not evaluate pupils' speaking proficiency from the perspective of language use and communication.

The need for EFL teachers to be equipped with some evaluation tools to evaluate pupils' speaking skill is becoming more and more important. The speaking skill in itself has become a vital part of the approach to language teaching used in all the Algerian secondary schools; every school is required, by the Ministry of National Education, to perform pupils' speaking abilities. Algerian EFL teachers, find it difficult to evaluate pupils' 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 EFL 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. Thus, this study focuses on Algerian secondary school English teachers' perceptions of speaking evaluation as well as on the congruence between the teaching approach and the evaluation methods used in the Algerian EFL context. It will also help to identify the types and the ways of speaking evaluation used by English teachers in secondary schools and to investigate teachers' perceptions of the practical constraints in EFL classrooms, which affect the students' evaluation of speaking.

3.3 Methodology of the Research

This study used a qualitative as well as a quantitative research. According to Wiersma (1995), **“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”**. In this study, two data collection instruments were used: 'a questionnaire' addressed to both pupils and teachers and 'semi-structured interview' addressed to EFL inspectors. The questionnaire research is popular among educational researchers in general and ELT research in particular. McDonough and McDonough 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;

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

(McDonough and McDonough, 1997: 171)

A Semi-structured interview was conducted with EFL inspectors because **"the interview is a very good way of accessing peoples' perceptions"** (Punch, 1998: 174). Thus, one purpose of the semi-structured interview has been to clarify the researcher's initial interpretation of the information collected from the questionnaires. The interviews lasted 15-20 minutes. The interviews were semi-structured and took place at a time convenient for the inspector. Since the purpose of the interview was to clarify the researcher's understanding of the lack of evaluation of the speaking skill in EFL classrooms to 3^oAS-SE, the individual semi-interviews have been guided by a set of questions about the evaluation of the speaking skill. The questions have been developed before the interview but necessary modifications and additions to the questions have been made as the interviews have been conducted.

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) Further, it was believed that such triangulation of data may yield factors not mentioned by the informants in the questionnaires. McDonough and McDonough (1997: 184) remark 'a semi-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.

3.3.1 Steps in the Selection of the Informants

The empirical phase of this research is conducted through different analytical devices: two questionnaires and a semi structured interview. Because pupils and teachers constitute two major poles in the teaching learning context, the questionnaires have been directed to both of them, so that to determine pupils attitudes towards speaking evaluation, to identify some of the speaking evaluation difficulties that may the EFL teachers encounter in the practice of such an evaluation in their classrooms and to find relevant solutions to overcome these difficulties.

The two questionnaires have been distributed in different secondary schools. The EFL teacher's questionnaire (Appendix 2) was administered to 20 EFL teachers who are working at secondary schools in different locations. These teachers agreed to participate in the research project while they were attending an English teachers' workshop. Permission has been gained from the inspector to distribute the questionnaire. Thirteen males and seven females responded to the questionnaire. The informants' age varies between 24 and 43 years old, with the majority in their 30s. The participants' experience in teaching English ranged from one to twenty years. At the time of the data collection, all were teaching third year secondary pupils (3AS-SE). On the other hand, a questionnaire has been addressed to 3AS-SE pupils in five different classes. It should be mentioned, however, that in both questionnaires three types of questions: close-ended, combined and scaled questions have been used. As a follow up to the teachers' questionnaire, the researcher conducted a semi structured interview with the EFL inspectors.

The researcher considered maximum variation in informants' age, gender, teaching experience, and teaching setting. It has been decided that teachers of different teaching experience must be represented in the group of informants and as well, that male and female teachers in schools, should be included. Two other parameters, informants' age and years of teaching, have been also included to ensure as much variety as possible.

3.3.2 Research Procedure

The main data collection instruments have been questionnaires for both teachers and learners. The pupils' questionnaire has been arranged in multi option pattern where the evaluations of attitudes and beliefs have been required; a limited number of scaled questions have been included to achieve this end. The teachers' questionnaire has been carried out using open-ended and scaled questions. Firstly, in an attempt to develop an appropriate survey instrument for this study, a pilot questionnaire was administered to five English teachers. The pilot questionnaire served to identify those items which were unclear, repetitive, and unnecessary. The final version of the questionnaire (Appendix 1) included both open-ended questions and mixed questions with generated from the data collected in the pilot survey. It asked for opinions on the evaluation of the speaking skill as well as the teachers' professional, educational, and personal background. The questionnaire has been written in English as the participants are EFL teachers. The responses to that questionnaire have been gathered, after they had received an explanatory statement form, it has been explained that their participation in the project has been entirely voluntary.

In addition to that a third pole of this investigative study has been conducted via a semi-structured interview held with two EFL inspectors of secondary school level. The choice of the EFL inspectors was to determine if the different methods of pupils' evaluation are congruent with the new approach used in teaching. Thus the focus has been on the fact that if the current methods of pupils evaluation used in classrooms reflect the competency- based approach and if they flesh out the competencies enunciated in the syllabus. The EFL inspectors have been invited to be interviewed so that their perceptions of speaking evaluation could be explored. Before the interview with the informants, a pilot interview was conducted with an English teacher colleague to ensure that the questions were precise, and clear.

The EFL inspectors' interview helped to collect more information on the evaluation of the speaking skill. According to Punch (1998: 178), interviews may have the characteristic of **"understanding the complex behaviour of people without imposing any a priori categorization which might limit the field of inquiry"**. The interview was semi-structured and conducted in a systematic order,

but sometimes digressed from the prepared and standardised questions. The interview has been conducted in English. Each interview lasted fifteen to twenty minutes.

Data analysis is not a simple description of the data collected but a process by which the researcher can bring interpretation to the data. Wiersma (1995: 216) suggests that: “**data analysis requires organization of information and data reduction**”. Thus, the researcher has been required to reorganize and select related information from disordered, unorganized data. After all, analysis in research is a process of successive approximation toward an accurate description and interpretation of the data gathered.

3.4 Learners’ Questionnaire

In an attempt to test the hypotheses proposed for this research work. A questionnaire has been first addressed to 3AS-SE pupils. Richard and Chamarel state that: “**questionnaires are structured instruments for the collection of data which translate research hypothesis into questions**” (Richard and Chamarel, 1980: 59). Then a questionnaire is a means of collecting data from the informants who are in this case 150 (3AS-SE) pupils. The pupils are aged between 16 to 20 years old.

The questionnaire was explained and administered to the pupils with the presence of their EFL teachers. This has been done with the purpose in mind that this may help to enhance pupils’ confidence and lower their anxiety. So in this way they could better think about the various questions, express their personal ideas and then provide appropriate answers to make their needs in studying English clearer.

The questionnaire has been answered by reading the questions and ticking responses. The obtained results can then form the basis for written works, discussions or repeated talks (Harmer, 2001). The hypotheses of the research have been translated into closed or scaled questions. This type limits the informants’ answers by proposing various and different possibilities. In addition to that the closed questions usually make the questionnaire easier and quicker to fill in.

The pupils’ questionnaire contains 20 questions (see appendix 1). All the questions turn implicitly around pupils’ attitude towards the place and role of

English in the school curriculum, learning preferences, interests as well as the evaluation methods. The purpose behind questions is as follows:

- The domains for English language use and the importance for studying English. Illustrated in questions 1, 2, 3 and 4;
- Learning preferences in language skills. Illustrated in questions 5 and 6;
- The role of English in the school syllabus and future life. Illustrated in questions 7, 8, 9 and 10;
- Attitudes, beliefs and diagnostic questions about the English programme. Questions 11, 12 and 13.
- Preferred learning styles and strategies. Illustrated in questions 14 and 15;
- Learner-learner interaction. Question 16
- Role relationship. Questions 17 and 18
- Attitudes, beliefs and diagnostic questions about the evaluation of the speaking skill. Questions 19 and 20.

The pupils' questionnaire has meant to elicit from them, as being the core of the teaching learning process. The aim of this study has been also to establish the need of a change in the way EFL learners experience the learning process.

3.4.1 Questionnaire's Analysis

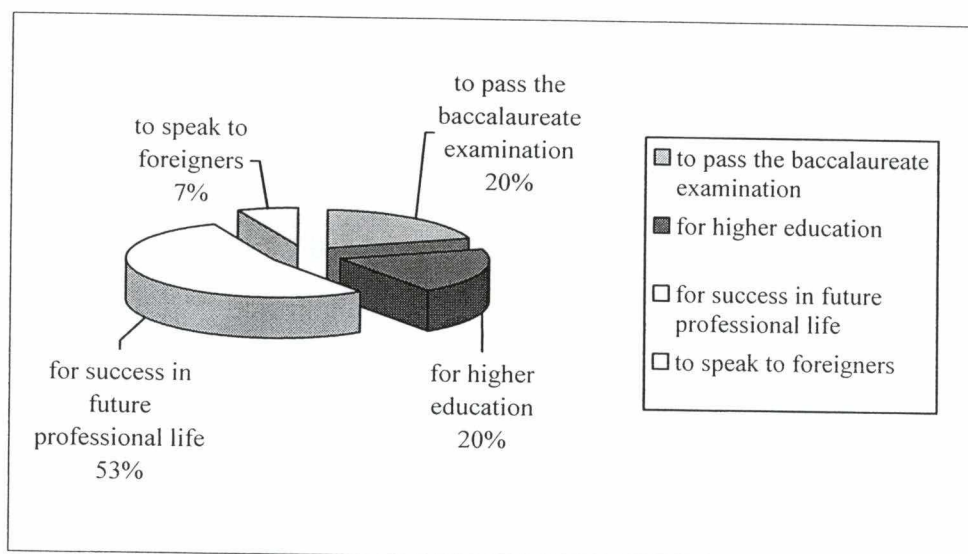
Investigation into pupils' attitudes towards the role of English in the school syllabus, their learning preferences in terms of language skills and the importance of the speaking skill in the programme need to be valid and reliable, and cannot be done at random. Weir and Roberts (1993) stress the importance of using data from different sources. This section is partly concerned with the treatment and analysis of data obtained from the pupils' questionnaire.

The questionnaire is “**useful for surveying a lot of people in many different locations**” (Wray and Bloomer 2006: 158). This has been the main reason for choosing questionnaire as the aim was to involve maximum number of third year secondary pupils. The pupils' questionnaire as previously mentioned contains 20 questions, carefully selected and simplified according to the pupils' level and age. The questionnaire contains questions with multiple-choices to help determining the present and future domains of language use. The present use of language was

also a consideration according to the importance of English in academic and other demands of day to day life. The information obtained from the questionnaire have been analysed and interpreted below.

- The domains for English language use and the importance for studying English: Questions 1,2,3 and 4

Question 1: (why do you think it is important to study English?): the intended purpose of this question was to discover the pupils' perception of their reasons for studying English as part of their school syllabus. A majority of the pupils, which is 53%, consider success in future professional life as their reason for the importance of the English language in the school programme.

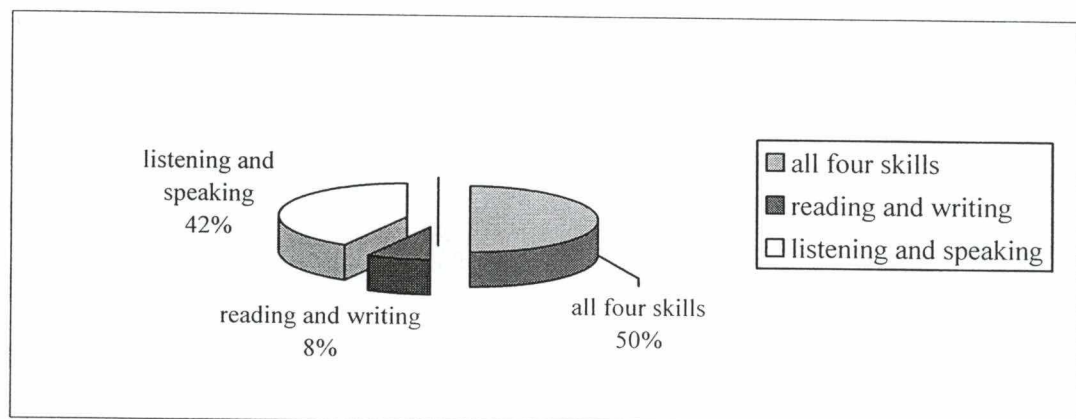


Pie-chart 3. 1: Reasons for Studying English

Question 2 and 3: (when do you usually use English? Do you use English more for?) These questions aimed at eliciting response from the pupils about their present domains of the English language use. The questions served as internal validity instrument as the same option in question number 2 and 3 has gathered highest number of responses. The present domains of the English language use, opted by 61% in question 2 and 67% in question number 3, have been for academic purposes.

speaking skill ability and Robinson's (1995) explanations regarding the importance of speaking skill for pupils that in many pupils opinion oral proficiency is the best indication of mastery of a language seems to be very valid in this context also.

Question 6 (What do you think English language teaching should focus on?) has investigated pupils' belief about the focus of English language teaching on the different skills and 50% have expressed the opinion that English language teaching should focus on the teaching of all four skills. (See pie-chart 3.6)

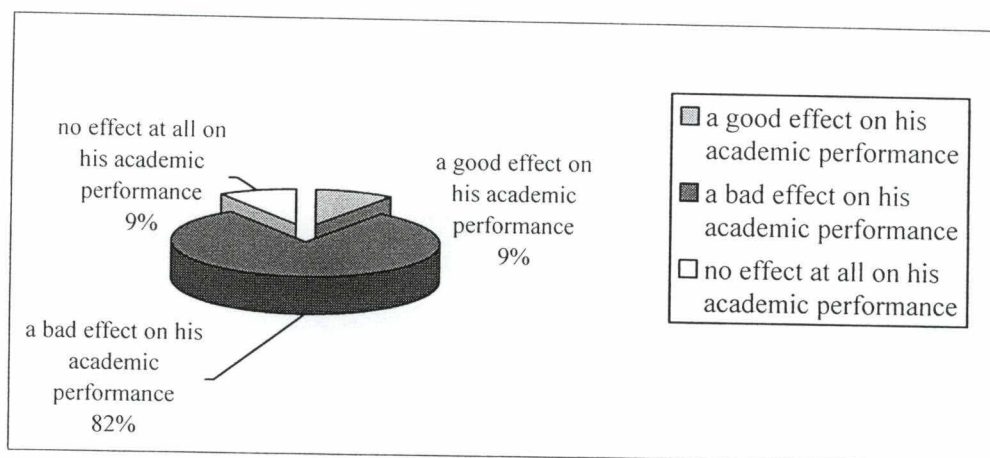


Pie-chart 3. 6: The Four Language Skills in Teaching

- The role of English in the school syllabus and future life: questions 7, 8, 9 and 10

The questionnaire contains questions which intended to judge pupils' attitude towards the role of English in the school programme within the CBA approach to language teaching/learning and in future life. The questions are in multiple choice forms and also in scaled form. Following is a pattern of responses to these questions which is helpful in establishing pupils' attitude towards the role of English in their academic and future life.

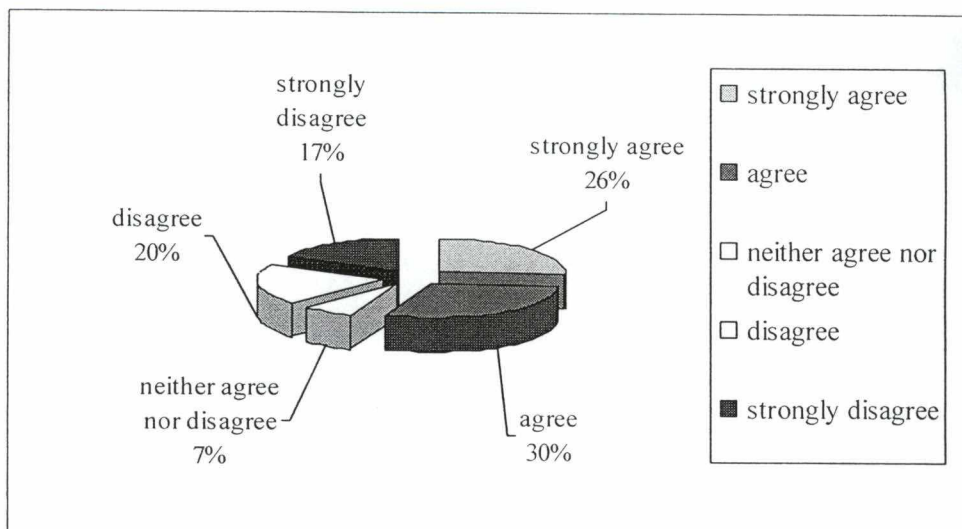
The purpose for questions 7, 8 and 9 has been to know the possible role of English in the present academic and future life of the pupils. **Question 7** (Do you think that if your level of English is not good it can have...) has tried to determine the effect of English language proficiency on the academic performance of the pupils. 82% thought that it can have a detrimental effect on their academic performance if the proficiency level in English is not good. (See pie-chart 3.7)



Pie-chart 3. 7: The Effect of Pupils' Instructional Level in English on their Academic Performance.

Questions 8 (My knowledge of English will..) and **question 9** (In the future, The English language) have investigated the pupils' opinion about the future role of English in the fields of higher education and progress in future career. 90% have been of the opinion that proficiency in English will play a vital role in the successful completion of their education and in making a good progress in their future career. (See appendix 1)

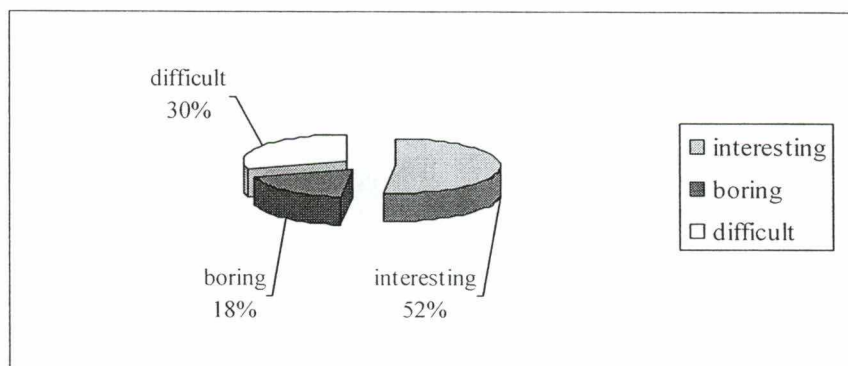
Question10: (would you like to change anything in the way the English language is taught in the school syllabus?) This question has aimed at probing the opinion of the pupils about the place of English in the school syllabus. The question is in the scaled form and the percentage of pupils who strongly agreed and those who agreed is 26% and 30% respectively. Thus 37% opposed the idea of changing completely the way the English language is taught at schools. This helps in establishing the importance attached to the study of English and their implication in the way the English is taught in EFL classrooms. (See pie-chart 3.8)



Pie-chart 3. 8: Changes in the way English is taught in the School Syllabus.

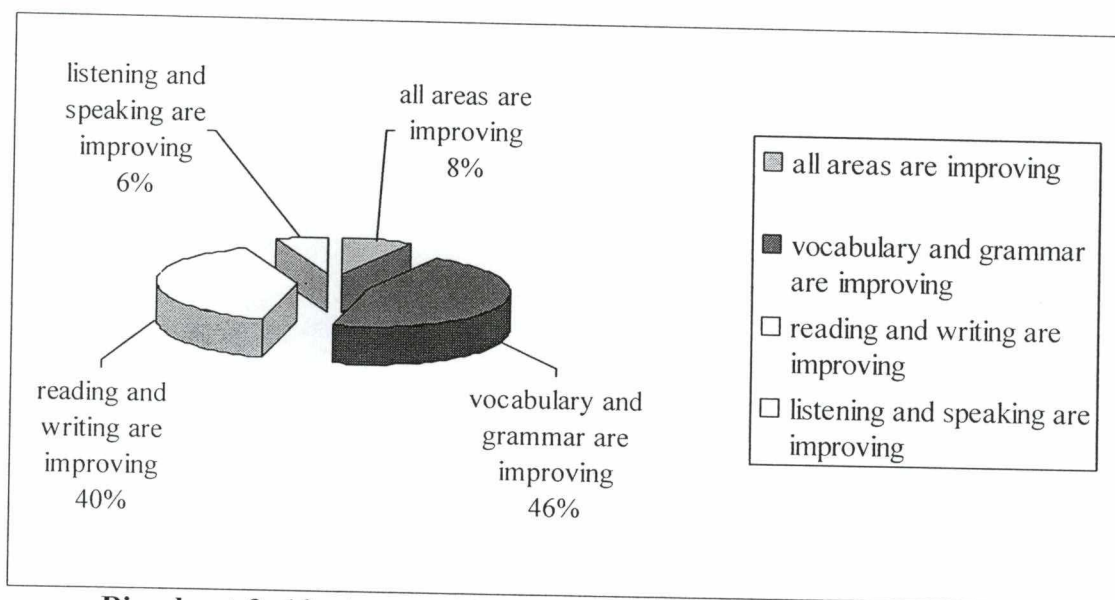
- Attitudes, beliefs and diagnostic questions about present curriculum. Questions 11, 12, 13.

The questionnaire has also posed certain questions to get an insight into pupils' attitudes, beliefs and some diagnostic questions. These questions have been included to find the truth or certain assumptions about the contents of English courses. Thus **question 11** (How do you find the content of your English course?) has investigated pupils' opinion about the contents of the present English course. 52% have expressed the opinion that these are interesting. There is a certain variety in lessons and exercises even though all lessons focus on vocabulary and grammar. 30% have answered negatively stating that the current content is rather difficult as it does not match their level in English, and 18% have stated that it is boring. (See pie-chart 3.9)



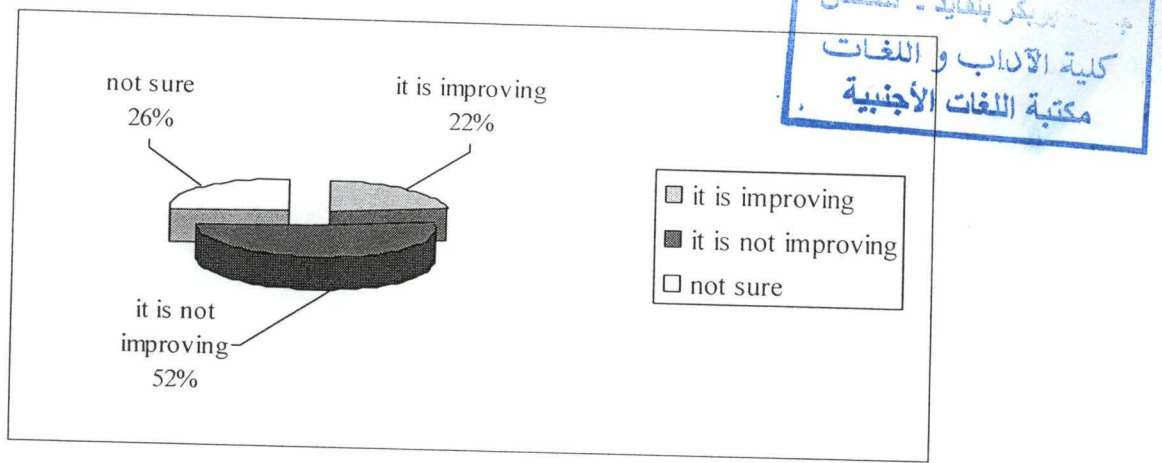
Pie-chart 3. 9: Course's Content

Question 12 (My lessons in English mainly focus on improving...) has investigated pupils' opinion about the areas of language learning which are being improved as a result of learning under the present ELT lessons. 45% have been of the opinion that it is improving their grammar and vocabulary, whereas 40% have stated that it is improving their reading and writing. (See pie-chart 3.10) This is contrary to pupils' desire that they wish to improve their speaking skills and the importance they attach to speaking and listening skills as compared to grammar / vocabulary and reading / writing. (See questions 5 and 6).



Pie-chart 3. 10: Areas which are improving as a result of ELT Lessons

Question 13 (Do you think that the present way of teaching and evaluating the speaking skill is helping in improving your English language any further?) has aimed at knowing pupils' perception of improvement or otherwise of their English proficiency. 51% have thought that their level in English is not improving this has proved the assumption that the focus on language teaching is still on vocabulary and grammar thus it is not improving the desired proficiency pupils to their desired level. (See pie-chart 3.11)

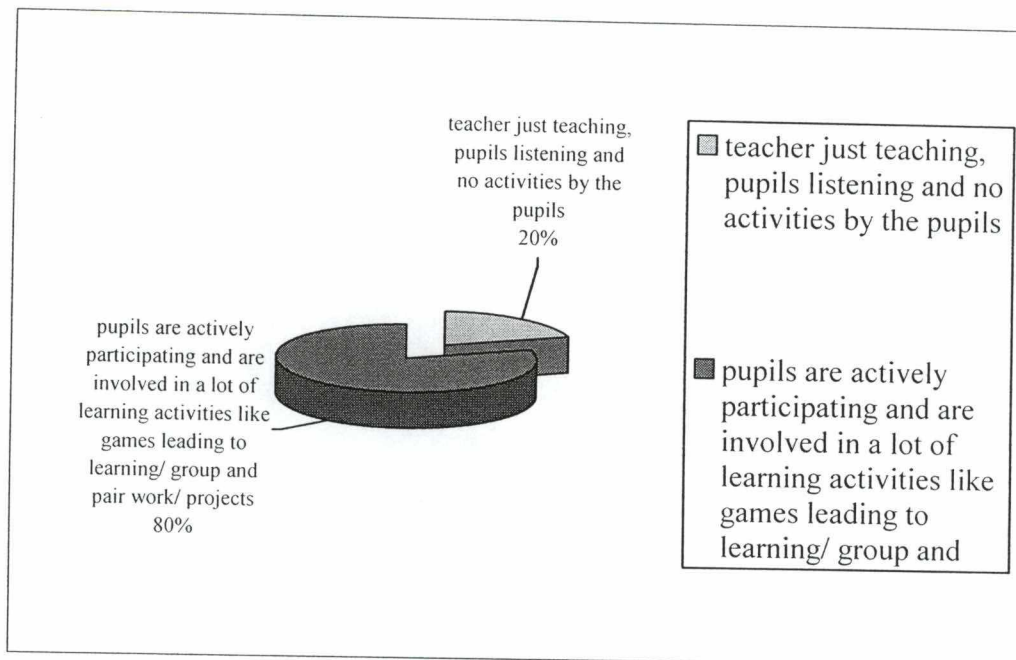


Pie-chart 3. 11: Pupils' Perception of improvement in their Level of English

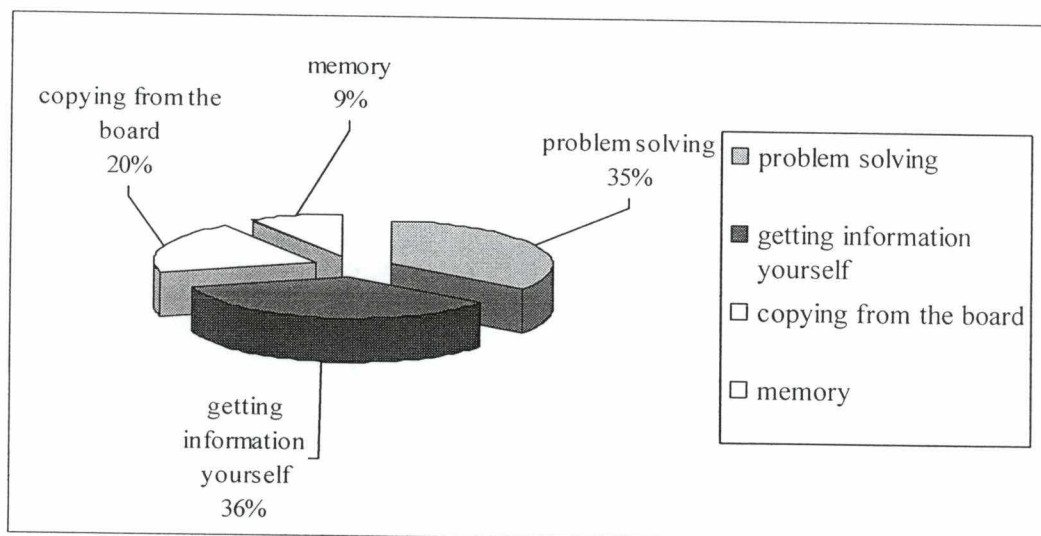
- Preferred learning styles and strategies. (Questions 14 and 15)

Both questions 14 and 15 have intended to find out pupils' preferred learning styles and strategies. Question 14 has established the pattern of pupils' preference for teaching/learning activities. 80% have preferred activities like role play, games, and projects as compared to passive learning. Pupils' preference for the kind of classroom interaction which involves several activities, where pupils interact and are involved in tasks and where the teacher relinquishes his control has been supported by the fact that pupils display a greater degree of enthusiasm and participation and thus learning would improve. Thus 80% of 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 to 20% who prefer a passive role with little activities in the classroom. (See pie-chart 3.12)

On the other hand, question 15 has elicited 35% of responses for a learning style involving problem solving and 36% of responses for a learning style where the learner prefers to get information for himself. 20% prefer copying from the board and 9% prefer learning by memory. (See pie-chart 3.13)



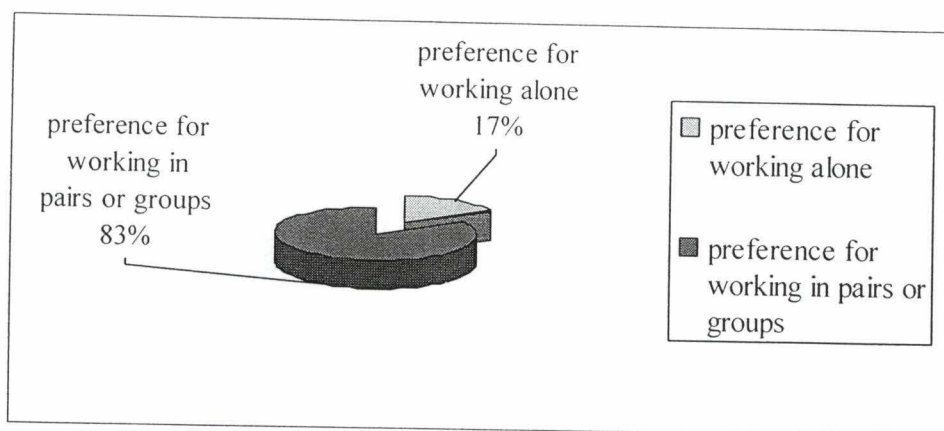
Pie-chart 3.12: Teaching/ Learning Activities



Pie-chart 3.13: Learning Styles

- Patterns of learner-learner interaction

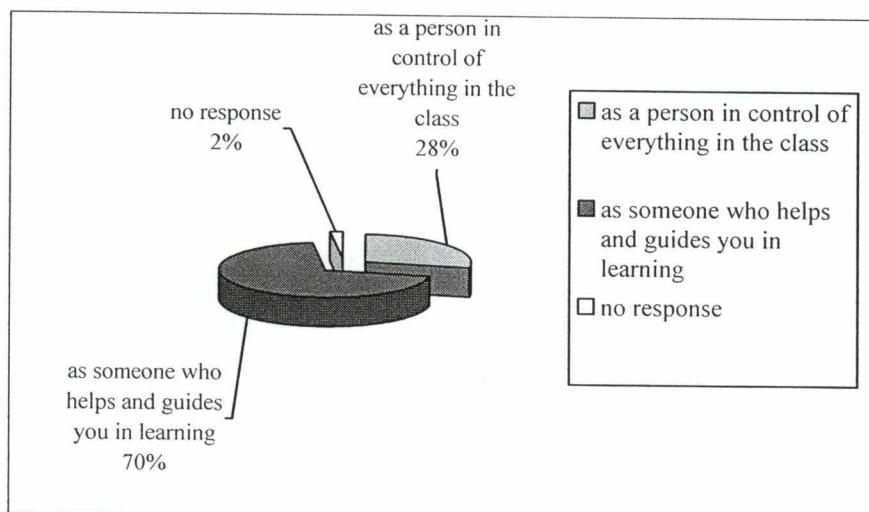
Question 16 (How do you prefer to do learning activities in class?). This question has investigated the preference for classroom interaction patterns. 83% of the pupils have preferred pair and group work interaction pattern as compared to working alone activities. 17% have stated a preference in working alone. (See pie-chart 3.14)



Pie-chart 3. 14: Learner-Learner Interaction

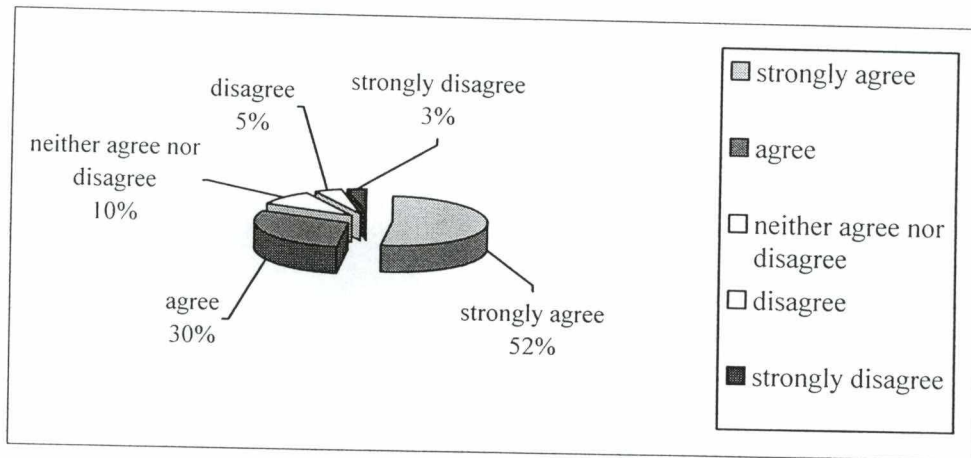
- Role relationship. **Question 17** (What kind of role do you like your teacher to have?) and **question 18** (Our teacher should adopt a modern way in evaluating his pupils' speaking skill?)

These two questions have examined the pupils' preferences for the role of the teacher in the classroom. Question 17 has been in the form of multiple-choice and question 18 has been in scaled form and has aimed at finding pupils' attitude towards teacher's giving up the traditional role. A total of 70% of the informants to question 13 have adopted for the role of the teacher as a guide and a facilitator in their learning. (See pie-chart 3.15)



Pie-chart 3. 15: Pattern of Preference for the Role of Teacher

Responses to question 18 have established pupils' attitude to the traditional role of the teacher (up-front and in control) and modern role of the teacher (facilitator and guide). 52 % have strongly agreed and 30 % have agreed that the teacher should abandon his traditional role. (See pie-chart 3.16)

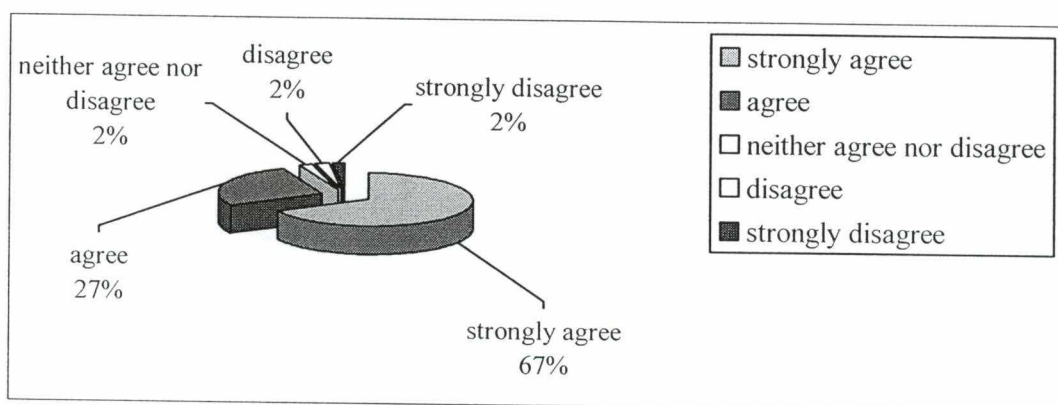


Pie-chart 3. 16: Pattern of Attitude to Teachers' assuming Modern Role

- Attitudes, beliefs and diagnostic questions about the evaluation of the speaking skill. Questions 19, 20.

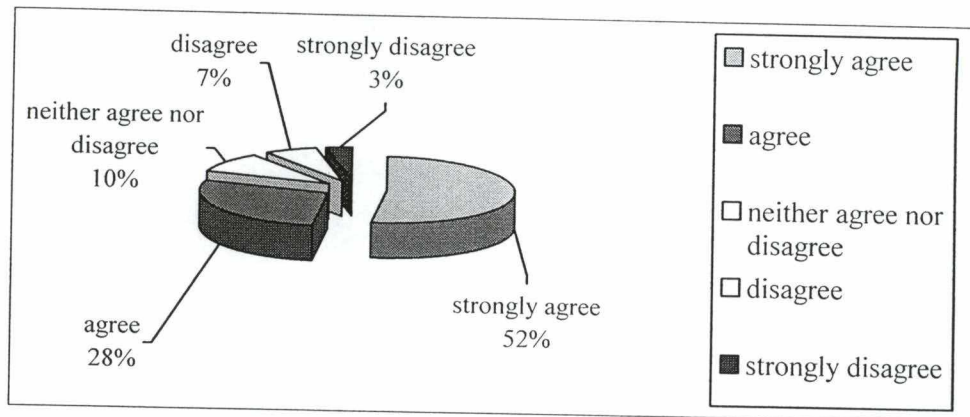
Questions 19 and 20 have tried to establish pupils' attitude to be evaluated through a modern approach on which the focus will be more on speaking skill. These questions have been posed in a scaled form. Pupils have been asked about their opinion regarding the adoption of a modern approach to their evaluation which would focus more on the speaking skill.

Question 19 (I can improve my English better if it is evaluated differently (scaled question)) has elicited the adoption of a modern approach in evaluating the pupils' speaking skill. 67% have strongly agreed and 27% have agreed for the adoption of modern approach to pupils' evaluation. (See pie-chart 3.17)



Pie-chart 3. 17: Pupils' Responses to the Adoption of a Modern Approach to their Evaluation

Question 20 (Do you think that you can improve better if you were evaluated on your speaking skill?) has elicited response from the pupils about their belief regarding the role of modern approach to pupils' evaluation in contributing to the improvement to their English proficiency. 52% strongly agrees and 29% agreed that their English language learning can improve if they are evaluated differently as compared to the present evaluation methods. (See pie-chart 3.18)



Pie-chart 3. 18: Pupils' Responses to the Adoption of the Evaluation of the Speaking Skill

3.4.2 Results Interpretation

The purpose of the pupils' questionnaire is to gather a set of data on which to base the study. The interpretation of the results is of great importance to the researcher and to the reader as well. Indeed, the analysis of the pupils' questionnaire has yielded important information about the informants involved in the current study. It has helped to draw the pupils' needs and expectations as far as EFL is concerned with reference to the speaking skill and the evaluation of the latter in EFL classrooms.

In fact, the findings of the pupils' questionnaire are presented in two parts; firstly the needs of the pupils are established. Secondly these needs are matched against the elements of the current methods of pupils' teaching and evaluations in the EFL classrooms and a new and modern approach to pupils' evaluation more conforming to the needs of the pupils. The conclusions related to the interpretations about the needs of the pupils are presented in the core areas of present and future

domains of language use, learning preferences, learning styles, classroom interaction and learning activities and role relationship.

- i. The present and future domains of language use are school curriculum and advancement in future professional life as suggested by the results presented in the pie-chart 3.1, 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4. Thus it can be inferred that the mastery of language is considered instrumental in making good progress in studies (present needs and in getting a good job in the future career future situation needs. these factors suggest that the motivation for EFL learning among these pupils is extrinsic. Harmer (1991) suggested that in the case of extrinsic motivation external factors can have an effect on learners' motivation for language learning in a negative way, and language learning environment needs to be supportive and encouraging to the learners in order to help them view language learning experience in a positive way. It will not be a miss to establish the need for an approach which is more consistent with learning needs of the learners.

As a matter of fact, 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 learning the English language, even though they are conscious of their weaknesses and are willing to study it and to improve their ability to speak it. The results seem to suggest that some pupils are studying it because it is part of the curriculum thus it is imposed on them. It is seen as a means to take up examinations, the baccalaureate exam mainly. Thus these pupils need to be encouraged and helped by the teachers and parents both inside and outside the classroom in order to change their attitude towards English from negative to positive, and this can mainly be done by creating a positive atmosphere and by increasing their motivation, therefore this may help in making EFL learning more pleasant because

the atmosphere in which the language is learnt is vitally important: the cold greyness of institutionalised education must be compensated for in some way if it is not to have a negative effect on motivation. (Harmer, 1991: 5)

And also because

learners bring preconceptions of what teaching and learning should be like . These constitute a set of learning, which when unrealized can lead to learner confusion and resentment.

(Richards and Rodgers, 2001:166)

However, the majority of the informants are well aware of the importance of the English language for their future job and career. The English language is seen as a key to the world of communication as well as for other purposes such as (EAP or ESP) and even though there is a lack of interaction and oral practice they are eager to learn this language being the international language and the language of world wide communication.

- ii. The pupils need to learn all the four skills of the language as compared to grammar and vocabulary. Speaking is more preferred as compared to the skills of listening, reading and writing (pie-chart 3.5), Greater importance to the skills of listening and speaking (pie-chart 3.6). Thus we can establish an order of learning preferences for language skills. (See figure 3.1)

The order of preferences indicates a need for developing communicative abilities of the students firstly in the areas of speaking and listening and secondly in the areas of reading and writing and finally in the areas of grammar and vocabulary.

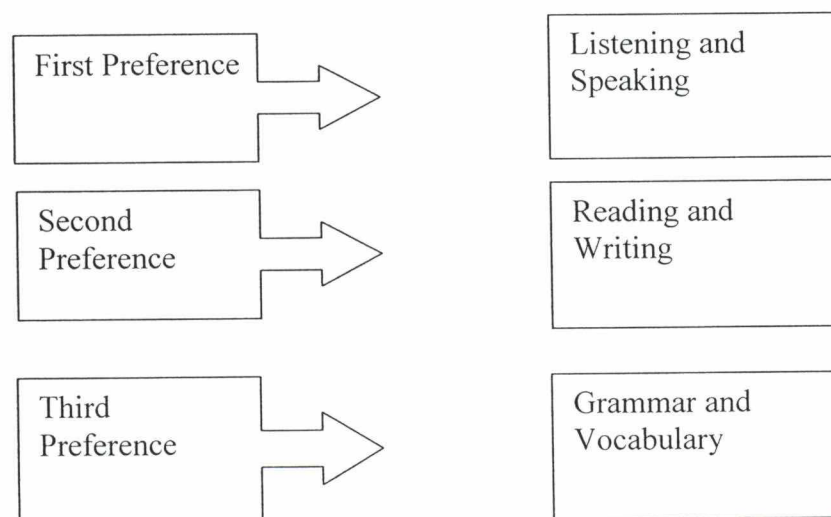


Figure 3.1: Learning Preferences for Language Skills

- iii. 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. (pie-chart 3. 12)
- iv. 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. (see pie-chart 3. 15)
- v. Pupils attach a great importance to the study of the English language. They need course material which are interesting and then can motivate them by incorporating variety in material, integrating the four skills, tasks and activities in group and pair work. It should contribute to the improvement of their language proficiency by focusing on the development of communicative ability and higher than their present level of English proficiency. The pupils believe that the present evaluation methods to their language learning is not contributing to the improvement of their oral performances as they have a favourable opinion to the suggestion of a new or modern approach to the evaluation of their learning as they have suggested that it may be helpful in improving their learning of English. (see pie-chart 3.17 and 3.18)

3.5 Teachers' Questionnaire

As noted in previously, the teachers' questionnaire (see Appendix 2) was administered to twenty Algerian secondary school teachers of English. It was designed to measure teachers' attitudes towards English education in Algeria and of course, to know more about their perception about EFL students' speaking evaluation within the current teaching approach. Although made up of a total of 11 questions, some the questions were based on a 4-point Likert scale consisted of multiple parts – see Appendix. In order to clarify the method of data analysis I shall, at this point, offer a brief explanation of the questionnaire before moving on to discuss the results in full.

In the proceeding discussion, the results of the teacher survey are examined according to the following four areas:

- Experience and current duties;
- Classroom methodology;
- Teacher attitudes and influencing factors;
- EFL pupils' speaking skill evaluation.

3.5.1 Questionnaire Analysis

The EFL teachers' questionnaire consists of eleven questions, the results of which are summed up in appendix 2. 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.

Questions 1 and 2 on the teacher questionnaire (see appendix 2) simply recorded relevant data – i.e. how long the teachers have been teaching English and which levels they are teaching now. Of the twenty teachers in the sample, some had ten or fewer years experience and others had 20 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 teaching and evaluating third year pupils.

Question 3: How important do you think it is important to test pupils' speaking ability?

With regard to the importance of the pupils' speaking evaluation, most teachers believed it was very important to evaluate the speaking skill. 18 out of 20 teachers answered positively to this question with just two teachers disagreeing. However the high central tendency recorded indicates a lack of familiarity with this type of evaluation. The teachers recognise the importance of speaking evaluation even if they lack training in this area.

Question 4: what type of activities do you use in your classroom?

This question has to deal with classroom methodology. The aim of this question was to establish if teachers promote group and pair works which may enhance the pupils to participate actively to their learning. The teachers' responses to this question refer to the preferred teaching practices of the respondents, and also

provide insight into materials teachers consider being most appropriate for Algerian learners. 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.

Question 5: Why do you think it is important for your pupils to study English?

This question aimed at having an idea about the teacher perceptions of the importance of studying English. For example, most teachers believed that it was very important for their learners to develop 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 were most important for Algerian pupils of English, the highest central tendencies were reported within the categories of speaking and listening.(see question 6)

Question 6: which of the following areas do you think are the most important for the 3rd year secondary school EFL pupils?

Indeed, when teachers were asked to state the areas which they thought were 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 in this question also recorded for writing, reading comprehension and vocabulary. Grammar is still considered to be an important part of English study but interestingly, fewer teachers strongly agreed that it should be seen as one of the most important aspects of language study. Given the nature of these responses, then, it would seem to suggest that whilst teachers recognise 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

emerge 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 using the first language.

Question 7: In Algeria, how important do you think it is for pupils to develop communicative ability in English?

Almost all the participants (sixteen out of the twenty) had positive attitudes towards the necessity of communicative or speaking ability. The informants viewed speaking evaluation as a necessary part of curriculum and the way that it will enhance pupils' motivation to perform better in the speaking skill. Speaking evaluation is necessary for the pupils. As the majority of the pupils tend to be motivated by evaluation or examinations.

On the other hand, some participant gave a different opinion to the necessity of speaking evaluation in the Algerian EFL classroom context. Some teachers wonder if speaking evaluation is needed for the pupils of English in Algerian Secondary Schools. Though they began to learn 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' responses for speaking evaluation, as they hope that speaking evaluation will be conducted when the pupils reached the 9th grade level.

Question 8: Do you evaluate the pupils' speaking skill? If yes, which types of speaking evaluation tasks do you use?

In response to the question asking if the teachers evaluate their pupils' speaking performance, the majority of them (15 out of 20) answered no. That is, speaking evaluation was 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.

To sum up, speaking evaluation is not conducted by the Algerian teachers in this study from the perspective of language use and communication. The questionnaire responses of teachers indicated that they are not trained with the types of speaking evaluation tasks and the ways they conducted speaking evaluation. For

the five remaining teachers, they perceive that "oral interview with the pupils are the best task for evaluating pupils' speaking proficiency".

Question 9: pupils speaking evaluation should be valid and reliable (scaled question)

When the researcher probed the participants' perceptions towards authenticity of speaking evaluation by asking if they assess pupils' communicative ability, nine participants mentioned that speaking evaluation did not assess pupils' authentic communicative ability. Though when using the interview format, it is sort of pupils' memory test. There is no interaction between the teacher and the pupils. Thus as evaluators, they score pupils' monolog on the basis of their preparation. For the convenience of construction and administration, most teachers prefer time-saving evaluation tasks. They are not related with assessing pupils' authentic communication ability.

On the other hand, all the participants expressed that they had little confidence in ensuring reliability (see 1.11.2) of scoring. The concept of reliability has been paid little attention by the participants. All the participants reported evaluating speaking alone. The informants mentioned that it is difficult for them to consider validity and reliability of speaking evaluation (see 1.12.3).

Question 10: What are the main constraints in conducting speaking evaluation?

This question considered all the constraint in conducting speaking evaluation in EFL classrooms. The following constraints are the major reasons why EFL teachers do not evaluate their pupils' speaking skill:

- Large classes;
- Lack of effective evaluation instruments;
- Difficulty in eliciting pupils responses;
- Difficulty in ensuring reliability;
- Pupils low English proficiency;
- Little opportunities for retaining.

Question 11: Do you think that you need special training in order to develop opportunities towards speaking evaluation?

For the question asking about teachers training in order to evaluate their pupils' speaking skill, most respondents, though, had not had such opportunities, answered positively. However they explicitly expressed their frustration. They want to learn effective and efficient method on the speaking evaluation.

Three teachers reported that they referred to research studies published in countries where English is taught as a second language (ESL). Their general perceptions were that these research studies could not meet the needs of the teachers in the Algerian EFL context. But considering the Algerian classroom situation, they still hesitate to try them. They can't ignore reality such as large classes and excessive work.

3.5.2 Results Interpretation

Teachers, as essential participants in the teaching learning process are in part responsible for their pupils' success. According to their responses, teachers are well aware of the importance of the speaking skill in EFL classrooms, however the evaluation of EFL pupils speaking or oral performance remains problematic.

The teachers are aware of the influence of evaluation on teaching and learning as it increases pupils' motivation. In fact it is an important factor in classrooms where examinations play a dominant role. However the teachers when trapped in an examination preparation they feel and know that the communicative and oral performance are luxuries they cannot afford in their classrooms.

The objectives defined by the syllabus support a communicative practice and are focused on developing all the four skills. The examination, however, is based mainly on reading and writing. There is no part or section in the examination paper to evaluate listening and speaking. Though the syllabus states the objectives of the English language to develop the ability of the pupils to communicate fluently in English in simple authentic situations, but in the examination no provision is made for evaluating these skills.

In addition to that, EFL teachers are facing many difficulties the following conclusions summarize the major constraints identified by the participants for not conducting speaking assessment to assess pupils' communicative competence in Algerian Secondary Schools.

i. Difficulties caused by the educational system

Large classes: Each class in Algerian Secondary Schools consists of 38 pupils approximately. One teaching period lasts 60 minutes. Thus, teachers have too many pupils in one class and it takes a long time for one teacher to evaluate even one part of individual speaking skill evaluation. All twenty respondents referred to large classes as one of the principal constraints on their attempts to evaluate pupils' communication ability. They find it very difficult to evaluate pupils' speaking ability with so many pupils in each class, knowing that for the majority of time teachers have more than one class. In addition to that if they consider pupils' hesitation time for appropriate responses, it will take more than just an hour to finish.

Excessive work in addition to classroom teaching is also seen by the informants as another constraint the teachers identified excessive work in addition to classroom teaching as a great obstacle to evaluate pupils' speaking ability. All the participants were overloaded. Any additional work was a burden itself for Algerian teachers.

Few opportunities for retraining the EFL teachers participants felt that there was inadequate training for teachers on conducting speaking evaluation. The lack of training in conducting speaking evaluation was initially a deterrent for Teachers to use authentic communicative speaking evaluation. 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 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 evaluation for their pupils.

ii. Difficulties caused by the pupils

Pupils' low English proficiency: All the respondents reported that one important difficulty preventing them from conducting speaking evaluation to evaluate pupils' speaking ability was their pupils' low English proficiency. Pupils have very small vocabulary and limited structures.

iii. Difficulties caused by the teachers

Difficulty of eliciting pupils' responses the participants referred to elicitation as a constraint. There are several elicitation techniques. In the case of Secondary School, teachers are using only one task for speaking evaluation if done at all. Questions are designed to ask for routine and typical answers. So it is difficult to elicit various responses.

Difficulty of ensuring reliability the respondents cited reliability in scoring as a constraint on their attempt in authentic speaking evaluation. One respondent stated that he has 38 students to be evaluated. 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.

3.6 EFL Inspectors' Interview

The third pole of this investigative study is conducted via a semi-structured interview held with two EFL inspectors from the secondary school level. In this part the EFL inspectors have been invited to assess the congruity between pupils' evaluation and the approach used in EFL classrooms. The EFL inspectors have also been invited to give invaluable guidelines that would help to reduce the problem.

Indeed if the teachers and the learners constitute two major poles in any teaching learning context, the need for a third pole has been necessary in order to increase the reliability of the research. The EFL inspectors have been asked to give their point of view as observers in the teaching /learning process.

The semi-structured interview included five open questions centred on the educational reform of 2003 as well as the congruency between the teaching method and learners' evaluation in EFL classes. The questions were as follows:

1. Do you think that EFL teachers are well informed about all this vast process of reform undertaken since 2003?
2. Is there any evolution in the different methods in evaluating learners since the educational reform of 2003?
3. Do the evaluation methods flesh out the competencies in the syllabus?
(Interacting orally in English, interpreting and producing oral messages)

4. Do you think that EFL teachers need specialized training to adjust the way they evaluate their pupils' to the new method of teaching i.e. CBA?
5. What are according to you the difficulties encountered by the teachers?

3.6.1 Data collection

The results obtained from the data collections of inspectors' responses are discussed in this section.

The first EFL inspector reported that recently the Ministry of Education has promoted curriculum reforms in order to meet the principles of a competency based approach. However, the inspector stated that EFL teachers are informed to some extent about the vast reform which has been undertaken since 2003. The inspector observed that EFL teachers use different methods of pupils' evaluation. They evaluate their pupils at different stages of the school year mainly diagnostic, summative and formative evaluation (see 1.10). They give importance to the specified objectives of the syllabus and the factual content but they are not well aware of the three competencies i.e. interaction, interpretation and production introduced in the CBA. At the same time the inspector mentioned that there is no true congruence between teaching/learning and evaluating. For the inspector the current method of pupils' 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".

Dealing with the congruency between the teaching method used in EFL classrooms and the pupils' evaluation methods whether the latter flesh out the three competencies enunciated in the syllabus, the inspector stated that the evaluation methods used by the teachers partly completed the competencies as the upper authorities often react to a feedback that is not always supported by educational reasons. In fact he stated that the authorities try to adapt according to extra curricular considerations, in this way the teachers are finding themselves riding more than a horse at a time between a mixture of approach and method components and specificities.

At the end, the inspector has been asked about the difficulties encountered by EFL teachers. The response of the inspector has shown that the teachers are facing

concrete problems dealing with over loaded syllabi and textbooks. In addition to that, he mentioned 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. As a possible remedy of the lack of congruency between teaching and evaluating methods, the respondent suggested a true training by true specialists. He stated: "the good will is there" and that the teachers often show readiness and that all what they need are adequate tools to implement all the sides of this new approach to language teaching.

The second EFL inspector maintained that though 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. The respondent attested that 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' evaluation.

The educational changes should have a significant effect on pupils' evaluation but in the long term as it was stated by the respondent. In fact, with this new approach, the learner is being trained to self evaluation progressively, hence to take more responsibility for his own learning. However, teachers should be trained as they do not perceive the reasons and the objectives of the CBA quite well. From the inspector's view the teachers should be provided by more appropriate training in order to apply them in their appropriate way. He mentioned that usually teachers are reluctant to undertake changes for their own as they feel more confident in their routine.

Dealing with the difficulties that could be encountered by the EFL teachers, the inspector focused on the lack of training. The respondent mentioned that there is a lack of documentation about the CBA, as for him 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. He also pointed out that the teachers should learn from their negative experiences and overcome the difficulties if they are motivated themselves and imaginative as reflexive teaching is good for their self development. The informant concluded by saying that EFL teachers cannot cope alone with this new approach that why they need specialized training in the new method of evaluating their learners as it requires from them new techniques.

3.6.2 Results Interpretation

Both EFL inspectors at the secondary level agree that 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 respondents, 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 programmes. Secondly, they emphasize 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 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.

3.7 Summary of the Main Results

One of the strengths of this study was its efforts at convergent validation by having three tools of research converging on the same issue, namely oral language instruction and evaluation from different points. Overall, what the researcher on oral language production showed was that although the programme claimed to have an approach to teaching which focuses more on communication, the teachers had not been completely successful in implementing this approach.

Indeed, through the analysis of the questionnaires and the interview, it is easily noticeable that several factors are, to a great extent, responsible for learners' weak speaking performance. For this reason, the researcher has based his study on a comparative analysis of both questionnaires and semi-structured interview. The obtained results seem, therefore, to confirm some points of the research hypotheses.

The results clearly show that despite the seven years of exposure to English learning, 3^oAS "sciences expérimentales" learners still find it difficult to use the target language. Even though they enjoy studying English in class, they claim that it is difficult to express themselves in English. Such learners are thought to present a poor performance in the speaking skills. Of the three language skills about which learners complain as being complex, it is easy to notice that speaking is the most difficult and thus the one which presents serious problems to learners. For their part, teachers assert that speaking remains a complex skill to evaluate in EFL classrooms and explain that it is the reason why their speaking performance is weak.

Teachers state that the constraints in the implementation of the evaluation of the speaking skill are numerous and assert that the causes behind learners' low speaking performance are numerous. On the one hand, the educational system has been mentioned as being at the origin of speaking deficiency. More than that, the educational system, the teachers as well as the learners are, indeed, highly involved in the lack of the evaluation of the speaking skill in EFL classrooms since they have a large part of responsibility; allowing insufficient time to English teaching, gathering huge numbers of learners in classes, very often under the control of

3.8 Conclusion

Chapter three has been devoted to the empirical phase of this research. The latter has examined the new approach to language teaching i.e. CBA, pupils' evaluation methods and the congruency between the two. It appears that integrating new methods in evaluating pupils' learning is not as easy as when applying the CBA to teaching. One reason for this may be that teachers lack training for language evaluation. Knowing about language and language learning is probably not enough to deal with pupils' evaluation. EFL teachers also seem to need to know how to tackle with the pupils' evaluation tasks, not just teaching tasks, as seen by the fact that some teachers are aware of the importance of the speaking skill but they are not sure how to do so. Moreover, it is also clear that there are many constraints that make the evaluation of the speaking skill very difficult in our EFL classrooms.

The data collection tools used for testing the research hypotheses have been introduced too. They consist of questionnaires for learners and teachers and semi-structured interviews for EFL inspectors. The obtained results have been exposed and discussed in this chapter. Although the questionnaire is considered as a data collection tool of a soft evidence category (McDonough, 1995), it has helped in this case for collecting relevant information on the learners. The data are analysed and some interpretations are drawn from the information collected.

On the light of what has been said, some suggestions will be outlined in the next chapter. Indeed, some speaking evaluation 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 FOUR

PERSPECTIVES FOR EFL SPEAKING SKILL EVALUATION: PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

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4.1 Introduction

One of the current issues which are of particular interest in the foreign language teaching researches is that of evaluating the learners' level in the speaking skill. This aspect of communication is a very important part of foreign language learning, as the ability to communicate in a foreign language clearly and efficiently contributes to the success of the learner in school and later in every phase of his life. Though the competency based approach (CBA) is promoted as an approach to language teaching which supports the development of learners' abilities to use language fluently and meaningfully. Teaching and evaluating speaking is undervalued and EFL teachers continue to teach speaking just as a repetition of drills or memorization of dialogues.

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). But 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 using that information. Today's world requires that the goal of teaching a foreign language is to improve pupils' speaking skill, because, only in that way, they can express themselves.

This chapter will tackle some alternative solutions or rather recommendations and suggestions concerning the teaching and evaluation of the speaking skill in EFL classrooms. Before all, and in order for teachers to introduce changes in their classrooms and yield pupils in the new way of evaluation, they have to consider that the speaking skill in the foreign language classrooms is probably the most problematic of all the skills to evaluate. However, the fundamental objective would to make EFL pupils improve their communicative abilities in English as the focus of foreign language education is communication, and the oral language is central for language learners at all levels.

4.2 Evaluation of Learning

Under the new educational approach introduced in our curricula since 2003, the government has launched a series of educational reforms with the aim of developing the Algerian nation into a knowledge-based society, which is a prerequisite for becoming a knowledge-based economy. One of these reforms focuses on the nature of the learning process occurring in all subject areas at all levels of education, and is considered to be the heart of all the changes being implemented.

However, it is less known about the evaluation practices employed by teachers. Evaluation happens every day in classrooms; whereas as a formal examination or an informal one (see 1.8). It is inextricably tied to the teaching process, and is always determined by the particular needs of pupils. Evaluation clarifies achievement of a language programme's goals and objectives as well as its effectiveness. Additionally,

evaluation may be concerned with how teachers, learners, and materials interact in classrooms, and how teachers and learners perceive the program's goals, materials, and learning experiences.

(Richards and Rodgers, 1986:158)

Evaluation is designed to give teachers information to modify and differentiate teaching and learning activities. Evaluation requires careful design on the part of the teachers so that they use the resulting information to determine not only what pupils know, but also to gain insights into how and when pupils apply what they know. On the other hand, teachers can also use the information gathered to target teaching and to provide feedback to pupils to help them advance their learning.

Teachers devote a large part of their preparation time creating instruments and observation procedures, marking, recording, and synthesizing results in informal and formal reports in their daily teaching. This section will take an overall look at EFL secondary pupils' evaluation as this plays a central and important role in the teaching / learning process.

The national educational reform focuses on the role of the pupils as the critical connector between evaluation and learning. When pupils are motivated, engaged, they make sense of information, relate it to prior knowledge, and use it for new learning. This occurs when pupils monitor their own learning and use feedback to make adjustments, adaptations, and even major changes in what they understand.

4.2.1 Evaluation in EFL Classrooms

EFL teaching, which is covered by the 2003 national educational reform, is becoming increasingly important in all aspects of Algerian life for social, economic as well as global communication. Nonetheless, evaluation in EFL classrooms continues to be a challenging endeavour in the Algerian educational context. EFL courses in the Algerian setting are often treated with great circumspection: Pupils tend to think of them as boring or unproductive. Evaluation, on the other hand, can cause an even greater challenge. However, without evaluation in these courses it is extremely difficult to gauge where our pupils are upon entering a new year, i.e. diagnostic evaluation, determines where they belong in the year, and how they are progressing with their studies.

Evaluation of speaking is an important part in EFL classrooms, and encompasses the whole language learning process. However, before looking at how evaluation affects courses, a definition of what the term evaluation incorporates is warranted. In fact, evaluation in EFL has many uses and forms. The majority of examinations are used to make decisions: decisions that affect our pupils' present and future.

Therefore, examinations in an EFL course must be done in a manner that will facilitate learning at all levels and ensures that our pupils gain the most from the examinations given. It is stated that:

Examinations are generally known to be given in order to make decisions about individuals in relation to their position in education and society

(Gorsuch, 1997: 21)

Since these decisions are so important, EFL teachers must ensure that evaluations are used appropriately. The problem with this is that pupils are not being evaluated on what they are actually being taught in the classroom following the objectives of the new approach to language teaching (see 2.2.1); and evaluation needs to mirror this reality. A look at the background of evaluation and how it can play a major role in language teaching reveals the nature of teaching/ learning process in EFL classrooms.

The Oral language skills i.e. listening and speaking are often neglected in the curriculum as well as in the examinations if not forgotten. Whereas standards for written English are generally agreed on, the goals of oral language skill teaching and evaluation are often unclear. First of all, EFL teachers need to define outcomes (oral proficiency goals) according to the needs of particular EFL pupils. Teachers need to establish valid, effective means of evaluating whether pupils have mastered the appropriate outcomes at the level required for their purposes.

If examinations are to be effective in classroom use, it is important for EFL teachers to establish goals, that is, defining its objectives. These goals should be determined by the government policies, teachers and administration involved in the evaluation process. For example, if the goal of EFL courses for 3AS-SE pupils is to enable them to acquire competences in the four skills as determined by the curriculum, then any examination given should reflect this goal. Examination that does not reflect the pre-set goals of a course is unnecessary.

4.2.2 Effects of Classroom Evaluation

Researches in the past few decades have fundamentally transformed what is known about learning. In order for teachers to use evaluation to enhance learning, they need an understanding of how pupils learn and then what could affect their learning. Then, for a better understanding of classroom evaluation, EFL teachers need to look at the effects which could have these examinations on learning and motivation as well.



4.2.2.1 Effects of Classroom Evaluation on Learning

There is considerable evidence that examination is a powerful process for enhancing learning. Black and William (1998) synthesized over 250 studies linking evaluation and learning, and found that the intentional use of examinations in the classroom to promote learning improved learners achievement. Increasing the amount of time on examination, however, does not necessarily enhance learning. Rather, when teachers use classroom evaluation to become aware of the knowledge, skills, and beliefs that their learners bring to a learning task, they can use this knowledge as a starting point for new instruction, and monitor pupils' changing perceptions as instruction proceeds, classroom examination promotes learning.

During the teaching /learning process, teachers and pupils collaborate together and use ongoing evaluation i.e. formative evaluation (see 1.10.2) to move learning forward. Indeed, when classroom evaluation is frequent and varied, teachers can learn a great deal about their pupils. Thus, the teachers can gain an understanding of pupils' knowledge, and can identify incomplete understandings or sometimes false interpretations that may influence or distort learning. Teachers can observe and investigate pupils' progress, and can identify links between prior knowledge and new learning.

On the other hand, Learning is also improved when pupils are encouraged to think about their own learning, and to apply what they have learned to their future learning. When pupils and teachers alike become comfortable with a continuous cycle of feedback and adjustment, learning becomes more efficient and pupils begin to internalize the process of standing outside their own learning then considering it not just as the teacher's judgement about quality or accuracy (Lambert *et al*, 1998).

When learners engage in this ongoing experience of learning, they are able to control their learning, make corrections, and develop a habit of mind for continually reviewing and challenging what they know. Then they are able to move along a continuum from emergent to proficient. As it is demonstrated on table (4.1.):

Stages in Growth from Emergent to Proficient				
Emergent		→ Proficient		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pupils have little or no practical experience. ▪ They are dependent on rules and imitate the teacher to be proficient. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pupils still rely on rules. Expect definitive answers. ▪ Some recognition of patterns. Limited experience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pupils have internalized the key dimensions so that they are automatic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pupils see the whole rather than aspects. Look for links and patterns. Adjust to adapt to the context. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pupils are able to understand the context. Have a holistic grasp of relationships. Consider alternatives and independently integrates ideas into efficient solutions. ▪ Makes ongoing adaptations automatically.

(Adapted from Lambert *et al*, 1998)

Table 4.1 Stages in Growth from Emergent to Proficient

On that account, learners at the emergent stage are generally uncertain, and rely heavily on the teacher, and whatever rules to give them direction about how to proceed. As learners become more competent, they develop more complex schemata of understanding, gain in confidence and independence, and become efficient in problem-solving within new contexts. They are able to apply the new learning independently and direct their own learning.

When teachers understand this emergent-to-proficient process as it relates to curriculum outcomes, they can use examination as tool for helping pupils understand and value their own learning and predict what comes next. The ongoing cycle of evaluation and feedback can guide the pupils and build their learning as they move along the learning continuum.

4.2.2.2 Effects of Classroom Evaluation on Motivation

Motivation is essential for the hard work of learning. The higher the motivation, the more time and energy a learner is willing to devote to any given task. Even when a learner finds the content interesting and the activity enjoyable, learning requires sustained concentration and effort. Past views of motivation were heavily influenced by the behaviourist psychology of the 1960s and 1970s, in which a schedule of rewards and punishments led to either reinforcing or extinguishing a particular behaviour. In fact, it was believed that examination and grading motivated learners to work hard and to learn. However, it is now understood that the relationship between grades and motivation is neither simple nor predictable. Grades have been found to be motivating for some learners, and de-motivating for others.

According to current cognitive research, people are motivated to learn by success and competence. Pupils who generally do well are often motivated by the likelihood of success that accompanies doing well. Pupils who typically do not do well may choose to avoid the likelihood of a failure. Thus evaluation can be a motivator, not through reward and punishment, but by stimulating their interest. Evaluation can enhance learners' motivation by

- emphasizing progress and achievement rather than failure;
- providing feedback to move learning forward;
- reinforcing the idea that learners have control over, and responsibility for, their own learning;
- building confidence in learners so they can and need to take risks;
- being relevant, and appealing to learners' imaginations;
- providing the scaffolding that learners need to genuinely succeed.

(Brophy, 1987: 42)

4.2.3 Outcomes in Teaching and Evaluation

What characterizes a competency-based approach is the focus on the outcomes of learning as the driving force of teaching and the curriculum. Then: **“it is extremely important to clarify from the beginning the aims and objectives of**

the evaluation.” (Nunan, 1992:197) One can define outcomes as goals which describe what pupils are expected to do at the end of an organized programme of instruction. A logical step in discussing evaluation is to examine the role of outcomes in the teaching-learning process. It is said that:

Teachers use certain indicators which tell them whether what they teach is effective... In the language class we intuitively assess from our students' reactions the extent to which the strategies we employ are successful and the objectives we have set ourselves are being met.

(Stern, 1992: 37)

Stern stated that outcomes guide teaching, learning and evaluation. Then if outcomes are to guide learning, pupils must be aware of them. In fact, outcomes should specify what pupils will be able to do following teaching, and they should be in a form that is understandable by the pupils.

With the CBA, education is concerned with much more than pupils recall of knowledge. Auer Bach identifies eight features involved in the implementation of CBA programmes in language teaching:

1. A focus on successful functioning in society. The goal is to enable learners to become autonomous individuals capable of coping with the demands of the world.
2. A focus on life skills. Rather than teaching language in isolation, CBA teaches language as a function of communication about concrete tasks. Learners are taught just those language forms/ skills required by the situations in which they will function.
3. Task or performance-oriented instruction. What counts is what learners can do as a result of instruction. The emphasis is on overt behaviours rather than on knowledge.
4. Objectives are broken into narrowly focused sub-objectives so that both teachers and learners can get a clear sense of progress.
5. Outcomes are made explicit. Outcomes are public knowledge, known and agreed upon by both learner and teacher. They are specified in terms of behavioural objectives so that learners know what behaviours are expected of them.

6. Continuous and ongoing assessment. Learners are pre-tested to determine what skills they lack and post-tested after instruction on that skill. If they do not achieve the desired level of mastery, they continue to work on the objective and are retested.

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

8. Individualized, learners -centred instruction. In content, level, and pace, objectives are defined in terms of individual needs; prior learning and achievement are taken into account in developing curricula. Instruction is not time-based; learners progress at their own rates and concentrate on just those areas in which they lack competence.

Auerbach (1986: 480)

There are two things to note about the CBA. First, it seeks to build more accountability into education by describing what a course of instruction seeks to accomplish. Secondly it shifts attention away from methodology or classroom processes, to learning outcomes. In a sense one can say that with this approach it doesn't matter what methodology is employed as long as it delivers the learning outcomes.

4.2.4 Using Classroom Evaluation for Differentiating Learning

It is sometimes felt that unless teachers evaluate all the pupils in a classroom in the same manner, an element of unfairness enters into the evaluation. However, pupils have different styles and rates of learning. They must be given opportunities to demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways. Each pupil is unique. Each pupil has strengths, abilities, and areas of needs. Recognition of these strengths and needs, as well as knowledge of individual learning styles, should be the basis for adaptation of evaluation procedures. Then teachers can adjust teaching, evaluation, and learning to accommodate all pupils. In fact examination tasks can be designed to allow pupils to demonstrate their accomplishment of learning outcomes through visual, and oral modes, as well as through writing.

Classes consist of pupils with different needs, backgrounds, and skills. Each pupil's learning is unique. The contexts of classrooms, schools, and communities vary. The new educational reform of 2003 requires that teachers find ways to create a wide range of learning options, so that all pupils have the opportunity to learn as much as they can, as deeply as they can, and as efficiently as they can.

In the past, the class was typically regarded as a homogeneous unit, and any pupil for whom the lesson did not go well was considered as an exception. Then "gifted" or "learning disability" pupils were seen as "different" from the rest of the class, and the rest of the class was seen as a single entity. However, differences exist among all pupils, not just those with such labels. It is individuals, not classes, who learn.

EFL teachers should keep in mind that when a pupil learns, he makes meaning for him, and he approaches learning tasks in different ways, bringing with him, his own understanding, skills, beliefs, hopes, desires, and intentions. Then, it is important to consider each individual pupil's learning, rather than talk about the learning of "the class."

Teachers need to differentiate the extent of independence with which pupils work, and the types and complexity of the learning. Curriculum guides and programmes of study provide the learning outcomes that teachers use to tailor examinations and teaching to help pupils learn and make sense of their learning. In the process of evaluating pupil, evaluation methods should not negatively affect a pupil's ability to demonstrate achievement of outcomes. If teachers want to find out what pupils know or can do, it is essential to ensure that the evaluation method itself does not impede the evaluation process.

The basic tenet of this section is that evaluation procedures should provide for individual differences among pupils. It follows, therefore, that evaluation procedures should be based on the stated outcomes but adapted according to the needs of the pupils.

Consideration should be given to not deducting marks for mistakes in spelling, grammar or handwriting unless these elements are being directly evaluated. The intent of the evaluation is not to give pupils an advantage but to

allow them to demonstrate what they know. There is an obligation on teachers to focus on the individual needs of a pupil, and to use sources of evaluation data that can be used to determine clearly the extent to which outcomes of a course have been achieved.

In the evaluation process, the teacher is trying to determine if pupils have achieved established outcomes. Different sources of evaluation data should be used whenever pupils' needs interfere with their ability to complete a particular evaluation task. Adjustments to evaluation must be specifically chosen to address the identified needs.

In addition to a set of skills, education should result in the development of a sense of personal dignity and worth in every pupil. In the process of evaluating pupils, the evaluation data used, should not negatively affect ability to demonstrate achievement of outcomes. Outcomes may have to be evaluated differently for some pupils if they are to demonstrate their level of achievement accurately. A pupil may be unable to demonstrate acquired knowledge because of some special need. However, this does not always indicate a lack of learning or understanding.

Keeping in mind that different mode of evaluation may produce a different result. There is an obligation to focus on the individual needs of a pupil and to employ evaluation methods that clearly determine the extent to which the outcomes of a course have been achieved. Each pupil is unique. Then, the teachers should provide for individual differences among pupils. Specified outcomes and sources of evaluation data may have to be adapted to meet the needs of the pupils. Where adaptations are made, pupils should be informed in a timely, sensitive and meaningful fashion.

4.3 Necessity for Improvement

The era of globalization which started in the last part of the 20th century calls for the necessity of acquiring English as a tool of worldwide communication. As English becomes a lingua franca across many different disciplines of study and research, we need to examine the extent to which the English which we teach in our schools meets the communicative needs at the international level.

In the 21st century, the information age has replaced the industrial one. Technology, with the efficiency of wireless communication, such as discussion groups has led the English language to become the language of worldwide communication. On the other extreme, the scientific growth of the new century in different areas and the use of technology such as the internet to spread information (mostly in English) the status of English in the educational systems and settings is an important one. Algeria, as the rest of the world is fully aware of the importance of English as the language which dominate communication and development.

English is acknowledged as a world language. Then learning English will benefit the Algerian pupils 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. Therefore, it is of necessity for Algeria to introduce significant modifications in the school curriculum. The table (4.2) 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 with all development and improvement.

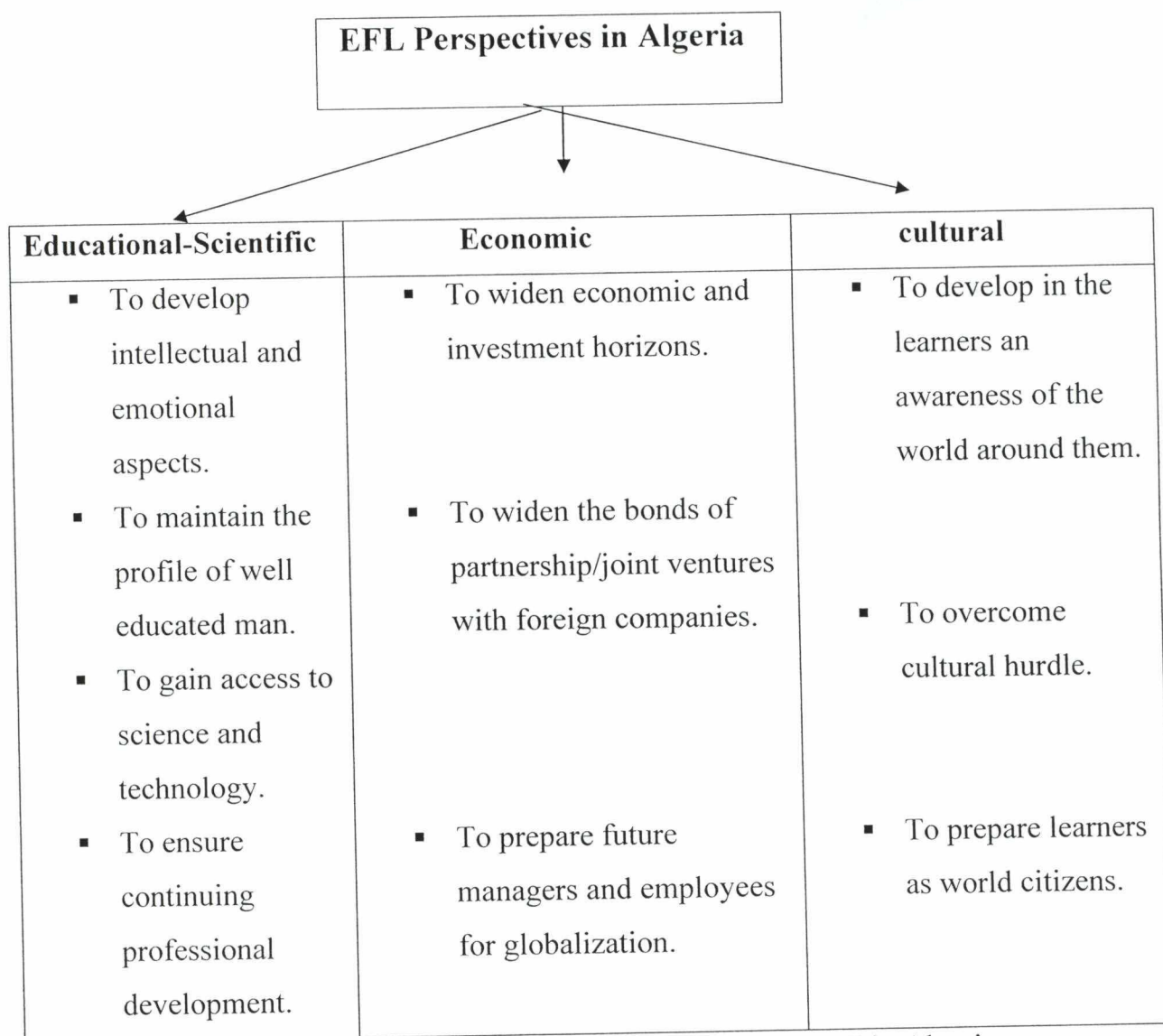


Table 4.2 Mid and Long Term Objectives of ELT in Algeria

(Adopted from Benmoussat, 2003: 253)

The learning of English as a foreign language (EFL) in Algeria is acquiring popularity and importance as Algeria opens its doors economically and culturally to the world at large. This argues that traditional Algerian teaching methods requiring passive learning are not sufficient to meet this demand, and that encouraging greater learner autonomy greatly assists pupils to learn efficiently and effectively. For such an aim some relevant parameters ought to be defined: the rationale behind the CBA in language learning, the changes in classroom evaluation, the new teacher roles, the current understandings of learner autonomy and the implications of teaching for

learning autonomy within recent modifications at the national and international levels.

4.3.1 The Rationale behind the CBA in Language Learning

Changes and shifts in language teaching have been present throughout the history of this discipline. At this apparently unending uncertainty about the efficiency of methods there is also a permanent search and striving to find better ways of teaching and learning languages, which implies certain dissatisfaction with ongoing methods and procedures.

In the second half of the 20th century those changes in methodology were more frequent and pressing for teachers and learners. Learning a new language is substantially different from what it used to be in the past: we have more need to communicate orally and we cannot wait for years before we engage in real communication. Hence the search for new and more efficient methods is a consequence of our social organization and the requirements for fluid communication.

Sanchez outlined two main trends in language teaching methodology: the ‘grammatical’ and the ‘conversational’ approach.

Both approaches have been permanently in tension with each other and are representative of a dichotomy that seems to reappear again and again in different ways: written vs. oral language; learning grammar vs. learning how to speak.

(Sanchez, 1992: 25)

In the last part of the 20th century the dichotomy which focuses on form vs. content, teaching and learning language for accuracy vs. fluency is at the root of a problem that has never been fully solved. Emphasis on one or the other tends to be cyclical, so that if form, structure and accuracy prevailed in the sixties and seventies, meaning and communicative potential gained momentum in the eighties and afterwards; The CBA must be placed within this context of communicative needs.

The competency based approach does not represent a complete change from the communicative approach. The most important responsibility of the teachers was to create the conditions for the learners to engage in meaningful situations. Indeed, emphasis on meaning and authenticity of communication appeal to many teachers and learners of languages. After all, we use language for transmitting messages, which is content, and association of meaning and language is perceived as close to reality, even if the transmission of meaning cannot be separated from the vehicle through which it is conveyed.

The methodology used in the CBA is task based. The skills appear in the syllabus in the form of meaningful tasks, engaging the learner in authentic language use. Thus, the principle of the preceding methods and approaches in language teaching and learning which were taken for granted:

what is taught = what is (or ought to be) learnt cannot be accepted any more, since it comes from outside (syllabus) or is imposed on the learner (by the teacher)

(Prabhu, 1984: 273).

Under those circumstances, one can say that it is a job that only the learner can do; he must be invited to collaborate in this purpose of learning, assuming this goal by himself. Indeed, through the communicative approach it is shown that even if the learner has reached a certain mastery of the language, his performance in practice remains at a low level. That is why dispensing knowledge is not enough any more, the pupils should be helped to play an active role in his learning.

4.3.2 Changes in Classroom Evaluation

As our life is changing, teachers find themselves faced with the task of creating syllabi that would serve their pupils well, even if they are uncertain about the nature of the life that their pupils will face in the future. During the past 50 years, massive cultural, social, economic, political, environmental, and technological changes have meant that every facet of schooling has been subjected to investigation and rethinking, including classroom evaluation.

- Researchers have traditionally relied on evaluation that compares pupils with more successful peers as a means to motivate pupils to learn, but recent research suggests pupils will likely be motivated when they experience progress rather than the failure and defeat associated with being compared to more successful pupils.

(Syllabuses for English, 2004)

These three changes in knowledge about learning have strong implications on how teachers ought to teach, what they ought to teach, and especially how they ought to apply classroom evaluation practices. In order to fulfil these purposes, teachers should extend their evaluation practices and began evaluating a wider range of pupil work, such as practical tasks, coursework, projects, and presentations. For the most part, however, evaluation is still a matter of making statements about pupils' weaknesses and strengths. More recently, the focus in educational policy has been on preparing all pupils for tomorrow's world. At the same time, the expectations for pupils have increased in breadth and depth, dramatically affecting teachers' instructional and assessment roles, and pupils' roles as learners.

4.3.3 Evolution of the Evaluation of Learning

Evaluating pupils is perhaps the most emotionally sensitive part of our education but at the same time is intellectually demanding and can be socially disturbing and divisive for the pupils. It is easy for pupils to feel that it is not only their learning that is being assessed, but their developing identity as persons. Associations with right and wrong can trigger the associations with good and bad and create fear and loss of confidence.

Pupils need to feel that they have been given the best opportunity to express their ability in their discipline, but also to convey something of themselves on what the subject means to them. Without this it becomes more closely associated with a system of control. For these reasons is it particularly important to match the whole experience of evaluation with what the programme is trying to achieve.

Pupils often derive more understanding of a course from the demands of its evaluations than from teachers and ELT text-books. If we want pupils to be clearer about what their courses are meant to achieve, better descriptions and detailed objectives will not be enough. They need to understand the real demands of the evaluation, as Hounsell suggests:

Students often approach their exams with assumptions and conceptions of the criteria used to judge their work that are very different from those of their teachers. They interpret the written criteria and feedback comments in a way that fits their assumptions rather than the teachers' intentions.

(Hounsell, 1997: 238)

Thus, helping the pupils to develop a deeper understanding of the course by looking at the demands of the examinations is challenging and involves a gradual development of skills that require practice.

The traditional evaluation of a course is summative in nature. As such, it gives no help to the pupil in his learning process. The results of tests are not used in a positive way to help the pupils know where their areas of weakness lie and to point towards where they should concentrate their energies in the future. In fact, summative evaluation (see 1.10.3) may be detrimental to learning. Formative evaluation is different (see 1.10.2). The results of the evaluation will affect the curriculum. If all pupils or most of them fail to achieve a reasonable result in a test then this should be an indication to the teacher that something is amiss. Either both pupils and the teacher have failed to achieve an effective learning environment or methodology or the test is testing pupils on something they haven't learnt. The results should be discussed and should help to convince both the pupils and the teacher that certain measures must be taken in the future to remedy the situation. Evaluation should be a tool that helps both learners and teacher and not something that threatens and judges them. Learners should be trained to evaluate themselves to help themselves see their progress in realistic terms and to show themselves where they need improvement.

Pupils often express a desire to communicate in authentic language, meaning they want to hear and use language outside of the language classroom. It is probably the case for most teachers that their pupils want to be able to use English outside the classroom. They may want to order food in a restaurant, send an e-mail message to a friend or acquaintance, make travel reservations, listen to music, or read a written note from an English-speaking person. As EFL teachers, we can often motivate our pupils by including activities in our classrooms that have real world applications. Indeed this type of focus often helps us convince the pupils that they are making progress in trying to become proficient in their new language, even though they may still be making numerous errors in pronunciation, grammar, or vocabulary usage. One of the interesting challenges for many language teachers is that there is a real gap between the classroom activities and the real world where pupils have to use the language, although that has changed a lot with the educational reform of 2003. However, the dilemma remains on how to evaluate the pupils and how to remain congruent with the teaching method. In other words how to evaluate our pupils' progress in terms of their functional ability in using English as a foreign language.

4.3.4 The New Orientation of Evaluation

Evaluation in the past typically was basically knowledge-based examinations. While knowledge-based examinations can certainly be used in CBA to measure mastery of information, the primary focus is on measuring mastery of skills. In keeping with this, Thomson (1991: 12) reports that: **“the decision to recognize a performance as satisfactory and to determine competence should be the basis for success of a competency-based program.”** Moreover, Foyster (1990: 50) argues that: **“assessment in competency-based programs must be criterion-referenced with the criterion being the competencies upon which the program is based.”**

Furthermore, traditional classroom practices, especially evaluating practices, have created environments in which pupils may not be motivated to take risks, to try hard, or to demonstrate their intellectual competence. According to motivational

researchers, learners who believe that academic achievement is determined by fixed ability are more likely to work toward performance goals, that is, for grades, to please the teacher, the parents and to appear competent. Lave and Wenger (1991: 45) harshly stated that such type of learning is **“a pervasive feature of school settings, where the exchange value of learning outcomes is emphasized over the use value of learning.”** According to this: **“performance-oriented students tend to pick easy tasks and are less likely to persist once they encounter difficulty.”** (Stipek, 1996: 80). Pupils who attribute academic success to their own efforts are more likely to adopt learning goals which means they are motivated by an increasing sense of mastery and by the desire to become competent. Thus, pupils with a learning objectives are more engaged in school work, use more self-assessment, and develop deeper understanding of subject matters.

4.3.5 Evaluation Issues in the CBA

It is important that foreign language teaching and EFL teachers must link evaluation in deliberate ways to teaching. It has been argued that there are many different ways that this goal can be accomplished in the field of language education. While language evaluation has traditionally focused on sampling what pupils know which can be contrasted with usage, which is the grammatical explanation of some language (e.g. the rules of grammar or vocabulary in the language classroom), contemporary language teaching practice advocates examining what pupils can do with the language which can be demonstrated with the use of the language in communication, or the function of language, and less on what they know. Thus it is of a major concern that language teachers need to start where they are with this topic of connecting teaching and testing, but not stay there.

In fact, concerns about evaluating EFL pupils' learning ability are among the issues in the EFL teaching learning process. Traditional testing techniques, e.g. multiple-choice, fill-in-the-gaps, matching, etc., are often incongruent with current foreign language classroom practices.

As Genesee and Hamayan stress

examinations can be useful for collecting information about student achievement under certain restricted conditions, but they are not particularly useful for collecting information about students' attitudes, motivation, interests, and learning strategies".

(Genesee and Hamayan, 1994: 229)

Evaluation serves a number of purposes: guiding instruction, gaining information useful for more effective teaching, providing information on the quality of teaching and more. In order to provide cues to help teachers improve teaching and classroom practices, the overwhelming majority of examinations should be sensitive to the teaching approach. Therefore, teachers should use the results of these examinations to revise their practices to help pupils improve their performances. Examinations are essential to measure the performance of all the pupils. Without some form of evaluation, schools and teachers would have no way of determining the progress of their pupils to ensure that they do not fall too far behind. For such an aim and in order to introduce change effectively we should take into account the new learner and teacher roles and needs within recent modifications at the secondary level. (See 4.4)

4.4 Learner Centeredness in EFL Classrooms

The reform of the teaching-learning of English in Algeria follows the trend in contemporary English language teaching pedagogies which have focused on developing learners' communicative abilities and on promoting learning strategies and learner autonomy in language classrooms.

During the 1980s the impact of learner-centeredness on language teaching was evident with the development of communicative approaches which shifted the attention of the teaching-learning processes from language form to language function, or to language use. This change in the approach to language teaching from traditional teacher-centred to more learner centred, which as Nunan (1988: 179) noted, is "**an offspring of communicative language learning**" requires learners to

participate and negotiate actively in meaningful interaction in order to interpret and construct meaning by themselves .

The learner-centred approach is based on the idea that learners can learn better when they are aware of their own goals. Thus:

this model for language curriculum development shifts from what should be done in a course of study to what is specifically done by language teachers in their classes, through negotiation between teachers and learners in the planning, implementation and evaluation of language courses.

(Idem)

Pupils' needs and learning styles are analysed and used for selecting course content and teaching methodologies.

On the other hand, evaluation is an on going process in every stage of teaching and learning. Self-evaluation by each pupil is regarded as important as evaluation by teachers. Two key components of the learner-centred classroom are first, placing more responsibility in the hands of the pupils to manage their own learning, and second, teachers taking roles as facilitators of knowledge to help learners learn how to learn rather than being the source of knowledge as was traditionally the case. Teachers can foster learner autonomy by creating and maintaining a learning environment through speaking tasks through which pupils can develop their language and learning skills to become autonomous learners. However, it is unrealistic to assume that all learners will be able to make their own choices about their learning process. Thus, negotiations between teachers and learners are important, but a continuum in which levels and degrees of negotiation vary depending on the characteristics of the learners. In such a situation, teachers have to be familiar with a wide range of teaching methodologies, learning materials, study options, and be flexible and adaptable while programmes need to be rich to develop a successful learner-centred curriculum that caters for a wide range of pupils' needs.

While teachers may be a central element in changes, context is also very important, not all innovations can be easily applied in every context, and the

application of CBA is still controversial in EFL, especially in Algerian contexts. In the Algerian context, if the approach is to be successful, there is an urgent need to investigate the English proficiency of teachers and their capacity to develop learner autonomy through a learner-centred CBA approach. This is particularly true for Algerian contexts where training and resources are likely to be fewer. Teachers need to be given a chance to reflect on how they perceive the system should work and how they implement the learner centred approach. This reform is unlikely to be successfully undertaken without listening to the teachers' voices and responding to their concerns.

4.4.1 Teachers' Roles

The role of an EFL teacher at a 3rd 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 over crowded 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 (see appendix 6), mixed abilities and low motivational drives.

In addition to that 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.

It is usually maintained that there is no fixed formula for good teaching. The teacher is a classroom manager; he is in charge of organizing activities in the classroom which will allow pupils to experiment with different learning styles and to try different tasks with the language they have acquired. The teacher is an overall organizer supplying his pupils with materials and methodological procedures. He needs to be a facilitator. 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 supporter; he sets the experiment in motion. The teacher sets up learning conditions and allows the pupils to discover knowledge for themselves. Whilst the teacher is knowledgeable about the subject that is being taught, the teacher is still learning about the subject as well. With language there is no arrival point. The teacher still makes mistakes in English. 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 pupils 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. The teacher should be a P.L.E.F.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:

- Planner, i.e. he sees planning and structuring of learning activities as fundamental to success in teaching and learning.
- Linguistic model, i.e. the teacher is seen as a model to be followed. He should maintain the quality of correct language use in the classroom.
- Evaluator, i.e. the teacher knows what types of evaluation he should use to examine his learners.
- Facilitator, i.e. the teacher should help his learners to discover their own ways of learning.
- Team member, 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.
- Educator, i.e. the teacher serves as a model suitable for imitation.
- Researcher, i.e. the teacher should keep up with the latest development dealing with language teaching and learning.

4.4.2 Learner's Needs

In the domain of EFL, emphasis has mostly been on what and how to teach. Very little attention has been given to the learner (i.e. how he learns). Our

educational systems are based on the assumption that what is taught is what is learnt. 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 thinks of the syllabi and the learning materials. In other word, the learning methods we impose on him; how he views his role and that of his teacher.

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?

In the CBA, the teachers should take account of the learner's attitude towards learning and their perception of learning. **“Student’ 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”** (idem). This would entail less teacher talk and more opportunity for the learner.

This "responsibility sharing" would also mean less rigidity in the implementation of the syllabus contents and in the process of learning/ teaching. The teaching/ learning exchange the teachers advocate aims at

- (i) Raising the learner's awareness towards his role and responsibility in the classroom and the learning process itself;
- (ii) Making him view the act of learning as more important than teaching.

(Stevick, 1982)

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. In a work entitled **“The Prophet”** by Khalil Gibran he stated that **“if the teacher is indeed wise, he does not did you enter the house of his wisdom but rather leads you to the threshold of your own mind”** (Gibrane, 1991: 76 in Harmer 2001: 56) 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 pupils' needs of tomorrow.

4.4.3 Learner Autonomy

Over the last 20 years, autonomy in language learning has been a topic of widespread discussion. Just as 'communicative' which was the buzzwords of the 1980s, learner autonomy is fast becoming of the strategy of choice in EFL teaching in this new century. Great progress has been made in the exploration and implementation of the concept of autonomy. However, much less concern has been shown and "little formal academic discussion about learner autonomy".

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: 85)

The point is emphasized by Littlewood who argues:

Students' willingness to act independently depends on the level of their motivation and confidence... on the level of their knowledge and skills".

(Littlewood, 1996: 230)

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 pupils 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.

There is broad agreement on the theoretical literature that learner autonomy grows from the individual learner's acceptance of responsibility for his own learning (Holec, 1981; Little, 1991). The term *autonomy* has come to be used in at least five ways (Benson & Voller, 1997):

- *Situations* in which learners study entirely on their own;
- A set of *skills* which can be learned and applied in self-directed learning;
- An inborn *capacity* which is suppressed by institutional education;
- The exercise of *learners' responsibility* for their own learning;
- The *right* of learners to determine the direction of their own learning.

(Adapted from Benson & Voller 1997)

4.5 The Speaking Skill Evaluation

Aspects of teaching and evaluation practices are generally considered in curriculum development. With the current trend towards making communication the focus of a curriculum in EFL classrooms, there should be a certain congruence of 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 learning the elements of the system first. Pupils do not learn best by memorizing vocabulary items in isolation and by producing limited simple sentences. Pupils who learn grammar well and do well on grammar tests may be unable to understand the target language outside the classroom.

It is interesting to mention that to acquire a language effectively, pupils at all levels should be evaluated for their speaking ability. The evaluation should expect that pupils respond to and ask questions, and develop ideas. 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.

4.5.1 Teachers' Perceptions of the Speaking Skill Evaluation

It is generally perceived that the speaking skill evaluation is difficult and it is a perplexing problem for many language teachers. In fact, the main obstacles that the Algerian teachers face are a lack of effective and efficient evaluation instruments. Accordingly, it could be difficult for the teachers to evaluate their pupils' speaking ability as there are no prescribed, ready-made evaluation tools for the speaking skill. Algerian teachers also found it difficult to balance content and language when scoring an oral exam. Even if some obstacles had little to do with pedagogical issues, but included large classes and a lack of time to conduct speaking assessments.

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 (see 1.11). 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. This part focuses on the rationale and validity of using speaking skill evaluation and shows the practical constraints in conducting such evaluation. Speaking skill 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.

4.5.2 Management of the Speaking Skill Evaluation in EFL Classrooms

The speaking skill 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. Since Canale and Swain presented their model of communicative competence in 1980 in which they distinguished four competence areas:

- i. *Grammatical competence* includes knowledge of phonology, orthography, vocabulary, word formation and sentence formation.
- ii. *Sociolinguistic competence* includes knowledge of socio-cultural rules of use. It is concerned with the learners' ability to handle for example settings, topic and communicative functions in different sociolinguistic contexts. In addition, it deals with the use of appropriate grammatical forms for different communicative functions in different sociolinguistic contexts.
- iii. *Discourse competence* is related to the learners' mastery of understanding and producing texts in the modes of listening, speaking, reading and writing. It deals with cohesion and coherence in different types of text.
- iv. *Strategic competence* refers to compensatory strategies in case of grammatical or sociolinguistic or discourse difficulties, such as the use of reference sources grammatical and lexical paraphrase, requests for repetition, clarification, slower speech or problems in addressing strangers when unsure of their social status or in finding the right cohesion devices. It is also concerned with such performance factors as coping with the nuisance of background noise or using gap fillers.

(Canale and Swain, 1980: 27)

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 pupils if he would like to evaluate his pupils' speaking skill 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 pupils to perform the assigned speaking task, and they need to ensure that pupils 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 pupils 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 pupils will not be able to rely on his memory to recode pertinent comments at a later time.

4.5.3 Suggestions for Conducting Speaking Evaluation Tasks

The study of the language system itself, while useful for some pupils, 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 pupils. 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 pupils 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 learning. 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.

Therefore there is not only the perception that pupil learning is closely linked to evaluation of pupil 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.

In this case and in order that speaking evaluation should be effective, spontaneity should be 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 pupils will handle the unrehearsed situation. A minimum of four speaking examinations should be given to each pupil during the school year. These four speaking examinations may evaluate the pupils at all levels in five areas: fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation, accuracy and comprehension.

In 3SE 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, combining and recombining elements or to use de Saussure's dichotomy of paradigmatic and syntagmatic, 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. They can discuss personal history and leisure time activities. As it is demonstrated in the table (4.3) at the end of the 3rd year the pupils should demonstrate an emerging evidence of connected discourse, particularly for simple narration and/or description.

Function	General notion	Specific notion	Examples of language forms	Grammar/structure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Describing ▪ expressing 	<p>Physical appearance</p> <p>Likes and dislikes</p>	person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ He has a fair complexion. ▪ Mary is a slim girl. ▪ John enjoys working with children ▪ Peter likes reading. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Simple present tense</u> ▪ Elementary uses of to be/ to have To love) To like) + verb+ ing To prefer) To enjoy)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Describing 	Regular activities	person	Dan generally wakes up at 8 o' clock in the morning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Simple present tense ▪ The use of the adverbs of frequency e.g. generally, often, usually, etc.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ narrating 	sequence	events	We sailed from Dover to Calais. We stopped for a picnic, then	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Simple past tense ▪ Temporal conjunctions and prepositions of time (first, then,

			we hitch-hiked along the road. After that we climbed the mountain. Finally we arrived at our friends' house.	finally, etc.)
▪ narrating	sequence	Sudden and continuous events	We called off the meeting. It came suddenly. We hurried into the forest. we were carrying important documents	▪ Simple past tense. ▪ contrasted with past continuous To be +verb +ing

Table 4.3 The Functional Use of Language

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 pupils' oral language through brief interviews with the teacher or working in groups or in pairs or role plays while the other students in the class are involved in writing or reading activities

4.5.3.1 Interview Tasks

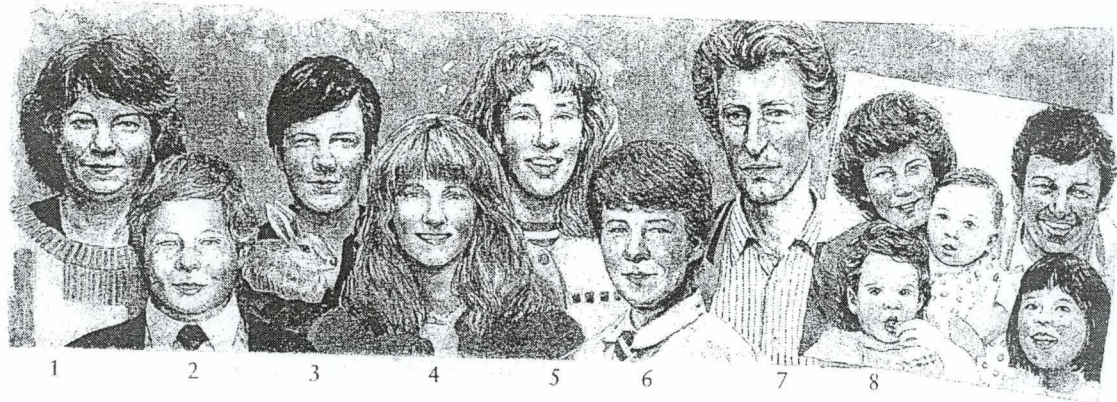
Interview tasks are a direct evaluation of language use; that is, **"they evaluate oral skills by having the examinees actually speak"** (Turner 1998: 194). Even so, the ostensible context remains that of a language evaluation. Beyond making the pupil feel at ease, there is no attempt to simulate a non-evaluation 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 learners preparing and asking a set of questions to others and then reporting their findings to the class.

Here is a Sample for an interview task which is adapted from the New Cambridge English Course:

Unit:	Appearances
Lesson:	I look like my father
Lesson focus:	listening and speaking skills
Class and layout:	pair and group work
Intermediate objectives:	simple present of look like, (affirmatives, questions, negatives and short answers)
Final objective:	pupils learn to talk about resemblances between people.

**Task One:**

Listen to the recording. Who is speaking? Read the text and put the names with the pictures.

-Alice	-Ann	-Joe	-Philip	-Alice's father	-Alice's mother
-Uncle George and family			-Uncle Edward		

Recording and Text:

My name's Alice. I've got a sister (her name's Ann), and two brothers, Joe and Philip. We've all got fair hair and blue eyes, and we're all slim except Joe- he's very fat. Ann's very pretty, and she's got lots of boyfriends. I've only got one boyfriend: his name's Kevin, and he's very nice.

I look a bit like my father- I've got his long nose and big mouth- but I've got my mother's personality. Joe and Philip both look more like mum.

We've got two uncles and an aunt. Uncle George and Aunt Agnes have got three children. Uncle Edward in only thirteen, so he hasn't got any children, but he's got a rabbit.

How to Proceed:

- Ask the pupils to cover the text and look at the picture for a minute or so.
- Tell the pupils they are going to hear one of the people in the picture speaking: they must decide which one.
- Play the recording once without stopping. See if the pupils can tell you which person is Alice.
- Play it again, and see if they can identify some of the other people, using the names in the box.
- Let pupils look at the text and finish working out the solution.

Key to Task One:

1. Alice's mother
2. Joe
3. uncle Edward
4. Ann
5. Alice
6. Philip
7. Alice's father
8. Uncle George and family.

Task Two: Prepare questions and answers for an interview.

Key to Task Two:

- How many people are there in your family?
- Have you got any brothers? Yes, I have. / No, I haven't.
- Has your mother got any sisters? Yes, she has. / No, she hasn't.
- How many children has your aunt got?
- Do you look like your mother? Yes, I do. / No, I don't.
- Who do you look like?

Task Three:

Work in pair. Interview another pupil and report to the class using the questions that you have formed in the previous activity.

Key to Task Three:

Amine has got three brothers. They all look like their mother, but they've got their father's personality. His brother Nassim has got three children, two girls and a boy.....

4.5.3.2 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. This is especially useful for the evaluation of oral performance. 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).

The teacher can be involved as a participant in the role play, or simply as an observer of two or more pupils. What follows is a Sample for a role play task which is adapted from LONGMAN language activator Course:

Sample role play task (adapted from LONGMAN language activator)

Grade level:	intermediate
Function:	using every day English
Lessons focus:	speaking skill
Class and layout:	Pair work
Intermediate objectives:	provide students with new vocabulary
Final objective:	Asking questions with wh_ words preparing a dialogue by establishing a situation. Using the appropriate vocabulary dealing with the situation e.g. a clothes shop.

10 Things people buy

1 At the market



1. Look at the market stall what can you see
2. Here are two conversations. Put them in order.

Conversation 1:

- Yes here you are
- 25 \$
- How much is it?
- All right, 20 then
- Oh no, that's too expensive
- Can I see that radio?

Conversation 2:

- I'll have one, please.
- Here you are. That's 1\$
- Blue, I think.
- How much are these lighters?
- What colour do you want?
- They're 1\$ each.

Now listen to the recording and check your answers.

3. Choose some other things on the market stall. What question could you ask about them?

Can I see.....?

How much.....?

What size.....?

4. Role play:

Pair works: act out a conversation with your classmate imagine yourself being in a clothes shop and ask the price of the blue sweater in the shop window. Ask to try it on. It is too big. Try another one. It's OK. Ask if they have other colours. Choose a colour and buy the sweater.

You: you work at the market stall. Sell things to B.

Your partner: you're a customer. Buy things

Key:

You: Can I help you?

Your partner: Yes, I'm looking for a sweater.

You: What size?

Your partner: Here's a lovely one.

You: Well, yellow doesn't really suit me. Have you got anything in blue?

Your partner: Here's a nice one in blue. And here's another one.

You: How much are they?

Your partner: £ 23.99.

You: Can I try them on?

Your partner: Yes, of course.

4.5.4 Interpret and Report the Results

In an education improvement system, data from evaluation provide information that teachers and administrators can use to revise their instructional programme to enable pupils to reach challenging standards. For that reason, evaluation results should be reported so that they indicate the level of pupils' performance. Schools should keep the reports on pupil's learning to ensure that teachers and schools will be accountable for the progress of all pupils, especially those with the greatest educational needs.

Teachers should interpret the results of the oral examination activity according to the purpose of the evaluation. Results can be used by pupils and parents to focus on areas for improvement. Since the evaluation is broken down into specific criteria, pupils can see more clearly where improvements could be made.

On the other hand, feedback to pupils can take many forms. It can be through the use of questions asked orally or through written notes. These questions can urge the pupils to think about their own learning. Feedback can also take place during conferences or informal conversations. The goal is to help pupils become more responsible in their own learning by allowing them to reflect and by helping the pupils set goals.

To be effective, feedback to pupils need to be specific to give them some guidance but not so specific to rob them from any creativity. Additionally, feedback should not be limited to pupils. Parents are deeply appreciative and much more supportive of a programme or a teacher when they are informed about their child achievement in the class. The feedback helps them monitor their child's learning.

However, whether the feedback is directed to the pupils or to the parents teachers should be careful not to limit their feedback to the need for improvement but also to comment on the individual progress and accomplishment of each pupil. In addition to that, teachers can use the results of evaluation to determine the focus of future activities then when doing so the link between curriculum instruction and evaluation is strengthened.

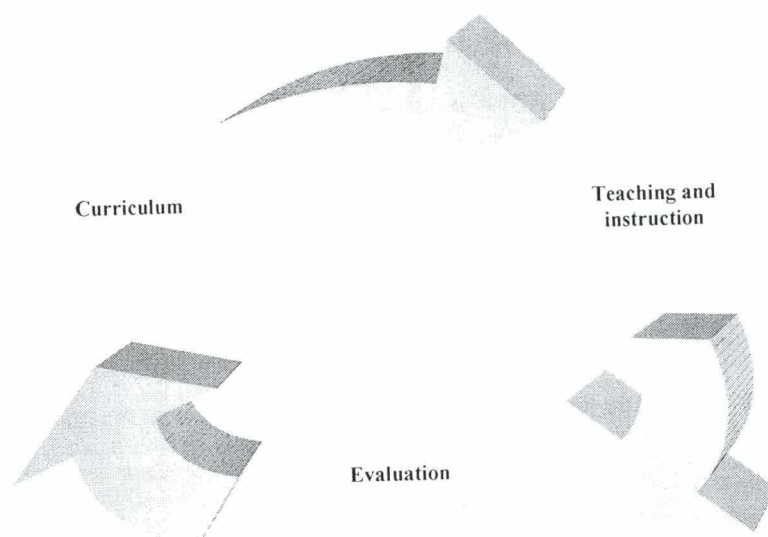


Figure 4.1: Link between Curriculum, Teaching and Evaluation

4.6 Oral Language Evaluation Criteria

Algerian EFL teachers find themselves faced with a number of challenges in both the environment in which they work and related to the new goals they are asked to achieve. Traditionally, the Algerian educational system has focused on language accuracy. Teachers who are the products of the old educational system may find it difficult to manage the new requirement of the reform. Understandably, most of the evaluation methods used in EFL classrooms still focus on grammar structures, vocabulary, writing and reading in order to be prepared for the baccalaureate examination and then university entrance. Since language in education policy has directed that there should be a change in the way English is taught, and a new programme is implemented, it is vital to evaluate these changes not only at teaching but even the way we evaluate our pupils in EFL context. All of the teachers agreed that their EFL classes were still not fully CBA oriented.

Oral language evaluation may examine pupils conversing with each other on the content of a given topic; they should actively use the language they have learned. Since evaluation greatly affect learners' abilities to evaluate their own progress in the target language, it is essential for language teachers to develop

examination that optimize the current views on language and language use. The oral language evaluation should be capable of measuring a wide range of abilities associated with pupils communicative abilities and include tasks that personify the main features of communicative language use. There are many EFL teachers who need to evaluate their pupils' speaking ability. However, before designing oral evaluation tasks there need to have a clear idea of the purpose of the evaluation. The purpose of the examination will determine the overall shape of the evaluation criteria to be used. It follows that all teachers in EFL contexts, whatever their positions and duties, ought to have a basic understanding of the principles underlying evaluation as well as the criteria used in evaluating speaking skill.

4.6.1 The Component of Language Use

Grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation all fall under the general category of grammatical (or linguistic) competence in Canale and Swain's influential model. (See 4.5.2) These are the basic skills, traditionally taught and evaluated in isolation from a communicative context. Yet in order to predict real language use successfully, higher level skills and knowledge also need to be considered.

A second category called discourse competence concerns the way language is conventionally shaped in different communicative contexts. Describing a person, for example, requires more than basic grammatical skills - it involves selecting, organising and linking elements together to create a structured and coherent whole. Canale and Swain distinguish a third category called sociocultural competence; which covers the cultural forms of speech deemed appropriate in a particular community.

Weir (1998) includes both discourse and sociocultural aspects of language use under the single heading "**routine skills**". These are frequently ways of structuring speech, such as descriptions, comparisons, instructions, telling stories, and they include the patterns of interactional language use seen in such things as "buying goods in a shop, or telephone conversations, interviews, meetings, discussions, decision making, etc" (Weir 1998: 32).

Canale and Swain's fourth category is strategic competence, which covers the various techniques people use to manage and enhance communication. This category is covered by Weir under the heading "**improvisation skills**" (1998: 32-4). Communication is a faulty and chaotic process and speakers need to be able to improvise when their conventional language routines fail. This includes both the "**negotiation of meaning**" (idem) in various ways to enhance understanding, as well as the "**management of interaction**" (idem) to establish "who is going to speak next and what the topic is going to be" i.e. turn taking and topic initiation.

4.6.2 Specifying Speaking Skill Criteria

Evaluating in EFL classrooms should have some common traits. That is, teachers need to keep in mind the following criteria: the suitability of the materials given for examinations; the use of a learner-centred approach in class work; and the need for activities presented in-class to improve fluency in language use. Also, where possible, it is important to consider the communicative function of the examination.

The benefits of the communicative include centring the focus on pupil interaction with each other in order to improve communicative abilities. The CBA as the communicative approach is now seen as superior to methods which espouse teaching grammar-based syllabi, and clearly has a purpose in all EFL classes.

On the other hand, to help pupils successfully fulfil a speaking performance task. They need identification and a definition of the criteria against which they are evaluated. We can define criteria as being the different elements which are valued by the teacher when evaluating his pupils. For example the teacher may evaluate the comprehensibility of pupils' speech, the organization of the speaking presentation as well as the delivery of the message are some possible criteria against which a teacher might want to assess the pupils' language abilities.

4.6.3 Selecting the Criteria in Rating Scales

In order to establish the scoring criteria for evaluating pupils achievement; teachers need to think about the kind of performance they want their pupils to accomplish in order to meet the objectives stated in the curriculum. Teachers may create their own scoring criteria in evaluating their pupils. Scales effectively dictate what combination of skills is to be recognized when examining at different levels,

although in practice the particular features **"may not co-occur in actual student performance"** (Turner 1999: 100).

Analysing the results strictly refers to the breaking down of an object into its constituent parts or aspects. This is the opposite of synthesis or the putting together of parts to make a whole. Although the general components of oral language use are those discussed above, there are various ways in which this "cake" of abilities can be sliced for pupils' evaluation. The choice of relevant tasks is an important step in itself, for as shown in one study of Turner:

some of the supposed characteristics of intermediate versus advanced learners represented in the rating scales were not substantiated in the actual performance of intermediate and advanced learners.

(Turner, 1999: 95)

Thus, within each category, different levels of ability need to be distinguished clearly using descriptive language that can be matched against evaluation results. With clear criteria determined by the overall purpose of the evaluation and founded on a clear theory of language use, it is possible to choose relevant evaluation tasks.

4.6.4 Special Issues

Some special issues that influence the design and implementation of an oral evaluation need to be mentioned. First, practicality of an evaluation refers to the degree to which it is easy to administer. The number of pupils, the time constraints for examination and scoring, and the available human and physical resources all need to be considered carefully before an evaluation scheme is chosen.

Evaluating oral language skill requires getting a representative sample of optimum performance. Teachers need to 'bias for best' means to elicit a pupil's best performance on an exam (see 1.11.4). A poorly designed or delivered speaking examination will not provide consistent results. This may be because teaching favours some pupils over others, or perhaps because role play situations require specific knowledge or vocabulary that only some of the pupils possess. Also, generally distracting or stressful conditions of evaluation will clearly disadvantage some pupils over others in a way that is unrelated to language ability. Another issue in language evaluation should be mentioned, grading is very much dependent on the purpose of the evaluation and the way this is reflected in the criteria.

4.7 Pedagogical Implications: Issues and Remedies

The findings and conclusions of this study have certain implications for language teachers which may not only contribute to the improvement of pupils' classroom competencies but to the teacher's professionalism as well. However, it is essential to make reference to all the constraints and limitations which act as a barrier to the success in EFL teaching /learning process. EFL teachers have to cope

with overloaded classrooms, overloaded curriculum and few resources. It is just impossible for the teachers to cope with more than thirty-five pupils who rely heavily on the teacher to make everything clear for them.

Nevertheless, all language teachers are invited to become familiar with the CBA which is a new and very popular and adaptable syllabus in language teaching. Pupils in this research were quite receptive to CBA syllabus as a willingness to learn is shown among them. When adopting this syllabus, language teachers should provide their pupils with a variety of enjoyable tasks. Carrying out a variety of tasks influences pupils' progress and attitudes towards the lesson. We should keep in mind that with the new approach to language teaching the pupils rather than being passive listeners, they should be active receivers. Therefore, serious consideration should be given to CBA and EFL teachers should provide their pupils with opportunities to make progressive use of content learnt through a variety of tasks.

Giving presentations is a task particularly liked by pupils. Speaking and interaction are very important for pupils. So, teachers should not ignore the communicative needs of their pupils which are a highly important aspect of the objectives stated by the syllabus. Teachers are recommended to increase the amount of pupils' talk as much as they can and presentation is an ideal task for this. It does not only improve the pupils' speaking skill but their social knowledge of the world as well. Furthermore, language teachers are recommended to provide an enjoyable learning environment for their pupils. Classroom atmosphere is very important for learning. When the pupils find the atmosphere enjoyable, they make use of learning opportunities more.

Finally, teachers are invited to spend more time in reflection. This allows them to think critically on their classroom behaviour. In this way, they can identify and work on their weaknesses in class as well as building on their strengths. As Wallace states, **“teachers should be encouraged to become reflective practitioners by reflecting on their professional experiences”** (1991: 26). Furthermore, Wallace (1991) states that there is not a best method that is always valid. Teachers should always be trained to renew themselves.

4.8 Conclusion

An effective evaluation of the speaking skill is not a haphazard selection of tasks chosen at random. Instead each evaluation situation presents a set of practical demands that need to be specifically addressed. The principles of validity, reliability, practicality and bias for best provide basic guidelines for evaluating the effectiveness of a speaking skill examination.

In view of what has been suggested and recommended in this chapter, it is interesting to note that the teaching and evaluation of the speaking skill should be supported by a set of activities as a remedial work, or rather alternative solutions to overcome some of the difficulties that learners and teachers usually encounter, namely pupils' low English proficiency and the lack of training for the teachers. Concerning teachers, they have to consider learners' needs, their learning styles and strategies. They also have to frame their teaching practices according to the requests of learner-centred education, and collaborative learning and teaching. The fundamental objectives for teachers would be to make EFL pupils improve their use in the target language.

Therefore, the remedial proposals and recommendations are addressed to both teachers and learners. These consist in eliciting the roles that the teacher is to play to help his learners overcome some of their speaking weaknesses and difficulties, and roles that learners use to develop their autonomy and responsibility rather than being imprisoned under the teacher's authority. They must develop the ability to speak.

A theoretical model of oral skills is also necessary to structure what is fundamentally changeable. At the same time it needs to be remembered that skills are highly dependent on a variety of internal and external factors that are independent of language ability per se. The art of evaluating involves minimising the influence of such extraneous factors and creating conditions under which all pupils can display their genuine abilities.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

GENERAL CONCLUSION

The teaching and evaluation of learners' speaking skill in EFL classrooms in some parts of the world continue 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 process, and it is also the skill which has often been neglected in EFL classrooms. In addition, the oral performances appear to be one of the most difficult skills to evaluate since there are many constraints that should be overcome by the teachers. Recently, many reforms have been promoted in order to meet the principles of a communicative ability in language learning. In light of this, a great deal of attention has been focused on revising teaching materials and curriculum which have been meant to improve teaching for the attainment of communicative goals, however the idea that teachers should improve evaluations by promoting the speaking skill has been neglected.

In the present study, the researcher has been primarily interested in finding some evidence for the lack of congruency between the teaching method to language teaching and the pupils' evaluation methods in EFL classrooms. The researcher has mainly focused on the evaluation of the speaking skill in EFL classrooms as well as on the constraints that EFL teachers usually face when dealing with a speaking evaluation task. Accordingly, a case study has been proposed on third-year secondary EFL pupils, as a means to check the sources through which these lack of congruency springs.

Raising teachers' awareness to the vast area of pupils' evaluation in EFL classrooms stressing its crucial role in the process of teaching and learning, as well as the recognition of the importance of pupils' evaluation as a process basic to teaching that should not be considered as an add-on feature of instruction but as an integral part of it has been collected in the first chapter. In addition to that, the first chapter has dealt with various aspects of the evaluation process as well as the principles that guide good evaluation. It also strives to shed light on the "evaluation components" of teaching and learning.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

The teaching/learning situation analysis has been designed in the second chapter. In this context, chapter two has tried to give an overview of the Algerian educational context with reference to teaching and evaluating the speaking skill at secondary school level and more specifically to third year secondary pupils for scientific streams. A thorough analysis of the teaching of EFL speaking skill has been dealt with, expecting to shed light on the causes of the lack or the almost non-existence of the speaking evaluation as well as of the existing gap between teaching practices and evaluating practices. The ELT situation in Algeria has been portrayed as well as the EFL objectives for 3AS as stated by the Ministry of Education mentioned in syllabuses for English. Besides, an overview of the recent changes in the policy of language teaching in EFL classrooms has been dealt with.

Chapter three has dealt with the empirical phase of this research which has aimed at finding illuminative data which have guided the research. It has described the evaluation process in addition to the different variables and characteristics of the learning situation of a particular population selected for this study. This research on the evaluation of the speaking skill at secondary level has been stimulated by the absence of previous research at this level and on account of its importance in foreign languages.

The last chapter has tackled some alternative solutions or rather recommendations and suggestions concerning the speaking evaluation in EFL classrooms. EFL teachers have to introduce changes in their classrooms and yield pupils in the new way of evaluation. The fundamental objective would to make EFL pupils improve their communicative abilities in English as the focus of foreign language education is communication, and oral language is central for the pupils at all levels.

This research work provides some ideas on how to design communicative tasks in EFL classrooms in order to achieve better teaching effects, 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 and how to design speaking tasks to fit CBA.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

With these ideas, EFL teachers will find it easier and more effective to adjust their teaching to meet the objectives of the curriculum requirements, and the pupils will find the benefit more than their expectation when they leave school and begin to use English for different purposes and in different circumstances.

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 different 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.

To conclude, it would seem important to investigate why the fit between teachers' instructions to language teaching in EFL classroom and pupils' evaluation was not. It was evident from the information gathered that both teachers and pupils could benefit from a better sense of what a communicative classroom actually entails. In addition, perhaps, teachers could benefit from training in how to apply the speaking evaluation tasks to their classroom practice.

Finally, the researcher might state that this dissertation 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 works 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 1
Third Year Secondary Pupils' Questionnaire

Dear Pupils:

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. Why do you think it is important to study English?

- To be able to speak to foreigners
- To pass the baccalaureate examination
- For success in future professional life
- For higher education

2. When do you usually use English?

- Listening to music
- Watching TV
- Reading
- When studying

3. Do you use English more for?

- Listening to music
- Watching TV
- Reading
- When studying

4. In the future for which purposes do you think you will use English

- Travelling
- Higher studies
- In future job/career
- Others

5. Which of the following areas do you wish to develop more?

- Listening
- Speaking
- Reading
- Writing
- Grammar
- Vocabulary

6. What do you think English language teaching should focus on?

- Listening and speaking
- Reading and writing
- All

7. Do you think that if your level of English is not good it can have

- A good effect on your academic performance
- A bad effect on your academic performance
- No effect on your academic performance

8. In the future, The English language

- Will help me in successful completion of higher education
- Will not help me in successful completion of higher education
- Will play no role at all

9. My knowledge of English

- Will help me in making a good progress in my future career.
- Will not help me in making a good progress in my future career.
- Will play no role at all

10. Would you like to change any thing in the way the English language is taught at school?

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree

17. What kind of role do you like your teacher to have?

- As a person in control of everything in the class
- As someone who helps and guides you in learning

18. Our teacher should adopt a modern way in teaching his students

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

19. I can improve my English better if it is evaluated differently

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

20. Do you think that you can improve better if you were evaluated on your speaking skill?

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

-END OF QUESTIONNAIRE-

Thank you very much for your help

APPENDIX 2
Teachers' Questionnaire

Please answer all questions as completely as possible.
If you wish to add any further comments, please use the space provided after each question.

1. How long have you been an English teacher?

.....years

2. Which courses and grades are you currently teaching?

.....

3. How important do you think it is to test pupils' speaking ability?

(Please rate your response on a 4 point scale where 1=not at all important; 2=not so important; 3=important; 4=very important. Circle your answers.)

1 2 3 4

Comments:.....

4. What type of activities do you use in your classroom?

(Please rate your responses on a 4 point scale where 1=strongly disagree; 2=disagree; 3=agree; 4=strongly agree. Circle your answers.)

(a) role play/simulation 1 2 3 4

(b) information gap activities 1 2 3 4

(c) class discussion 1 2 3 4

(e) grammar/vocabulary activities 1 2 3 4

(f) reading comprehension activities 1 2 3 4

(g) gap-filling/activities 1 2 3 4

(h) speaking activities in pairs or groups 1 2 3 4

Comments:.....

5. Why do you think it is important for your pupils to study English?

(Please rate your responses on a 4 point scale where 1=strongly disagree; 2=disagree; 3=agree; 4=strongly agree. Circle your answers.)

- (a) To pass the baccalaureate examination 1 2 3 4
- (b) To develop communicative abilities 1 2 3 4
- (c) To study/work abroad 1 2 3 4
- (d) For future employment 1 2 3 4
- (e) To study English at university 1 2 3 4
- (f) To communicate with English-speaking people 1 2 3 4
- (g) Because it is educationally and culturally desirable to have knowledge of English 1 2 3 4

Comments:.....

6. Which of the following areas do you think the most important for the 3rd year secondary EFL pupils?

(Please rate your responses on a 4 point scale where 1=strongly disagree; 2=disagree; 3=agree; 4=strongly agree. Circle your answers.)

- (a) listening comprehension 1 2 3 4
- (b) writing 1 2 3 4
- (c) reading comprehension 1 2 3 4
- (d) speaking 1 2 3 4
- (e) grammar 1 2 3 4
- (f) vocabulary 1 2 3 4
- (g) Because it is educationally and culturally desirable to have knowledge of English 1 2 3 4

Comments:.....

7. In Algeria, how important do you think it is for pupils to develop communicative ability in English?

(Please rate your response on a 4 point scale where 1=not at all important; 2=not so important; 3=important; 4=very important. Circle your answers.)

APPENDIX 3
Frequency of Answers in Pupils' Questionnaire

Questions	Respondent's Answers	AF	RF
1. Why do you think it is important to study English?	-To be able to speak to foreigners	10	07%
	-To pass the baccalaureate examination	30	20%
	-For success in future professional life	80	53%
	-For higher education	30	20%
2. When do you usually use English?	-Listening to music	50	33%
	-Watching TV	05	03%
	-Reading	05	03%
	-When studying	90	61%
3. Do you use English more for?	-Listening to music	44	20%
	-Watching TV	04	03%
	-Reading	02	01%
	-When studying	100	67%
4. In the future for which purposes do you think you will use English	-Travelling	28	19%
	-Higher studies	30	20%
	-In future job/career	90	60%
	-Others	02	01%
5. Which of the following areas do you wish to develop more?	-Listening	12	08%
	-Speaking	110	74%
	-Reading	10	07%
	-Writing	08	05%
	-Grammar	05	03%
	-Vocabulary	05	03%
6. What do you think English language teaching should focus on?	-Listening and speaking	63	42%
	-Reading and writing	12	08%
	-All	75	50%
7. Do you think that if your level of English is not good it can have	-A good effect on your academic performance	14	09%
	-A bad effect on your academic performance	122	82%
	-No effect on your academic performance	14	09%
8. In the future, The English language	-Will help me in successful completion of higher education	135	90%
	-Will not help me in successful completion of higher education	12	08%
	-Will play no role at all	03	02%
		176	

9. My knowledge of English	-Will help me in making a good progress in my future career. -Will not help me in making a good progress in my future career. -Will play no role at all	135 06 09	90% 04% 06%
10. Would you like to change any thing in the way the English language is taught at school?	-Strongly disagree -Disagree -Neither agree nor disagree -Agree -Strongly agree	26 30 10 45 39	17% 20% 07% 30% 26%
11. How do you find the content of your English course?	-Interesting -Boring -difficult	78 27 45	52% 18% 30%
12. My lessons in English mainly focus on improving	-My listening and speaking skills -My reading and writing skills -My vocabulary and grammar -All areas are improving	09 60 69 12	06% 40% 46% 08%
13. Do you think that the present way of teaching and evaluating the speaking skill is helping in improving your English language any further?	-It is improving -It is not improving -Not sure	78 33 39	52% 22% 26%
14. What kind of English class do you like?	-Teacher just teaching, students listening -Student are actively participating and are involved in a lot of learning activities like games group and pair work/ projects	30 120	20% 80%
15. Do you like learning by	-Memory -Problem solving -Getting information yourself -Copying form the board	14 52 54 30	09% 35% 36% 20%
16. How do you prefer to do learning activities in class?	-Alone -With a friend or a group of friends	25 125	17% 83%
17. What kind of role do you like your teacher to have?	-As a person in control of everything in the class -As someone who helps and guides you in learning	42 105	28% 70%
18. Our teacher should adopt a modern way in teaching his students	-Strongly disagree -Disagree -Neither agree nor disagree -Agree	05 07 15 45	03% 05% 10% 30%

	-Strongly agree	78	52%
19. I can improve my English better if it is evaluated differently	-Strongly disagree	03	02%
	-Disagree	03	02%
	-Neither agree nor disagree	03	02%
	-Agree	39	27%
	-Strongly agree	99	67%
20. Do you think that you can improve better if you were evaluated on your speaking skill?	-Strongly disagree	05	03%
	-Disagree	10	07%
	-Neither agree nor disagree	15	10%
	-Agree	42	28%
	-Strongly agree	78	52%

AF Absolute Frequency

RF Reference Frequency

APPENDIX 4

A Sample Listening and Speaking Lesson

This sample lesson is adapted from the ELT textbook (pp93-96)

Skills and Strategies Outcomes

Grade level:	Third Year Pupils
Unit:	School: Different and Alike
Function:	Description
Lesson focus:	listening and Speaking
Class layout and organization:	Individual work
Intermediate objectives:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Enable the Pupils to listen and understand to simple authentic text.-Teach them how to take notes while listening.-Provide practices in comparing and contrasting.
Final objectives:	By the end of the lesson Pupils should be able to make a speech about one's ideal school in which they can compare the educational system between past and present or they can describe the issues related to education or then make a speech between the similarities and differences between today's educational systems in the world and this could be either a guided or a free topic.

Text: Mary Curie's life. (See appendix 5)

Unit3, script 2 listening and Speaking

Source: unknown

Before Listening:

Aim: The aim of this rubric is to access Pupils' background knowledge, and to prepare the Pupils psychologically and linguistically to the topic to be exploited.

Task: the picture and the caption in italics on the right illustrate a life story. Look at them closely and guess the answers to questions 1-5 on the left.

The Discoverer of Radium
(by J.Walker McSpadden)

1. Who do you think the lady is?
2. Where was she born?
3. What nationality is she?
4. Where is she and what is she doing?
5. Do you think her education has prepared her for the kind of work she is doing?



As You Listen:

Task 1 (p.94)

Students listen to the teacher reading the first part of the lady's life story and then they check their answers to the question on the previous rubric.

Key:

1. The lady is Mary Curie.
2. She was born in Warsaw, Poland.
3. She is Polish.
4. She is in the laboratory doing an experiment.
5. Yes, it has.

Task 2 (p.94)

- The Pupils skim through and discuss the text in the Coping box before setting task.

Coping

When you take notes, write down only **important words** and **specific details**, such as dates which you are not likely to remember. Taking notes is not the same as writing from dictation then:

- Leave grammar words such as pronouns
 - Use abbreviations e.g. UK , USA
 - Use figures instead of letters when writing numbers for example
- The teacher reads the script paragraph by paragraph and tries to have the Pupils guess what comes next after each pause. The teacher can help the Pupils with a diagram containing **wh** words: who, what, where, when, how, why because the listening script is a narrative.
 - In this part note taking can be supplemented by note making, i.e. briefly writing down one's reactions and ideas about the text.

Task 3 (p.94)

- Use the notes you have taken in task 2 above to make a short oral summary of the life story you have listened

Aim: The Pupils remember that taking notes is essential in order to remember what one listens to or reads, but it has a further use: when taking notes, **it is necessary to establish the structure of the text and its key ideas** and to learn to leave out irrelevant information.

In making summaries, too, minor details must be omitted, but

- A summary is usually written in one's words.
- It does not necessarily imply outlining the structure of the text, as note-taking usually does.
- It should be an accurate and objective account of the text, leaving out our reactions to it whereas note taking can be supplemented by note making.
- Make sure you limit the time devoted to the oral presentation of the summary (2 to 3 minutes).

Key:

Possible summary

This story recounts the life of Marie Curie, née Manya Sklodovsky in Poland occupied then by Russia. Curie experienced many hardships during her childhood. She lost her mother at an early age, and her father, a professor of physics, had problems with Russian rulers. Though she was close to her father, she left him for Paris. She made heavy sacrifices to pursue her further studies. Marie obtained a doctorate from the Sorbonne (Paris) and married Professor Curie. Both of them were attracted to each other because they had similar interests in physics.

APPENDIX 5

Text: Mary Curie's life

Unit 3, script 2 : Listening and speaking

First part of the life story

A shy, frightened child stood before a government school inspector in a Polish school room.

"Name the Czars of Russia," he barked.

The girl did so in a voice which she tried to keep steady.

"Who governs us?"

The child hesitated. Her teacher and her schoolmates looked anxious.

"Answer me !" came the sharp command.

"His Majesty, Alexander the Second, Czar of all the Russias," came the clear, low voice of the student.

The inspector glanced quickly around the room to check up on the others. All the girls were bending low over their tables, and he could not see their faces.

"Very well, then; remember!" he said to all in general, and walked out of the room. Later, when the inspector left, the teacher called, "Come here, my little soul."

And the child sank down beside her and burst into tears.

Warsaw, the birthplace of Manya Sklodovsky, was then ruled by Russia. Russian inspectors made sudden visits to the unhappy country roundabout, seeking to spy out possible trouble. Even the schools were watched. Manya had been chosen for examination that day, as often because she was bright and dependable.

At home, as well as at school, she was called Manya. Her father was a professor of physics. She grew up helping him at his work, busily washing bottles and test tubes and learning to love science. Her mother died when Manya was very young and Dr Sklodovsky tried to be both father and mother to his four girls and one boy. All of them were good students. They spent many of their evenings before the fire, as their father told them stories or helped them with their lessons. Dr Sklodovsky was skilled in arts and languages as well as in science.

"He knew everything or nearly everything," his children said of him later.

However, before his children were grown, Dr Sklodovsky had difficulties with the Russian rulers. He lost his position and had to take a humbler teaching job. From the time she was ten until she reached middle age, Manya faced struggle and hardship.

When she was eighteen, she went to work as a teacher in a private home. She saved as much as she could of her small salary and went to Paris for further study. There she was known as Marie. One reason for her choice of Paris was that an older sister, Bronya, had married and moved to that city. Another reason was the excellence of the universities. She has attended a chemistry course.

Second part of the life story

At first she lived in her sister's home, but it was so far from the university that she took a single room and lived alone. Her small savings were soon gone, and her father was able to send her only very little money. For some reason, she did not want her sister to know that she was living from hand to mouth. She never missed her beloved classes until the day when she fainted in the street.

Her sister's husband was a doctor. He came on the run. Marie was taken to her room. His keen eyes took in the bare furnishings. He could not find even the makings of a cup of tea.

"What did you eat today?" he asked.

"Today? Why, I can't seem to remember."

"Yesterday, then?"

"Oh, yesterday... why, I had some cherries – and all sorts of things."

He bundled her up and took her home in a cab to her sister Bronya. "Take care of the little one," he called from the bottom of the steps. "I'm off to get a prescription filled." The "prescription" was a large steak and some French fried potatoes.

The next day, rested and fed, she returned to her cold attic room, promising to take better care of herself. She longed to be back to the laboratory. She liked even the smells of the chemicals. She wanted to take not one but two degrees – both a master's and a doctorate of science. Then armed with these she could return to her beloved Poland and work side by side with her father.

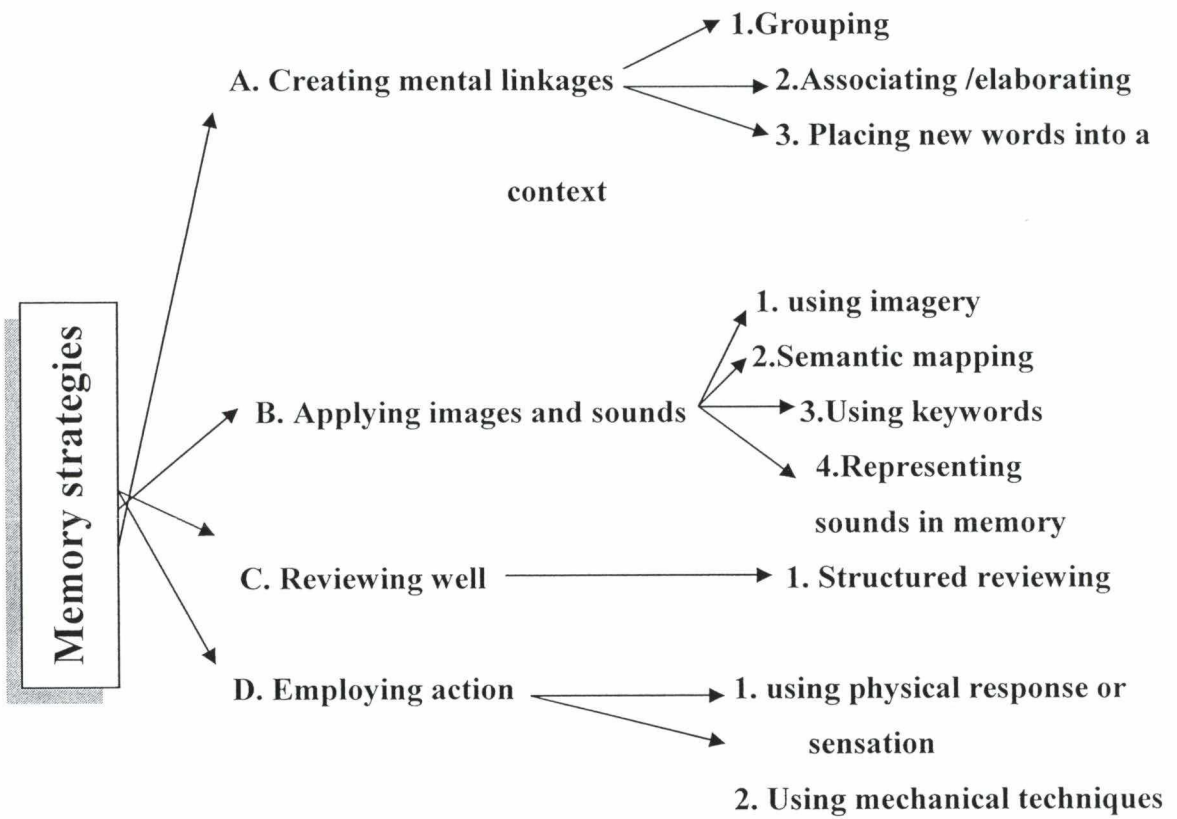
But in the meantime, she became acquainted with a young professor. His life was also devoted to science. He was French, and of good family, and his name was Pierre Curie. He was so underpaid and so deep in his work that he had decided never to marry. But in spite of himself he became deeply interested in this Polish girl with the intense grey eyes and delicate features, who was as keen on test tubes as he himself was.

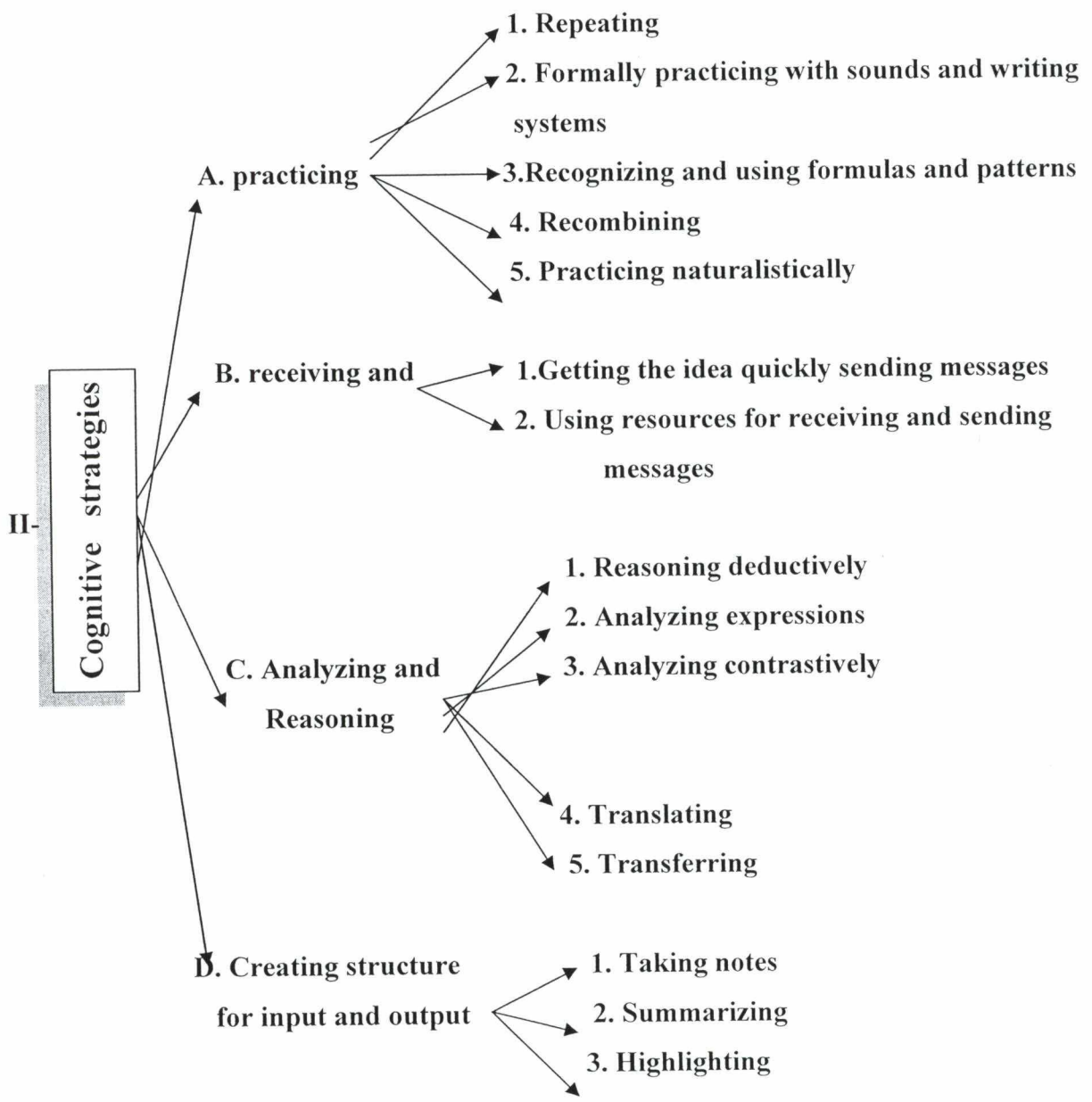
Weeks and months passed by. At last Marie wrote to her father that she was not coming back to Warsaw; she was going to marry Professor Pierre Curie. They were poor; but they had the same tastes, and could continue their work together. For a wedding trip they rode out into the country on bicycles.

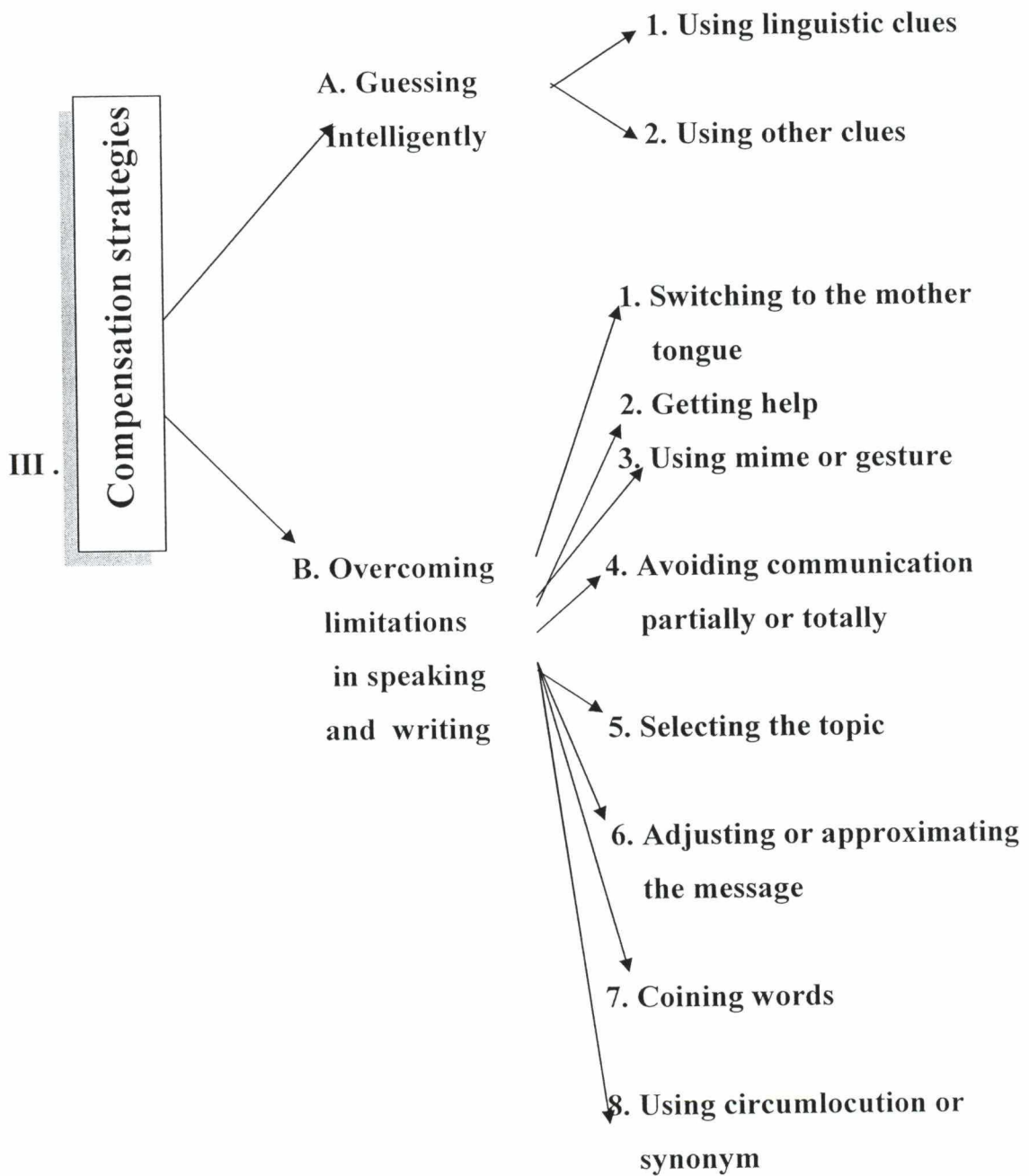
When they got back to their little apartment, Marie made a humiliating discovery. She couldn't cook! For years she had done her most delicate work in the laboratory, but now she had no idea of how to prepare string beans! She bought a cookbook and followed it as carefully as if she were doing an experiment in physics. Pierre never complained. His thoughts were so taken up with his work that he didn't pay much attention to what he ate. ...

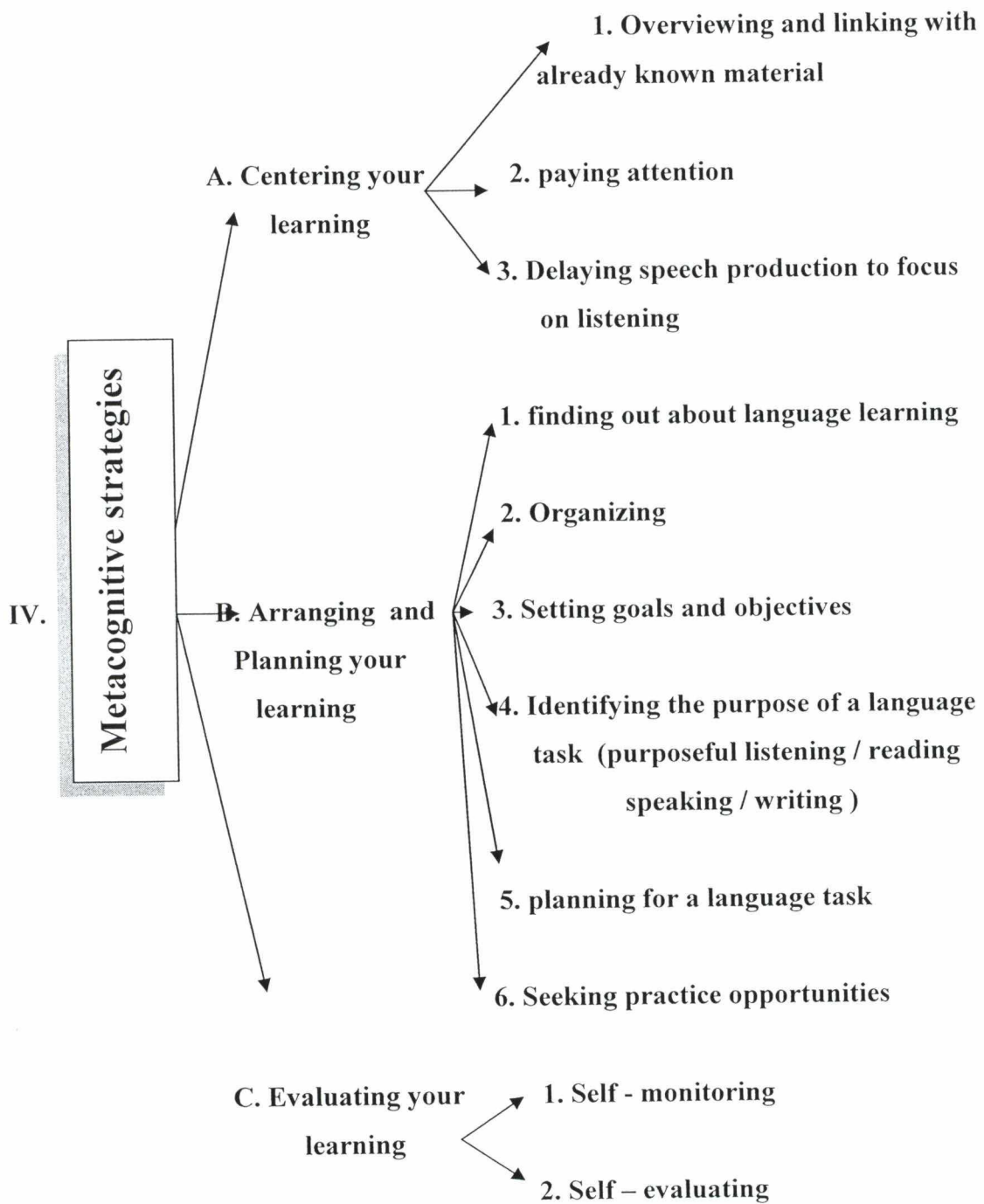
APPENDIX 6
Learning Strategies

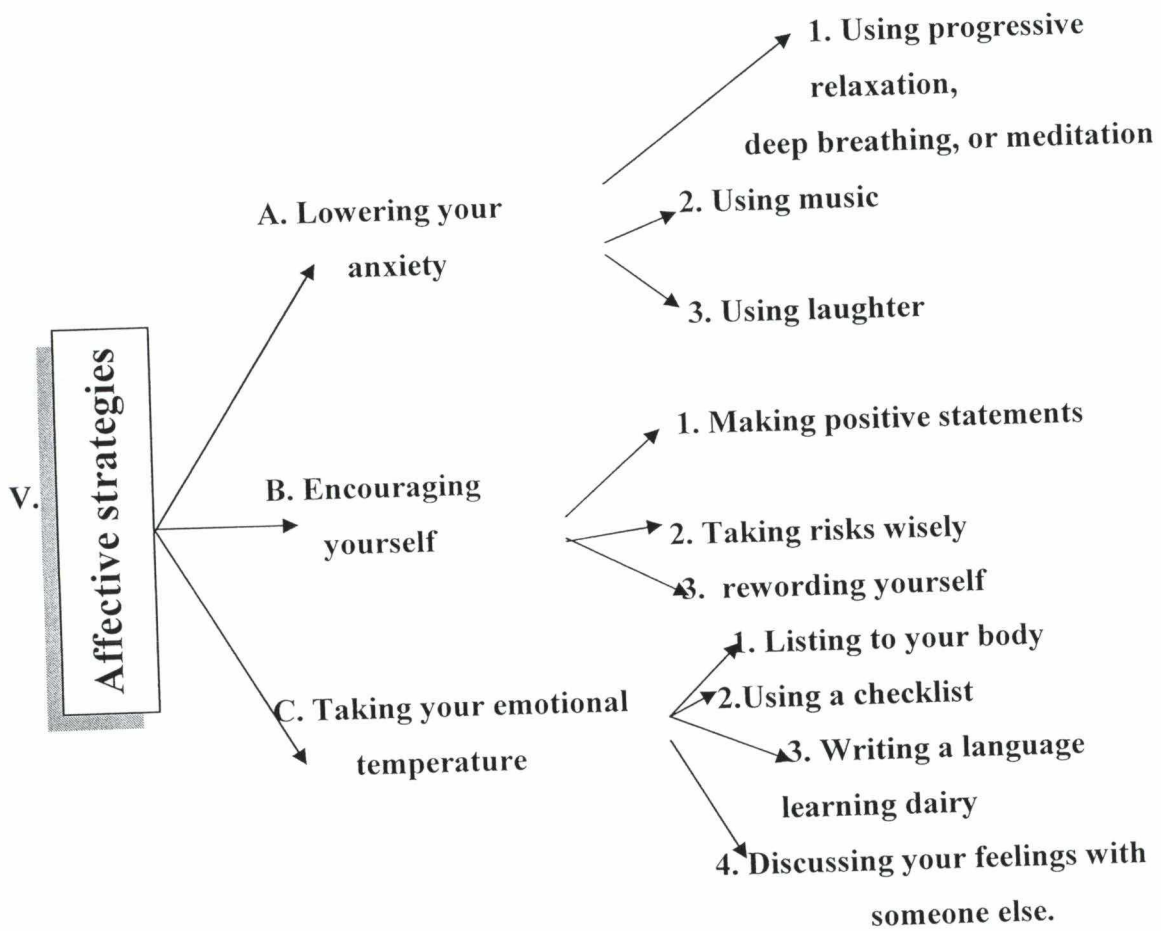
Strategies:

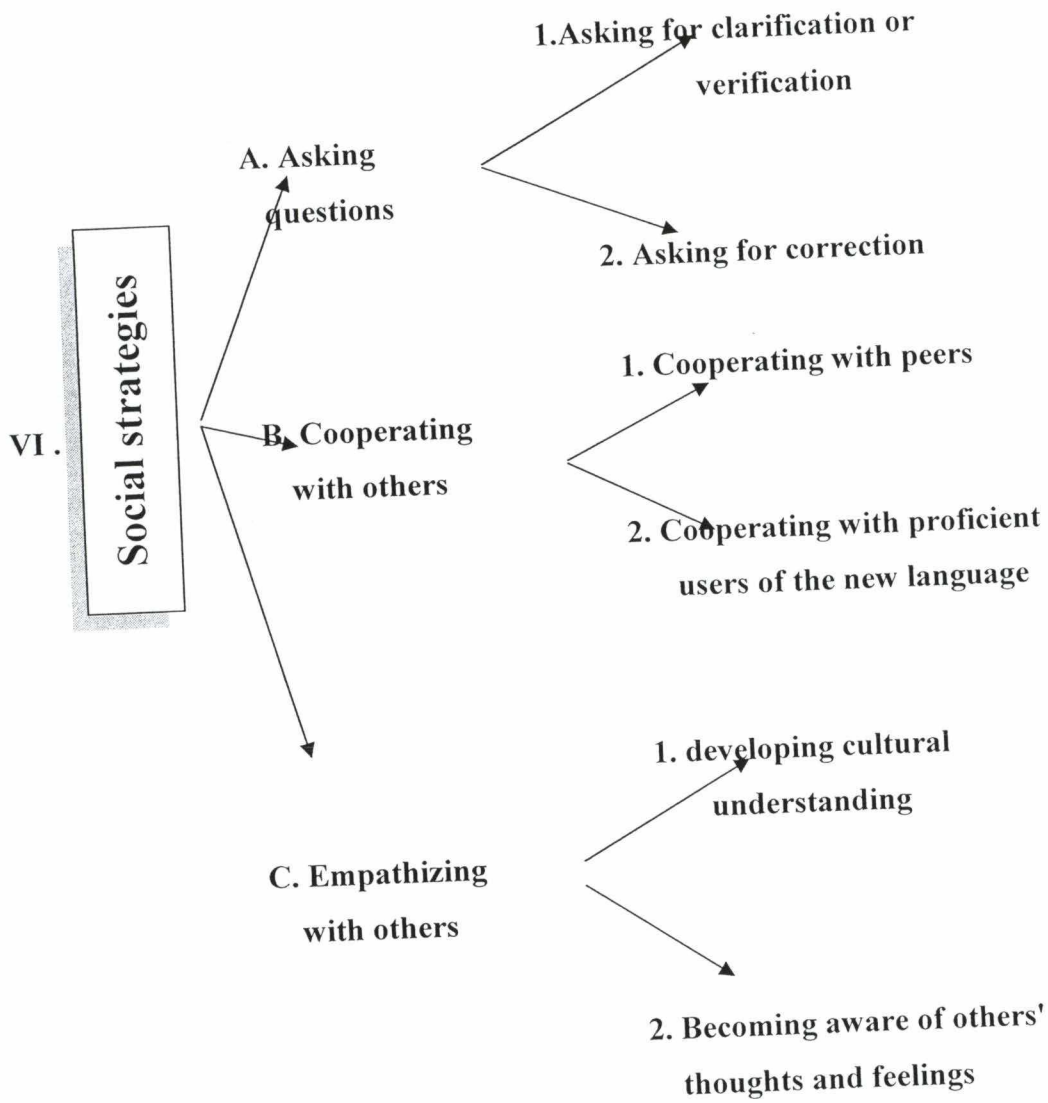












(At the cross roads teacher's guide, 2006: 150)

APPENDIX 7

An adapted version of BLOOM'S TAXONOMY OF THINKING PROCESSES

LEVEL OF TAXONOMY	DEFINITION	LEARNERS' ROLES	ACTION VERBS
Evaluation	Judging the value of materials or ideas on the basis of set standards or criteria	Judges Disputes forms opinion debates	judge, decide, select, justify, evaluate, critique, debate, verify, recommend, assess
Synthesis	Putting together ideas into a new or unique plan	discusses generalises relate, contrasts discusses	create, invent, compose, construct, design, modify, produce, propose; what if ...
Analysis	Breaking down information into parts	uncovers, lists dissects solve problems demonstrates	analyse, dissect, distinguish, examine, compare, contrast, survey, investigate, categorise, classify, organise
Application	Use of rules, concepts, principles, theories in new situations	uses knowledge constructs explains	apply, practise, employ, use, demonstrate, illustrate, show, report, transform, change,
Comprehension	Understanding of communicated information	translates demonstrates interprets responds	restate, describe, explain, review, paraphrase, relate, generalise,
Knowledge	Recall of information	absorbs remembers recognises	infer, tell, list, define, name, identify, state, remember, repeat.

(At the Cross Roads –Teacher's Guide-, 2005: 152)

الملخص:

يهدف هذا البحث إلى دراسة التقويم في عملية التعلم الذي يعتبر حافزا قويا لتطوير الممارسات التعليمية لتلاميذ الثالثة ثانوي شعبة العلوم التجريبية. يدخل في تطوير هذه العلاقة بين التقويم و التعليم التعبير الشفوي من خلال حوارات شفوية بين التلاميذ و الأستاذ الذي يقوم بالملاحظة، السماع، ثم إعطاء حكم موضوعي عن طاقات و كفاءات الكلام عندهم.

يتعلق موضوع البحث بالمقاربة بالكفاءات في تعليمية اللغات التي بدأ تطبيقها في البرنامج منذ سنة 2003. علاوة على هذا حاول الباحث الخروج ببعض النتائج منها توضيح أهمية توجيه أساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في تعليم، تعلم و تقييم اللغة أثناء الممارسة التواصلية.

الكلمات المفتاحية:

. تعليم و تعلم اللغات الأجنبية - التقويم - تعليم و تقويم مهارة التكلم - المقاربة بالكفاءات

Résumé:

L'évaluation est au coeur même de tout processus d'apprentissage. Elle est considérée aujourd'hui comme un outil important pour faire évoluer les pratiques enseignantes et ainsi permettre à nos élèves un meilleur apprentissage des langues. La médiocrité des performances en langue anglaise des élèves algériens constitue un défi à relever. De ce fait le chercheur a souhaité dresser un état des lieux des pratiques d'évaluation aux élèves de 3eme année secondaire. Il invite ainsi les enseignants de cette discipline à repenser les objectifs prioritaires et préconise de nouvelles modalités d'évaluation en langue anglaise qui doivent correspondre à la réforme éducative introduite par le ministère de l'éducation nationale depuis 2003. 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 et l'évaluation de la production orale aux élèves de 3ème année secondaire.

Abstract:

This research addresses the pedagogical principles of connecting the way the English language is taught in EFL classrooms with the way it is evaluated. The researcher states that this important connection can be made by providing concrete teaching tasks including the speaking skill, through oral interviews, role plays and rubrics for assessing pupils' speaking proficiency. The present dissertation is based on a research conducted in secondary education, a case study for 3 AS "Sciences Expérimentales". These are related to the Competency-Based Approach to language teaching introduced in our curricula since 2003. In addition to this the researcher focuses on the importance for a need for guidance to EFL teachers in order to make EFL teaching, learning and evaluation truly communicative in nature.

Key words: EFL learning and teaching, pupils' evaluation, speaking skill teaching and evaluation, the competency-based approach.