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**THE EFFECT OF CLASSROOM INTERACTION
ON DEVELOPING THE LEARNER'S SPEAKING
SKILL**

The case of third year LMD students of English at Constantine University

Thesis submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Master Degree in
Language Sciences (TEFL)

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Dedication

To the memory of my niece CHAYMA.

To my sympathetic father and thoughtful mother whose love always strengthens my will.

To my lovely sister HIND.

To all my brothers: LYES, DANI, BOUBAKER, KHALED, and especially ATAF

To my dearest niece, nephews and their mother.

To all the members of my family KOUICEM and BOUSSOF.

To all my friends with whom I shared the university life with its lights and shadows.

To all my teachers.

To my closet friends.

To all those who love me.

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Abstract

The idea that interaction could and should take place in the classroom became more and more popular especially in second or foreign language classroom. Today, many researchers claim that through classroom interaction knowledge can be constructed and skills can be developed. Teachers' roles and responsibilities were changed in the direction of facilitators of the learning and teaching processes. In this context, learners are supposed to be given opportunities to use the language naturally other than only memorizing dialogues and pattern practices.

The present work aims at showing that classroom interaction can be a best pedagogical strategy to develop not only the learners' speaking skill, but also to foster their capacity to generate new language

This study is based on two questionnaire administrated to both the third year LMD students and teachers of Oral Expression to get information about the impact of classroom interaction on developing the learners' speaking skill.

The analysis of the questionnaire showed that both learners and teachers consider classroom interaction as an important pedagogical strategy in enhancing the skill of speaking.

List of Abbreviations

CA:	Communicative Approach
CLT:	Communicative Language Teaching
EFL:	English as a Foreign Language
FL:	Foreign Language
L1:	First Language
L2:	Second Language
N:	Number
OE:	Oral Expression
Q:	Question
SL:	Second Language
SLA:	Second Language Acquisition
TL:	Target Language
TEFL:	Teaching English as a Foreign Language
%:	Percentage

List of Tables

Table 1: Students' Gender	45.
Table 2: Students' Level in English	46.
Table 3: Students and Teacher Relationship	47.
Table 4: Students and the Teacher's Amount of Talking.....	48.
Table 5: Frequency of Teacher-Learner Interaction.....	49.
Table 6: Teacher's Comprehensible Input.....	50.
Table 7: Frequency of Learner-Learner Interaction.....	51.
Table 8: Frequency of Outside Classroom Interaction.....	52.
Table 9: The Students' Contribution in Interaction.....	53.
Table 10: The Most Desired Language Skills to be Mastered.....	54.
Table 11: Students' Speaking Ability as a Result of Classroom Interaction.....	55.
Table 12: Teachers' Interruptions for Students' Correction.....	57.
Table 13: Students' Reactions to Teacher's Correction.....	58.
Table 14: Regular Interaction as a Help to Reduce Speaking Mistakes.....	59.
Table 15: Students' Reasons Behind not Interacting.....	60.
Table 16: Teachers' Gender.....	66.
Table 17: Teachers' Degrees.....	67.
Table 18: Teaching Experience of OE Teachers.....	68.
Table 19: Teachers' Amount of Talking.....	69.
Table 20: Teachers' Knowledge about Classroom Interaction.....	70.
Table 21: Teachers' Application of Classroom Interaction in Teaching OE	71.

Table 22: Students' Frequency of Engagement in Classroom Interaction.....	72.
Table 23: Students Enjoyment of Learner-Learner Interaction.....	73.
Table 24: Teachers' Decision to Make Silent Students Interact.....	74.
Table 25: Teachers' Most Focuses in Classroom Interaction.....	75.
Table 26: Teachers' Most Focuses on Speaking Activities.....	77.
Table 27: The Possibility of Having all of the Students Participate in the Speaking Activities.....	78.
Table 28: Students Most Speaking Problems.....	79.
Table 29: Teachers' Attitudes Towards Correcting Students.....	81.
Table 30: Types of Feedback Given by Teachers.....	82.
Table 31: Interaction's Effect on Speaking Problems and Mistakes.....	83.

List of Figures

Figure 1: Interaction between Teachers and Students.....	14.
Figure 2: Interaction between Students.....	15.
Figure 3: Students Gender.....	45.
Figure 4: Students Level in English.....	46.
Figure 5: Students and Teacher's Relationship.....	47.
Figure 6: Students and Teacher's Amount of Talking.....	48.
Figure 7: Frequency of Teacher-Learner Interaction.....	49.
Figure 8: Teacher's Comprehensible Input.....	50.
Figure 9: Frequency of Learner-Learner Interaction.....	51.
Figure 10: Frequency of Outside Classroom Interaction.....	52.
Figure 11: The Student's Contribution in Interaction.....	53.
Figure 12: The Most Desired Language Skills to be Mastered.....	54.
Figure 13: Students' Speaking Ability as a Result of Classroom Interaction.....	56.
Figure 14: Teachers' Interruptions for Students Correction.....	57.
Figure 15: Students' Reactions to Teacher's Correction.....	58.
Figure 16: Regular Interaction as a Help to Reduce Speaking Mistakes.....	59.
Figure 17: Students' Reasons Behind not Interacting.....	60.
Figure 18: Teachers' Gender.....	66.
Figure 19: Teachers' Degrees.....	67.
Figure 20: Teaching Experience of OE Teachers.....	68.
Figure 21: Teachers' Amount of Talking.....	69.

Figure 22: Teachers' Knowledge about Classroom Interaction.....	70.
Figure 23: Teachers' Application of Classroom Interaction in Teaching OE.....	71.
Figure 24: Students' Frequency of Engagement in Classroom Interaction.....	72.
Figure 25: Students Enjoyment of Learner-Learner Interaction.....	73.
Figure 26: Teachers' Decision to Make Silent Students Interact.....	74.
Figure 27: Teachers' Most Focuses in Classroom Interaction.....	75.
Figure 28: Teachers' Most Focuses on Speaking Activities.....	77.
Table 29: The Possibility of having all of the Students Participate in the Speaking Activities.....	78.
Table 30: Students Most Speaking Problems.....	80.
Table 31: Teachers' Attitudes towards Correcting Students.....	81.
Table 32: Types of Feedback Given by Teachers.....	82.
Table 33: Interaction's Effect on Speaking Problems and Mistakes.....	83.

Content

Introduction.....	1.
1- General Overview.....	2.
2- Aim of the Study.....	3.
3- Statement of the Problem.....	3.
4- Hypothesis.....	4.
5- Means of Research.....	4.
6- Structure of the Study	4.
Chapter One: Classroom Interaction.....	6.
Introduction.....	7.
1. The Communicative Approach.....	7.
1.1. Communicative Competence.....	8.
1.2. Interaction as a Type of CLT Frameworks.....	9.
2. Classroom Interaction.....	9.
2.1. Aspects of Classroom Interaction.....	10.
2.1.1. Negotiation of Meaning.....	11.
2.1.2. The Role of Feedback.....	12.
2.2. Types of Classroom Interaction.....	13.
2.2.1. Teacher-Learner Interaction.....	13.
2.2.2. Learner-Learner Interaction.....	15.
2.3. Principles of Verbal Interaction.....	16.

2.3.1. Adjacency Pairs.....	16.
2.3.2. Exchanges.....	17
2.3.3. Turns Taking.....	17.
2.3.4. Transactions and Topics.....	18.
2.4. Teachers' Roles and Responsibilities.....	19.
2.5. Designing Pairs and Groups.....	21.
2.5.1. Criteria for Designing Pairs and Groups.....	22.
Conclusion	23.
Chapter Two: Speaking Skill.....	25.
Introduction.....	26.
1. The skill of speaking	26.
1.1. Definition of Speaking	27.
1.2. Elements of Speaking.....	27.
1.2.1. Language Features.....	27.
1.2.2. Mental/ Social Processing.....	28.
1.3. The Importance of Speaking.....	29.
1.4. Integration between Listening and Speaking	30.
2. Characteristics of Speaking Performance.....	30.
2.1. Fluency.....	31.
2.2. Accuracy.....	32.
2.2.1. Grammar.....	32.
2.2.2. Vocabulary.....	33.
2.2.3. Pronunciation.....	33.
3. Oral Communicative Strategies.....	34.

3.1. Achievement Strategies.....	35.
3.1.1. Guessing Strategies.....	35.
3.1.2. Paraphrase Strategies.....	35.
3.1.3. Co-operative Strategies.....	35.
3.2. Reduction Strategies.....	36.
3.2.1. Avoidance Strategies.....	36.
4. Speaking Difficulties in Foreign Language Learning.....	36.
4.1. Inhibition.....	37.
4.2. Nothing to Say.....	37.
4.3. Low Uneven Participation.....	38.
4.4. Mother Tongue Use.....	38.
5. Practising the Speaking Skill in Classroom.....	39.
Conclusion.....	41.
Chapter Three: Teachers' and Students' Questionnaire.....	42.
Introduction.....	43.
1. The Students' Questionnaire.....	43.
1.1. The Sample.....	43.
1.2. Description of the Questionnaire.....	44.
1.3. Analysis of the Results.....	45.
1.4. Interpretation of the Results.....	61.
2. The Teachers' Questionnaire.....	64.
2.1. The Sample.....	64.
2.2. Description of the Questionnaire.....	64.
2.3. Analysis of the Results.....	66.

2.4. Interpretation of the Results.....	83.
Conclusion.....	87.
Conclusion.....	88.
Bibliography.....	90.
Appendices	
Appendix I	
Appendix II	

Introduction

1. General Overview
2. Aim of the Study
3. Statement of the Problem
4. Hypothesis
5. Means of Research
6. Structure of the Study

1. General Overview

For learners who are studying English in a non-English speaking setting, it is very important to experience real communicative situations in which they will learn how to express their own views and opinions, and to develop their oral fluency and accuracy which are very essential for the success of FL communication. Classroom Interaction then, is necessary and useful as an educational strategy to enhance learning.

The concept of classroom interaction plays a significant role in the process of second language learning. In fact the considerable interest in the role of interaction in the context of learning became an important factor for the researchers of this field, because it creates opportunities for the classroom community to develop knowledge and skills. As far as the speaking skill is concerned, we will try to shed some light on this skill which is considered the most desirable skill to be mastered by the vast majority of SL learners.

The understanding of the role of interaction in the classroom context in enhancing the speaking skill comes from the understanding of its main types: teacher-learner interaction and learner-learner interaction, where negotiation of meaning and the provision of feedback are highlighted. Classroom interaction then involves the verbal exchanges between learners and teachers; however, teachers should know that the learners need to do most of the talk to activate their speaking, since this skill requires practice and experience to be developed.

If teachers are advised to reduce their time of talking in the classroom interaction, then it does not mean that they have no role to play. Involving all of the learners in the interactive activities is their main job, they must apply some of the teaching strategies to get all of the students to talk. However, teachers during interaction should avoid a continual interruption.

2. Aim of the Study

Through the present research, we aim at investigating the relationship between the opportunities for production that arise in a classroom setting and the development of the speaking skill. Thus, our main aim is to contribute to our understanding of how and to what extent interaction in the classroom could help the third year LMD students at Constantine University to activate their speaking skill.

3. Statement of the Problem

Researchers such as Mackey (2007) and Ellis (2003) suggested that interaction is beneficial to language development overall, but whether it is beneficial to develop all the skills of second language learning is not known. Because a certain skill may be developed in different manners. Obviously, speaking is considered as the major skill to be developed for learning a second language. We have noticed that students who interact and speak in the classroom achieve better in Oral Expression in most cases than those who always keep silent. Therefore, the problem we are confronted within this research is the existing relationship between classroom interaction and developing the speaking skill. The precise question is:

Are the students able to develop their speaking skill through interacting inside the classroom, or does classroom interaction lead to a better achievement in speaking?

4. Hypothesis

The classroom context in which students learn English gives a lot of opportunities for natural language use. It enables the students to interact and speak freely where the majority of them can show their true oral capacities. This leads us to hypothesize that:

If the students are given the opportunities for interaction in the classroom, then their speaking skill would develop.

5. Means of Research

The data will be collected through teachers' and students' questionnaire. The teachers' questionnaire, intended for the teachers of Oral Expression, aims at investigating the teachers' opinions about applying interaction as a pedagogical strategy to enhance the learners' speaking skill. The students' questionnaire, intended for third year LMD (Licence, Master, Doctorate) students to find out whether the learners give importance and value to interaction that take place in the classroom. The analysis of the collected data aims at determining the interactive elements that will provide the basis for the development of the speaking skill.

6. Structure of the Study

The present dissertation consists of three main chapters. The first two chapters constitute the literature survey. Chapter One represents a review of classroom interaction; the main focus of this chapter is on its main types, aspects and principles. Chapter Two is devoted to the skill of speaking; its definition, importance, aspects of speakers' performance,

difficulties and speaking activities to be practised in the classroom.

The last chapter concerns the analysis of the collected data by means of the teachers' and the students' questionnaires.

Chapter One

Classroom Interaction

Introduction

1. The Communicative Approach

2.1. Communicative Competence

2.2. Interaction as a Type of CLT Frameworks

3. Classroom Interaction

3.1. Aspects of Classroom Interaction

3.1.1. Negotiation of Meaning

3.1.2. The Role of Feedback

3.2. Types of Classroom Interaction

3.2.1. Teacher-Learner Interaction

3.2.2. Learner-Learner Interaction

3.3. Principles of Verbal Interaction

3.3.1. Adjacency Pairs

3.3.2. Exchanges

3.3.3. Turns Taking

3.3.4. Transactions and Topics

3.4. Teachers' Roles and Responsibilities

3.5. Designing Groups and Pairs

3.5.1. Criteria for Designing Pairs and Groups

Conclusion

Chapter one

Classroom Interaction

Introduction

In the field of second language acquisition, interaction has long been considered important in language learning. It requires in the process of second language learning the presence of two or more learners who collaborate in achieving communication. Interaction is a way of learning in general and developing the language skills in particular. In this chapter we shall deal with the notion of interaction as a strategy that takes place in classrooms, starting with a brief view about communicative language teaching (CLT) theory, since interaction is one type of its frameworks. Then, We will explain the main aspects, types and principles of interaction, in addition to the role of teachers in the classroom interaction, and finally with designing groups and pairs to ensure a high level of interactive learning.

1. The Communicative Approach

With the importance of English on today's world, teachers look for a significant method to meet the demand of learners to use this language for communication. The communicative approach or (CLT) is considered as the best approach for such purpose. It is mainly related to the idea that "*Language learning will take care of itself*" (Harmer, 2001:70). A deep understanding of CLT theory and its implication for classroom practice is very important for both learners and teachers, since it aims at helping learners to use the target language for communication. Lindsay and Knight (2006) say that CLT appeared by the end of 1960s and continued to evolve. Today, it is not considered as a method but as an approach for teaching based on the idea that language learning means learning how to use the language to achieve a better communication outside the classroom.

CLT developed because of the limitations of the previous methods, it mainly focuses on the ability to communicate and interact which was absent in the other methods. Harmer also makes the important point that learners are always in need to be exposed to language and be given opportunities to use this language in order to develop their knowledge and skills (2001). So, among the characteristics of CLT approach is that it was created around the individual learner, taking his needs and objectives as starting points in teaching and learning a second language.

1.1. Communicative Competence

The communicative approach is mainly based on the theory of communicative competence that includes grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic competence. According to Hedge (2000) who has been explaining these competences or abilities needed to create a coherent conversation, grammatical or linguistic competence refers to the different aspects of the language; syntax, phonology and lexicology, i.e. it is related to the knowledge of spelling, pronunciation and grammatical structure. Sociolinguistic competence or pragmatic competence refers to the social rules of language use which includes a better understanding of the social context where communication takes place like the shared knowledge of the participants; It is also called the illocutionary competence. Discourse competence deals with the ability to understand individual messages and to recognize all the discourse features. Strategic competence consists of the strategies involved for a successful communication, such strategies take place when learners cannot express what they want to say because they lack the resources to do so. In the communicative approach, most researchers agree on the need for the communicative competence to support learning and make the classroom interaction successful. Johnson (1995:161) claims that “*classroom communicative competence is essential in order for the second language students to participate in and learn from their classroom experience.*”

1.2. Interaction as a Type of CLT Frameworks

Many researchers have investigated about classroom communication that involves interaction; they showed the importance of interactions in building knowledge and improving skills. For Allwright (1984) it is important to keep learners active in the classroom, which means reducing the amount of teachers talk in classroom and increasing the learner's talk time. Naturally, they will talk to each other through pairs or groups where each learner gets his time to talk. Teachers usually seek to move on from getting learners talking to each other to the more complex problems of getting them communicating, and that is the result of what is called the communicative approach. CLT relies mainly on the value of interaction; person to person encounters. Teachers and learners then should distinguish between interaction and communication; they should not consider them as synonyms, In spite of the fact that many of them consider that communication refers only to people interacting with each other.

2. Classroom Interaction

The communicative process involves interaction between at least two people who share a list of signs and semiotic rules. The concept of interaction is defined as *“reciprocal events that require at least two objects and two actions. Interaction occurs when these objects and events naturally influence one another”* (Wagner, 1994:8). Therefore, interactions do not occur only from one side, there must be mutual influence through giving and receiving messages in order to achieve communication.

The concept of interaction has a significant importance in the classroom too; it is an essential part in learning and teaching processes. Allwright and Baily (1991) hold that interaction is something people can do together i.e. collectively. Obviously, in the classroom it is considered as important for the teacher to manage who should talk, to whom, on what topic, in what language and

so on. However, none of this can change the fact that classroom interaction focuses on the learners' cooperation. In order to understand the relationship between classroom interaction and SLA, there are two main assumptions. First, the classroom provides an environment that leads to SLA, The second is that what happens in classrooms involve communication, and this can be seen as some form of interaction, i.e. there are reception and production based theories of classroom interaction and SLA. Reception-based theories agree that interaction contributes to SLA through learners' reception and understanding of the SL; however, production-based theories contend that interaction helps learners to produce the SL (Ellis, 1990 cited in Johnson 1995).

Reception-based theory, according to Johnson (1995), is related to the input hypothesis, which holds that the input should be comprehensible to learners for a better acquisition since the latter happens when learners understand input that contains well-formed structures and which can meet their current level. Productive-based theory relates to the output hypothesis that holds that learners should get opportunities to produce the language if they want to be fluent or like native speakers.

2.1. Aspects of Classroom Interaction

Classroom interaction involves two main aspects, which are negotiation of meaning and feedback, if these two elements are not available in the classroom, then we cannot speak of a successful learning through interaction. Ellis and Foto (1999:09) say, "*Interaction contributes to acquisition through the provision of negative evidence and through opportunities for modified output.*" Interaction then is rich of meaning negotiation where the learners can receive feedback from their interlocutors.

2.1.1. Negotiation of Meaning

Studies on interaction between learners focus on the interactive discourse between learners

engaged in second language learning tasks where negotiation of meaning is the focal point. Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005) define negotiation of meaning as the verbal exchanges that occur when the speakers seek to prevent the breakdown of the communication. They add that negotiation of meaning is the central discourse structure. The learners in the classroom then should make the linguistic output more comprehensible for the other learners in the class, so that they can engage with them in the interaction. However, if there is a lack of comprehension different processes can be focused on to repair the interaction. Mackey Alison (2007: 12-3) asserts that

“Through processes of repetition, segmentation and rewording, interaction can serve to draw learners’ attention to form-meaning relationship and provide them with additional time to focus on encoding meaning.”

Repetition involves repeating the students’ exact speech as it is when the others do not understand. Segmentation is another process for repairing a negotiation; the students repeat the utterance by dividing it into linguistic segments with a rising or falling intonation. Rewording means rephrasing the original utterance, i.e. using other simple words. Therefore, instead of all these terms, clarification can be considered as an umbrella term to cover these processes; the learners in interactions often ask the one who speaks to well explain if they do not understand, and the latter attempts to modify his output to meet the level of understanding of the whole class. The opportunities of meaning negotiation help the language learners in three main ways. First, as suggested by Long and others, it helps learners to get comprehensible input that is to say it facilitates comprehension. One way in which this takes place is when the negotiation breaks down and learners seek to segment the input into units so that they can understand them. Second, negotiation of meaning provides learners with feedback on how to use the second language. For example, teachers very often correct students’ mistakes when they negotiate so that they use the SL accurately. Finally, negotiation of meaning encourages learners to adjust, manipulate and modify their personal output, because a successful negotiation occurs when learners produce outputs that

are comprehensible and therefore target-like (Pica 1992-1994 cited in Ellis 2003).

To sum up, in negotiation of meaning the students will focus on the form as well, because negotiation involves feedback and modification to input and output when the students attempt to send again their misunderstanding, which is sometimes due to problems with language use.

2.1.2. The Role of Feedback

Researchers have suggested that oral feedback is one of the key beneficial aspects of interaction which can promote learning in general. According to Mackey (2007: 30) *“through interaction that involves feedback, the attention of the learners are paid to the form of errors and are pushed to create modification.”* In order for interaction to develop the speaking skill, learners must notice the errors and recognize them for correction. Thus, for some researchers attention is very crucial for learning. Feedback may occur from learners, i.e. learners are able to correct and call each other’s attention to the errors. In doing so, they very rarely replace their interlocutors’ correct form with incorrect form. However, feedback from teachers can be different from the learners’ one, because teachers employ many types of correction strategies.

Mackey (2007) suggests two forms of feedback, an explicit and implicit feedback. Explicit feedback is defined as any feedback that states overtly that learners do not use the second language correctly in their speech; it is called also metalinguistic feedback because teachers provide the learners with the linguistic form of their errors. Whereas implicit feedback refers to the corrective feedback that includes requests for clarification or recasts, in other words, teachers rephrase the learners’ utterance by changing one or more sentence component, Recently, many studies have shown that the explicit feedback is more effective than the implicit feedback, this means that in explicit feedback, the teacher draws the students’ attention directly to the errors so that the students do not use them again. However, in implicit feedback, the teacher asks students to reformulate their

output to be understood and this is an indirect corrective feedback since the teacher does not point the errors directly. In brief, the feedback role of interaction is of crucial Importance. Students often want to know how they are doing in relation to their peers. However, teachers should not deal with all oral production of the students and during all the time, they should make decisions when and how to react to the students' errors so that the interactive activity will not break down each time.

2.2. Types of Classroom Interaction

Thurmond (2003) defines interaction as

“The learners’ engagement with the course content, other learners, the instructor and the technological medium used in the course. True interactions with other learners, the instructor and technology results in a reciprocal exchange of information. The exchange of information intended to enhance knowledge development in the learning environment.”

From this quote we understand that there are four types of interaction: learner-course content interaction, learner-learner interaction, learner-teacher interaction and learner-technology interaction. We shall focus in this research work only on two main types.

2.2.1. Teacher-Learner Interaction

This type of interaction as Coulthard (1977) mentions has received a great deal from teachers in a wide range of disciplines. It happens between the teacher and one learner or many other learners, that is to say a teacher takes a part in such interaction. He negotiates with his students the content of the course, asks questions, uses students' ideas, lectures, gives directions, criticizes or justifies student talk responses. On the other hand, the students will benefit by drawing on the experience of their teachers on how well to interact in the manner that is most effective. Scrivener (2005: 85) made the following diagram to show clearly how the interaction happens between the teacher and the students.

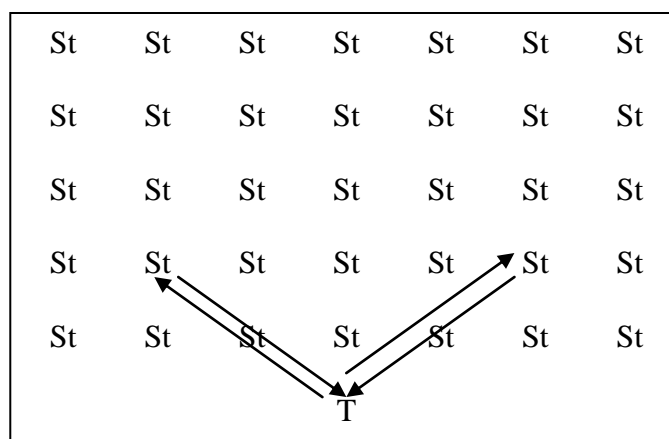


Figure 1: Interaction between teacher and students

Key:

↗ Teacher interacts with student

↘ Student interacts with teacher

St Student

T Teacher

During teacher-learner interaction, the students seek to demonstrate their speaking and listening skills in front of their teachers that is why latter should consider his way of interacting which is very crucial in learning and teaching. According to Harmer (2009) teachers should focus on three things when they talk with their students. Firstly, they must pay attention to the kind of the language the students are able to understand, i.e. teachers should provide an output that is comprehensible for the level of all the students. Secondly, the teachers must think about what they will say to their students, hence the teacher speech is as a resource for learners. Finally, teachers also have to identify the ways in which they will speak such as the voice, tone and intonation.

works. So, learners will establish social relationship through this kind of interaction, where the sense of learning community is promoted and isolation is reduced in the classroom.

Naegle Paula (2002: 128) adds also that *“talking students with their peers about the content of the course is a powerful way for them to reinforce what they have learned.”* The teachers, then must encourage such type of interaction between learners because it is the fastest and the best way, it makes learners active rather than passive participants.

2.3. Principles of Verbal Interaction

Classroom interaction prepares learners to use the language naturally outside the classroom. It provides for them the basis and the principles to interact in English in real situations; that is why classroom talk is worth investigating and understanding. The students should learn some essential principles involved in interactions. We shall deal with some McCarthy principles as the following.

2.3.1. Adjacency Pairs

McCarthy (1991) defines them as referring to pairs of utterances produced by the speaker; they are usually mutual and dependant, the most obvious example is that a question predicts an answer and an answer needs a question. Pairs of utterances such as greeting-greeting and apology-acceptance are called adjacency pairs. They are of different types; the first pair-part can be the same as the second pair-part, for example, saying hello-hello, happy new year- happy new year. However, others expect a different second pair-part such as congratulations and thanks.

2.3.2. Exchanges

The term of exchanges was developed by Sinclair and Coulthard in 1975 to refer to the utterances performed by the speakers. They consist of moves; the first move often called the opening move or initiation, the second move is the answering move or response, and the last move is called the follow up move. According to McCarthy (1999), the exchanges are the central units in any interaction talk; they are independently observable entities, and we may find adjacency pairs within their boundaries.

The patterns of the moves of the exchanges were followed by the traditional classrooms, where students were restricted to responding moves, whereas the teachers play the great role in any talk. In such classrooms, learners get little or no practice of how to initiate or to end the talk. Today, Teachers well understand the role of the students in initiating, responding and closing the interaction because they will use the second language outside the classroom too, where they will not only respond to the speakers' questions. Teachers' role then, is to encourage learners to practise common opening, answering and follow up strategies through designing speaking activities to meet this goal.

2.3.3. Turns Taking

“This phenomenon refers to both the construction and distribution of turns.” (Ellis and Barkhuizen, 2005: 201) In some interactive activities, we can observe how participants organize themselves to take their turns. Therefore, according to McCarthy (1991) turns occur smoothly between the participants, but with a little overlap and interruption with a brief silence between turns. People often take turns in speech when they are selected or named by the current speaker.

There are some linguistic devices to take turns when a person is unable to enter the normal flow of turn taking. Parrott (1993) suggests some expressions learners may use to take turns, for

example “something I’d just like to bring up is...”, in addition to some other expressions. McCarthy adds that there are some linguistic means to avoid taking turn when one has this opportunity or to make it clear for the speaker that he is attending his message, this is called “back-channel responses”, it consists of vocalizations like mm, ah, and ha in addition to short words or phrases such as yeah, no, right, and sure. These back-channel vocalizations vary from one culture to another. A further feature of turn taking is the way speakers predict others’ utterances and seek to complete the utterances for them. This often happens between students in classrooms where they help each other in talk. Other features of turn taking in English interaction include body language like head movement or eye contact. Teachers may teach turn management directly, and supply learners with a range of phrases of how to take a turn or how to interrupt the speakers in a formal and informal setting. To conclude, turn taking is not really something that needs to be taught, but specific linguistic realization can be presented and practised in addition to the cultural differences that must be mentioned by the teachers to make the learners aware of them.

2.3.4. Transactions and Topics

Transactions “*are concerned with how speakers manage longer stretches of talk*” (McCarthy 1991: 130). He explains how well speakers realize transaction markers in talk. They are found in conversations, marking openings and closing. The teacher may present and illustrate a set of useful transaction markers such as right, now, so, okay,...etc. It is important to make learners see whether these transactions markers can be translated directly into their first language through designing interactive activities that need to be opened and closed within a specified time limit.

A topic is a crucial factor and considered as the basis for interaction to take place. McCarthy (1991) points out that many questions arise around the topic notion: how it is opened, developed, changed and closed. Topics could be defined on the formal level as stretches of talk linked by using

certain topics or transactional markers such as lexical ones (by the way, to change the subject...), or phonological ones like changing the pitch, or using single words or phrasal title that express the content of different segments of talk such as Holidays, buying a house,...etc. Topics could be seen as the ideas given by several speakers i.e. each speaker performs an utterance which is relevant to the other speaker's utterance, then the topic is created on the basis of interaction. Pragmatically speaking, topics are strings of relevant utterances perceived by participants in talk. The definition that seems to be dominant in the content of language teaching is that topics are titles for the subject matter of speech. Topics in general are raised for several of reasons, most of the time it is just to keep the talk going because people are together and chatting, and in these cases, we can see clearly how topics start, develop, shift or come to close. Language teachers very often concentrate on the vocabulary of topics because if there is a lack of vocabulary, it is impossible to talk on a topic. The interactive features of topics could be taught and practised too as turn taking, such as the use of markers both opening ones (by the way, I meant to ask you...), and closing ones (still, anyway, so...). If the students did not participate in classroom because of the chosen topic, the teacher should consider this point in the future (Ibid.).

2.4. Teachers' Roles and Responsibilities

Most students will not engage in an interaction by themselves unless the teachers start first. Obviously, the role of the teacher is very crucial in motivating and creating interest in the topics. The basis of the communicative approach is this capacity of the teacher to adapt himself, to change roles. Hedge Tricia (2000: 26) identifies important roles the teachers can play,

“As controller in eliciting nationality words; as assessor of accuracy as students try to pronounce the words; as corrector of pronunciation; as organizer in giving instructions of the pair work, initiating it, monitoring it, and organizing feedback; as promoter while students are working together and as resource if students need help with words and structures during the pairwork.”

- Controller: within a classroom interaction and especially learner-teacher interaction, the teacher is the responsible for the teaching and learning processes. Harmer (2001) asserts that the teacher job here is to transmit knowledge from himself to his students.

- Assessor: the most expected act from the teacher is to show the learners that their accuracy is being developed; Harmer (2001) says that this is done through giving correction or by praising them. The students have to know how they are being assessed; the teacher should tell them their strengths and weaknesses, the students, then can have a clear idea about their levels and what they need to concentrate on. The assessor teacher should pay attention also to the learners’ reactions and how to deal with them.

- Corrector: the teacher has to decide when and where to correct students’ production. Another important point is that the teacher should be careful when correcting pronunciation mistakes or errors the learners commit during classroom interaction, i.e. he works seriously to give the correct pronunciation, form or meaning because the learners very often acquire these issues from their teachers.

- Organizer: it is the most important role –according to Harmer (2001) - that the teacher acts in a classroom where many things must be set up such as organizing pair/ group work, giving learners instructions about how well they interact, and finally stopping everything when the time is over. The teacher in such a role spends much time in engaging all the class in the interaction and ensures its participation. Once the students are involved in the interaction, the teacher can stop interacting

and let the learners speak and listen to each other, exchange views and why not correct each others too.

- Prompter: Sometimes the learners do not find the words when they talk to each others or with the teacher, the role then of the latter is to encourage the learners to think creatively so that to be independent from the teacher. In such role, the teacher must prevent himself to help the students even if he wants so that they will be creative in their learning (Ibid.).

- Resource: the job of the teacher here is to answer students' questions. For example, when they want to know how to say something or when they look for the meaning of a given word or phrase, they go back to their teacher as a resource of information. In turn, the teacher should be able to offer such needed information.

Another role the teacher needs to adopt in a classroom interaction is the observer. Harmer (2001) points out that, the teacher here should disattract the students' attention so that they can interact naturally and spontaneously. Moreover, he has to take notes about his learners in their use of actual language. Teachers do not use observation only to give feedback, but also to evaluate the success of the classroom interaction in developing the speaking skill of the learners. If there is failure in achieving fluency, then the teacher tries to bring changes for the classroom in the future.

2.5. Designing Pairs and Groups

In an interactive activity, the teacher may devide the whole class into pairs and groups. In some cases, it is possible to let learners find their own partners. However, it is also better for learners who do not know each other well to interact together, since one of the goals of interaction is to establish social relationships between the learners so that the learning process is facilitated. Lindsay and Knight (2006) make the important point that it is a good idea to gather students and let them work in pairs and groups in order to practise the speaking skill effectively. Because if those

learners will talk only to their teachers, then their chances for practice are reduced. Richards and Lockhart (1996: 152) support this view saying,

“Through interacting with other students in pairs or groups, students can be given the opportunity to draw on their linguistic resources in a nonthreatening situation and use them to complete different kinds of talks. Indeed, it is through this kind of interaction that researchers believe many aspects of both linguistic and communicative competence are developed.”

So, learner-learner interaction occurs through designing groups and pairs where learners can enhance their competence in using communication and language.

In pairwork the learner finds himself in an obligation to practise the language because he must speak with the other learners who is with him. Harmer (2001) asserts that pairwork increases the amount of each student’s speaking time. It allows students to work and interact independently without teachers’ guidance, and this leads to promoting learner independence. Groupwork is like pairwork because it increases the amount of talking time for individual students, but unlike pairwork because more students will contribute in the interaction; they will have different ideas and varied opinions. So, groupwork ensures a high level of interaction. Richards and Lockhart (1996) argue also that groupwork promotes collaboration among the students, it creates the sense of learning community that reduces learners’ isolation.

2.5.1. Criteria for Designing Pairs and Groups

Teachers should decide how to put individual students into pairs and groups because it is very essential in varying the interactive learning. Harmer (2001) sets up a set of principles that teachers can be based on when creating pairs and groups.

- Friendship: when grouping learners, the teachers should consider putting friends with friends, rather than taking risks of putting learners with others whom they find it difficult to interact with them. In such cases, the learners would choose and go towards other students they like, admire

or want to be liked by.

- Streaming: refers to the act of arranging students into pairs or groups according to their abilities. For example, the teachers may stream a group of less able learners and ask them to interact and from time to time they give them the special help they need. However, when the teachers stream a group of more able learners, their goal is to create a challenge, competition and a high level of negotiation among them. Participation is another basis that the teachers might focus on during streaming. If they see that some students participate less than others they might then make a group/ pair of weak participators to ensure that those learners will not hide behind the more talking classmates.

- Chance: the teachers can group the learners by chance without any reason of friendship, ability or level of participation, and this is the easiest way of creating groups or pairs because it does not require pre-planning from the teachers. One way of grouping the learners under this basis of chance is sitting; the learners who sit next or near each other will interact together.

- Changing groups: when the teachers create the groups or pairs according to the previous principles, it does not mean that the members should stay until the end in their groups. The pair/ group may change while the interactive activity continues. For example one member from other groups can interact with the actual group and share information with them, then he may come back to his original group/ pair.

Conclusion

Interaction is at the heart of the current theories of communicative competence; it involves learners in face-to-face or teacher-learners encounters in the classroom. Pairs or groups interaction provides a basis for language learning in general; it gives the learners practice in community and negotiation of meanings through taking turns, in addition to learning other features that are crucial

in any interactive discourse such as how to initiate, respond and close conversations. At the same time, it allows learners to know how they can understand and make themselves understood. Teachers' talking time must be reduced in classroom interactions as apposed to learners who should increase their talking time because their teachers need to take other roles.

Chapter Two

Speaking Skill

Introduction

1. The Skill of Speaking

1.5. Definition of Speaking

1.6. Elements of Speaking

1.2.3. Language Features

1.2.4. Mental/ Social Processing

1.7. The Importance of Speaking

1.8. Integration between Listening and Speaking

6. Characteristics of Speaking Performance

2.3. Fluency

2.4. Accuracy

2.2.4. Grammar

2.2.5. Vocabulary

2.2.6. Pronunciation

7. Oral Communicative Strategies

3.3. Achievement Strategies

3.1.4. Guessing Strategies

3.1.5. Paraphrase Strategies

3.1.6. Co-operative Strategies

3.4. Reduction Strategies

3.2.2. Avoidance Strategies

8. Speaking Difficulties in Foreign Language Learning

4.5. Inhibition

4.6. Nothing to Say

4.7. Low Uneven Participation

4.8. Mother Tongue Use

9. Practising the Speaking Skill in Classroom

Conclusion

Chapter two

The Speaking Skill

Introduction

Teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) requires learners' exposure to what is called the foreign language skills: reading, speaking, writing and listening. The first and the last aim of acquiring such language skills is to achieve a high development of abilities of receiving and producing the second language either in oral or written form, i.e. achieving a good mastery in the productive and receptive skills. As far as speaking is concerned, it is regarded as the major skill to be developed because it is necessary for displaying the language proficiency, Learners are going to be put in situations where communication in English is needed, that is why the emphasis is mainly on speaking.

In this chapter, light will be shed on the speaking skill with more details, including the main characteristics of speaking performance, demonstrating the oral communicative strategies, with some focus on speaking difficulties and finally, how to practise the speaking skill in the classroom.

1. The Skill of Speaking

Second Language Learners speech is characterized by a number of errors and mistakes. Therefore, speaking is not a simple skill; its complete mastery requires some experience and practice. Luoma (2004: 1) argues that "*speaking in a foreign language is very difficult and competence in speaking takes a Long time to develop.*" The skill of speaking is quite different from writing in its typical grammatical, lexical and discourse patterns. Moreover, some of the processing skills needed in speaking differ from the ones involved in reading and writing. Also, second language speaking differs from first language speaking in terms of the lack of grammar and

vocabulary knowledge of learners, i.e., the process of building utterances accurately and retrieving words does not yet become automatic in second language speaking (Thornbury 2005).

1.1. Definition of Speaking

Speaking is a basic skill that Language Learners should master with the other language skills. It is defined as a complex process of sending and receiving messages through the use of verbal expressions, but it also involves non verbal symbols such as gestures and facial expressions. Hedge (2000: 261) defines speaking as “*a skill by which they [people] are judged while first impressions are being formed.*” That is to say speaking is an important skill which deserves more attention in both first and second language because it reflects people’s thoughts and personalities.

1.2. Elements of Speaking

To speak the second language fluently and accurately, learners need to be able to know some elements which are very important to develop this skill. Harmer (2001) mentions these elements which refer to the language features that learners should have knowledge about. In addition to the processes of the language and information in the same time when an interlocutor interacts with them.

1.2.1. Language Features

The following features are necessary for an effective speaking.

- Connected speech: this ability needs from the speaker of English to produce more connected sounds not only separated phonemes. These sounds may be modified, omitted, added or weakened in the connected speech.
- Expressive devices: English native speakers use effectively the phonological rules which refer to

the pitch, stress, volume, speed with the use of non verbal means. These devices help them to convey their intended meaning. Students, then need to have this ability of employing such devices if they want to be effective communicators.

- Lexis and grammar: when learners produce some language functions, they often use the same lexical structures. The teacher's role then, is to provide them with different phrases which carry different functions so that they can use them in the different stages of communication with others.

- Negotiation language: learners benefit a lot from the use of negotiation language; they often ask clarification when they are listening to others talk. So, the teachers have to provide them with the necessary expressions they need when they ask clarification from other speakers. Learners also need to well perform their utterances if they seek to be understood and clear especially when they can see that the other interlocutors did not understand them.

1.2.2. Mental/ Social Processing

The necessary processing skills of speaking are the following:

- Language processing: this refers to the ability of the learners/ speakers to process the language in their minds through putting it in a coherent order so that the other interlocutors can understand it and get the intended messages. Speakers also should be able to retrieve words and phrases from their memories to use them when they are interacting with others.

- Interacting with others: most of the speaking situations involve interaction between two or more interlocutors, that is to say an effective speaker needs to be able to listen and understand others' talk then reacts through taking turns or keeping the others to do so.

- Information processing: this relates to the ability of processing the information in the mind rapidly, i.e. the time speakers get information, they should be ready to response to the others' talk.

1.3. The Importance of Speaking

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

In the communicative approach, speaking was given more importance since oral communication involves speech where learners are expected to interact verbally with other people. Moreover, the teachers' talk will be reduced; that is to say learners are supported to talk more in the classroom.

Ur (2000: 12) declares also that

“of all the four skills [listening, speaking, reading and writing], speaking seems intuitively the most important: people who know a language are referred to as ‘speakers’ of the language, as if speaking included all other kinds of knowing.”

Today, many second language learners give the speaking skill priority in their learning because if they master this skill then they will be considered as if they have mastered all of the other skills. Furthermore, the main question often given to foreign language learners is “do you speak English?” or “do you speak French?” , but not “do you write English?” We understand that most of people take speaking and knowing a language as synonyms. Celce-Murcia (2001: 103) argues that for most people *“the ability to speak a language is synonymous with knowing that language since speech is the most basic means of human communication.”*

The importance of speaking is more revealed with the integration of the other language skills. For instance, speaking can help students to develop their vocabulary and grammar and then improving their writing skill. With speaking, learners can express their personal feeling, opinions or

ideas; tell stories; inform or explain; request; converse and discuss, i.e. through speaking, we can display the different functions of language. Speaking is very important outside the classroom as well. Many companies and organizations look for people who speak English very well for the purpose of communicating with other people. So, speakers of foreign languages have more opportunities to get jobs in such companies. Baker and Westrup (2003: 05) support that “*a student who can speak English well may have greater chance for further education, of finding employment and gaining promotion.*”

1.4. Integration between Listening and Speaking

In discussing aural skills, speaking and listening are two basic skills and are essential in acquiring communicative competence in language learning. So, part of being a proficient speaker is listening to oral language and understanding what is said so that the responses will be accurate. A speaker has necessity to a listener because speaking is rarely carried in isolation, as put by Redmond and Vrchota (2007:120) “*speakers are at the mercy of listeners.*” Moreover, the listening skill involves a list of processes of perception, interpretation, evaluation, retaining, recalling, and reaction to the speakers (Ibid.). Therefore, listening will not occur in isolation as well, there must be a speech to listen to. Finally, for communication to occur, both a speaker and a listener must take parts in it through interacting and negotiating verbally. The speaker produces comprehensible output, and the listener pays attention and then tries to process these output effectively.

2. Characteristics of Speaking Performance

In recent teaching context, a lot of attention has been paid to design activities which focus more on tasks that are balanced between the need to achieve fluency and accuracy. These criteria are also based upon in the assessment of the oral skills.

In the communicative approach, fluency and accuracy are of the main characteristics of this approach, and they are seen as complementary in accomplishing a given task. Although Richards and Rodgers (2001: 157) mention that *“fluency and acceptable language is the primary goal: Accuracy is judged not in the abstract but in context”*, and this is an obvious point since the emphasis of CLT is on the communicative process between learners or teachers-learners, rather than mastery of the language forms.

Many questions have been raised about the role of accuracy in CLT theory. Hedge (2000: 61) makes the important point that *“The communicative approach somehow excuses teachers and learners from a consideration of how to develop high levels of accuracy in the use of grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary.”* Learners then, should develop a communicative competence through classroom practice; however, simultaneously they should know how the language system works in a correct and appropriate way.

2.1. Fluency

The main goal teachers wish to achieve in teaching the productive skill of speaking is oral fluency; it is the main characteristics of the speaker performance. Hughes (2002) defines fluency as the ability to express oneself in an intelligible, reasonable and accurate way without too much hesitation, otherwise the communication will break down because listeners will lose their interest. To achieve this goal, the teachers then should train learners to use their personal language freely to express their own ideas and then avoid imitations of a model of some kind. Hedge Tricia (2000: 54) adds also that

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

One can say, it is the ability to respond in a coherent way through linking the words and

phrases effectively, pronounce the sounds clearly, using stress and intonation, i.e. doing all of these quickly. Hughes (2002) supports also that fluency and coherence refer to the ability to speak in a normal level of continuity, rate and effort in addition to link the ideas together in a coherent way. Speech rate and speech continuity are the key indicators of coherence.

Many of second language speakers think of fluency as the ability to speak fast, that is why they start speaking rapidly without pauses. Thornbury, (2005) argues that speed is an important factor in fluency and pausing too, because speakers need to take breath. Native speakers also need to pause from time to time in order to let the interlocutors catch what they said. However, a frequent pausing is an indication that the speaker has problems of speaking. In such cases Thornbury suggests what is called ‘tricks’ or production strategies, i.e. the ability to fill the pauses. The most common pause fillers are “uh” and “um”, vagueness expressions such as “short of” and “I mean”. Another device for filling the pauses is the repetition of one word when there is a pause.

2.2. Accuracy

Most second language teachers nowadays emphasized the term of accuracy in their teaching because learners seek more to be fluent and they forget about being accurate. Without structuring accurate speech, speakers will not be understood and their interlocutors will lose interest if they perform incorrect utterances each time. Therefore, paying attention to correctness and completeness of language form is of more importance for oral proficiency. (Skehan 1996 b: 23 cited in Ellis and Barkhuizen 2005: 139) define accuracy as referring “*to how well the target language is produced in relation to the rule system of the target language.*” Therefore, learners should focus on a number of things in their production of the spoken language, mainly, the grammatical structure, vocabulary and pronunciation.

2.2.1. Grammar

According to (IELTS, 2001: 15 cited in Hughes 2002) the grammatical accuracy refers to the

range and the appropriate use of the learners' grammatical structure that involves the length and the complexity of the utterances in addition to the ability to use the subordinating clauses. The grammar of speech differs of that of writing. Thornbury (2005) lists the following features of spoken grammar:

- Clause is the basic unit of construction.
- Clauses are usually added (co-ordinate).
- Head+ body+ tail construction.
- Direct speech favored.
- A lot of ellipsis.
- Many question tags.
- Performance effects (hesitation, repeats, false starts, incompleteness, syntactic blends).

2.2.2. Vocabulary

Achieving accuracy in terms of vocabulary refers to the appropriate selection of words during speaking. Students often find difficulties when they try to express what they want to say, they lack the appropriate vocabulary, and they sometimes use words incorrectly like in the case of synonyms which do not carry the same meaning in all contexts. Students then, have to be able to use words and expressions accurately. According to Harmer (2001) the knowledge of the word classes also allows speakers to perform well formed utterances.

2.2.3. Pronunciation

English language has been long considered by either native speakers or non native speakers as a difficult language because of its pronunciation. Learners, then who want to develop their speaking skill in English should practise pronunciation overall. They should be aware of the different sounds

and their features and where they are made in one's mouth; they have also to be aware of where the words should be stressed, when to use raising intonation and when to use a falling one. All these issues give them extra information about how to speak English effectively and help to achieve the goal of a better understanding of spoken English. Redmond and Vrchota (2007: 104) argue that

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

However, if the pronunciation is not correct, the speakers then will not be understood and therefore accuracy is not achieved.

3. Oral Communicative Strategies

The ultimate aim of learning a second language in classrooms should be the acquisition of the oral communicative competence, i.e. the ability to speak appropriately and confidently. However, learners may find difficulties in taking parts in interactions. So, the best way to overcome these problems of communication is through using communicative strategies. Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005: 170-71) define communicative strategies as *“Speakers-oriented; that is they are used by learners to compensate for lack of L2 knowledge or their inability to access the L2 knowledge they have.”* These strategies help learners to avoid the breakdown of the oral communication. Hughes (2002) also defines this term as the ability of the learners to manipulate a conversation and negotiate interaction in an effective way. Such strategies are particularly important where there are problems of expression and communication.

Bygate (1987) classifies two main types of communicative strategies. First, achievement strategies which include: guessing strategies, paraphrase strategies and cooperative strategies. Second, reduction strategies which involve avoidance strategies.

3.1. Achievement Strategies

Learners use such strategies to compensate for language gap by using a substitute; they try to find a way to convey their messages without losing or changing it. Achievement strategies involve the following sub strategies.

3.1.1. Guessing Strategies

There are different types of guessing strategies the speaker might use. He can foreignize his mother tongue word and pronounce it as it belongs to the target language like a Frenchman who is speaking English and who uses the word 'manoeuvre' as it is an English word. The speaker might also use a word from his mother tongue without changing it hoping that the interlocutors will understand them. For example, an English speaker says 'il y a deux candles sur la cheminée.' A last guessing strategy can be used to coin a word, i.e. a learner creates a new target language word on the basis of his knowledge of the language, such as using 'air ball' for balloon.

3.1.2. Paraphrase Strategies

This mainly involves looking for an alternative to the word or the expression that the speaker needs in the target language. He might use a synonym or a more general word; this is called a lexical substitution strategy. The speaker can explain a concept or a word by making some sort of phrases to express his meaning, this is also called circumlocution. For example, a mixing of beige and brown: light brown.

3.1.3. Co-operative Strategies

These are used when the speaker gets help from the other interlocutors. He may ask for the word through using it in the mother tongue and the interlocutors help him to find it in the target language, or through indicating the object that he means.

3.2. Reduction Strategies

Learners reduce their communicative objectives through giving up the topic or abandoning a specific message.

3.2.1. Avoidance Strategies

The learners often use such strategies to avoid various kinds of trouble they can have. They may want to avoid some particular sound sequence, for example, 'th' in English. Some learners wish to avoid the conditional in English, and others like to avoid words whose gender is unknown or unsure for them. In using this kind of strategies, the learners may sacrifice part of their intended meaning. Finally, students may avoid some difficulties in expressing opinions too, because of the lack of vocabulary, so, they avoid some of the message content and look for something else to talk about or simply they keep silent.

4. Speaking Difficulties in Foreign Language Learning

Practising the speaking skill of the foreign language is not as knowing about this language. Echevarria et al. (2008) support that the difference between the knowledge of how things must be done and the ability to do these things is crucial in the learning process. Learners often find some difficulties when practising the speaking skill, even those who know about the system of the foreign language. Parrott (1993) asserts that teachers must perform a series of tasks that aim at providing learners with the confidence and the skills required to take advantages of the classroom opportunities in order to speak English effectively. According to Ur (2000) there are four main problems in getting students speak in the foreign language in the classroom.

4.1. Inhibition

This problem reveals more when learners try to participate in the classroom but many factors stop them to do so. Littlewood (1999: 93) argues that *“it is too easy for a foreign language classroom to create inhibition and anxiety.”* Such factors refer to the feeling of shyness and fear of making mistakes and these are due to the ill development of communicative skills and the feeling of linguistic inferiority. Students fear to make mistakes especially if they will speak to critical audience. Ur (2000:111) states that

“Learners are often inhibited about trying to say things in a foreign language in the classroom. Worried about, making mistakes, fearful of criticism or losing face, or simply shy of the attention that their speech attracts.”

This view is supported also by Bowman et al. (1989) who argue that in teaching speaking you are asking your learners to express themselves in front of the whole class, so this leads many of them to experience the stress when doing speaking activities. To end, stress and anxiety are two factors that also can stop the students from speaking confidently in front of their classmates.

4.2. Nothing to Say

The common expressions SL Learners use when they are imposed to participate in a given topic is “I have nothing to talk about”, “I don’t know”, “no comment” or they keep silent. These expressions are due to the lack of motivation in expressing themselves or the chosen topic they should discuss or talk about. Rivers (1968: 192) says that

“The teacher may have chosen a topic which is uncongenial to him [the learner] or about which he knows very little, and as a result he has nothing to express, whether in the native language or the foreign language.”

Moreover, the poor practice of the SL can contribute to create this problem. Backer and

Westrup (2003) support that many students find it difficult to answer when teachers ask them to say anything in the target language. The learners may have only some ideas to talk about; they may not know how to use some vocabulary or they are not sure of the grammatical correctness. Also, students could not carry out the discussion on topics that are not interesting for them.

4.3. Low Uneven Participation

This problem refers to the amount of each student's time of talking. Rivers (1968) claims that some personality factors can affect participation in a FL and teachers then should recognize them. There are some students who tend to be dominant and take almost the whole students' talk time. However, others prefer to speak only if they ensure that what they will say is correct, and some others keep silent, show no interest or participation all along the course. Harmer (2001) suggests streaming weak participators in groups and letting them work together. In such cases they will not hide behind the strong participators, and the teacher can achieve a high level of participation. Another factor that can create problem of participation is the classroom arrangement that may not help students to perform some speaking activities. Bowman et al. (1989: 40) support the idea by saying that "*traditional classroom seating arrangements often work against you in your interactive teaching.*"

Low participation is due to the ignorance of teacher's motivation too. If the teacher does not motivate his learners, the talkative ones also will show no interest. So, increasing and directing student motivation is one of the teacher's responsibilities.

4.4. Mother Tongue Use

SL students of the same mother tongue tend to use it outside and even inside the classroom because they feel more comfortable and less exposed to the target language. According to Baker

and Westrup (2003: 12) “*barriers to learning can occur if students knowingly or unknowingly transfer the cultural rules from their mother tongue to a foreign language.*” Therefore, the learners will not be able to use the foreign language correctly if they keep on being influenced by the use of their mother tongue. Lack of the vocabulary of the target language usually leads learners to borrow words from their native language.

5. Practising the speaking skill in classroom

Practising the speaking skill outside the classroom is the role of listening. In a foreign country, the students will hear the spoken language regularly and then without any conscious efforts they will imitate and perform their own utterances on the basis of what they have heard. Progressively, they will come at a stage where they can speak like people around them.

In the mother country, SL students need to practise the language regularly inside the classroom through performing different activities. O’Mlley and Pierce (1996: 59) assert the American Council of Teachers of Foreign Language (ACTFL) suggests that “*different kinds of speaking activities (and consequently assessment task) are appropriate at different levels of proficiency.*” So, learners should be given ample practice in classroom at all levels to express themselves in situations where they can use spontaneous language.

Practice activities may serve the learning/teaching goal of speaking proficiency. Richards and Lockhart (1996) define practice activities as tasks used to perform or learn a particular item or involve the use of a given model. For example, dialogues may be used to perform sentence patterns. Richards, Platt and Weber (1985: 289) add that “*the use of variety of different tasks in language teaching is said to make language teaching more communicative[...]since it provides a purpose for classroom activity*” (cited in Lee, 2000:31). Tasks, then, are also used to achieve communication beyond that of practising the language itself.

If we assume that speaking the SL is an essential part of language learning, teachers must provide activities that involve interaction between learners. Scriverener (2005: 152) makes the important point that

“the aim of communicative activity in class is to get learners to use the language they are learning to interact in realistic and meaningful ways. Usually involving exchanges of information or opinion.”

Among these activities are the following

- Communication games: teachers design such games to encourage and involve the students in a verbal interaction. According to Bygate (1987) such activities include first, “Describe and Draw” in which one student describes a given picture and the other one draws it. Second, “Describe and Arrange”; one student describes a particular structure using oral language and the other reconstructs it without seeing the original one. Third, “Find the difference”, two students have two similar pictures but with some differences, they must extract these differences through describing their pictures, i.e. without seeing each others’ pictures. O’Malley and Pierce (1996) call these activities “information gap activities”; they define them as *“the ability of one person to give information to another. An information gap is an activity where one student is provided with information that is kept from a partner.”*

- Drama, simulations and role-plays: These three types of oral activities are very important – according to Bygate (1987) - they are not performed for audiences, the participants work together within an imaginary setting. O’Malley and Pierce (1996) say that such activities are more authentic because they provide a format for using the real life conversation such as repetitions, interruptions, recitations, facial expressions and gestures. Students often engage in another identity in role-plays, drama and simulations activities, where their anxiety is reduced, motivation is increased and their language acquisition enhanced.

●Discussion activities: these activities are often employed for advanced language learners; they can serve as the basis of spontaneous interaction. Lindsay and Knight (2006) point out that in such activities, students are supposed to give their opinions or receive others' opinions, they can speak freely without being told what to say or not by the teacher, the students should be only informed what to talk about and given the enough time to structure what they wish to say. However, Thornbury (2005) says that many teachers agree that the best discussions are those that arise spontaneously either because one learner reports something personal or because the topic of the course book arises discussion.

●Presentations and Talks: The best way to make students gain their self-confidence is through making them present oral works in front of their classmates. Thornbury (2005) asserts that the students act of standing up in front of their colleagues and speaking is an excellent preparation for authentic speaking. A prepared talk is when students make the presentation on a given topic of their choice, and this talk is not planned for an informal spontaneous conversations; it is more writing-like.

Conclusion

As a productive skill, speaking is a very important process that helps to evaluate learners' proficiency in the target language. It should be one of the basic curriculum designs of second or foreign language teaching, in addition to other skills. Learning to speak entails learner's engagement in communicative situations so that they will activate their speaking capacity. So, the development of oral skill requires students to make active use of the language that is correct in its grammar and pronunciation. That is to say fluency and accuracy are two essential aspects to be developed in classroom interaction.

Chapter Three:

Teachers' and Students' Questionnaire

Introduction

1. The Students' Questionnaire

1.1. The Sample

1.2. Description of the Questionnaire

1.3. Analysis of the Results

1.4. Interpretation of the Results

2. The Teachers' Questionnaire

2.1. The Sample

2.2. Description of the Questionnaire

2.3. Analysis of the Results

2.4. Interpretation of the Results

Conclusion

Chapter Three

Teachers' and Students' Questionnaire

Introduction

The present research is about eliciting teachers' and students' opinion about the effect of classroom interaction on developing the speaking skill, since the teachers and the learners are the main variables of this study. Their views and opinions are very crucial to test the stated hypothesis, and the most appropriate tool to investigate that is through addressing a questionnaire to both learners and teachers.

The students' questionnaire aims at finding out whether the learners give importance and a value to interactions that happen inside the classroom in activating their speaking skill through participating with their classmates or teachers.

The teachers' questionnaire is intended to investigate the teachers' opinions about encouraging interaction as a pedagogical strategy to enhance the learners' speaking skill.

1. The Students' Questionnaire

1.1. The Sample

The forty (40) students who responded to the questionnaire were chosen among the total number of the third year LMD students' population (555) at the University of Constantine. The selection of such sample was based on the consideration that third year LMD students have already experienced the concept of interaction with their teachers in the previous years –first and second year- so, their teachers focus more on students' talk at this level since they are considered as

advanced learners. Moreover, those students are supposed to graduate this year and therefore if they happen to teach in the future they will accordingly know about the importance of interaction in building knowledge and developing the skills.

1.2. Description of the Questionnaire

This questionnaire consists of fifteen (15) questions which are arranged in a logical way. They are either closed questions requiring from the students to choose ‘yes’ or ‘no’ answers, or to pick up the appropriate answer from a number of choices or open questions requiring from them to give their own answers and justify them.

Question (1) to (3) are devoted to students’ background information; these latter are asked to specify their gender, evaluate their level in English and show the relationship that exists between them and their teachers of Oral Expression. Question (4) is about who does most of the talk in OE, the teacher or the learner.

In question (5) students are asked if they are given the opportunity to interact with their teachers and whether –in question (6)- this latter provides comprehensible input that is suitable to the students’ level or not. Question (7) is put to know how often students interact between themselves in the classroom, and in question (8) they are also asked whether they interact outside the classroom and then they have to justify their answer. Moreover, in question (9) students are asked if they interact because it is the teacher who asks them or just because they want to do so. Question (10) is designed to generate information about the learners’ most desired language skills to be mastered and how they judge their speaking skill as a result of classroom interaction in question (11). Question (12) is devoted to know how often the teacher of Oral Expression interrupts the students to correct their mistakes and in question (13) they are asked how they react to this correction. Question (14) is put to know whether regular interaction in classroom helps students to

reduce their speaking mistakes with justifying the answer. In the last question (15) the students are asked to choose the main reason why they do not sometimes interact in the classroom.

1.3. Analysis of the Results

1- Specify your gender

a- Female

b- Male

Option	Number	Percentage
a	28	70
b	12	30
Total	40	100

Table 1: Students' Gender

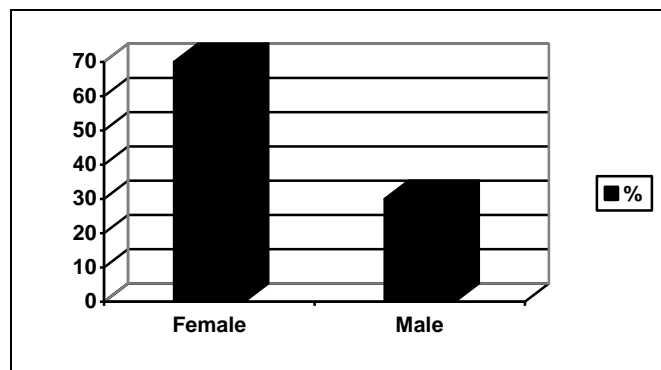


Figure 3: Students' Gender

As shown in the table, females (28) are about three times the number of males (12).

2- Is your level in English

a- Good

b- Average

c- Less than average

d- I don't know

Option	N	%
a	11	27.5
b	18	45
c	4	10
d	7	17.5
Total	40	100

Table 2: Students' Level in English

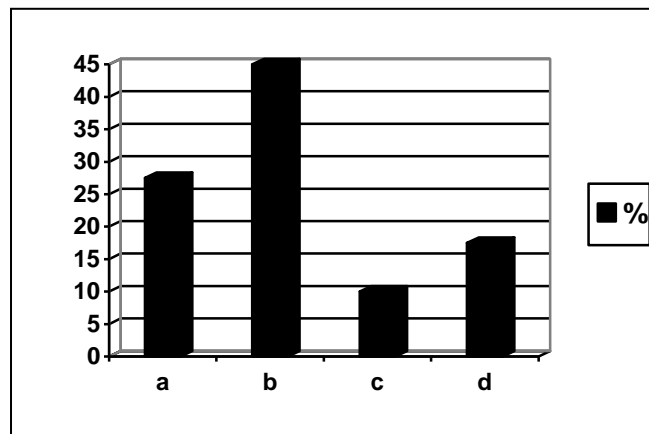


Figure 4: Students' Level in English

We can notice that the highest percentage of students (45%) claims that their level in English is average. Others (27.5%) show that they are good in English. Some others (17.5%) say that they do not know their level at all. The least percentage (10%) of students shows that their level is less than average.

3- What type of relationship exists between you and your teacher of Oral Expression?

a- Good

b- No relationship

Option	N	%
a	13	32.5
b	25	62.5
Total	38	95

Table 3: Students and the Teacher Relationship

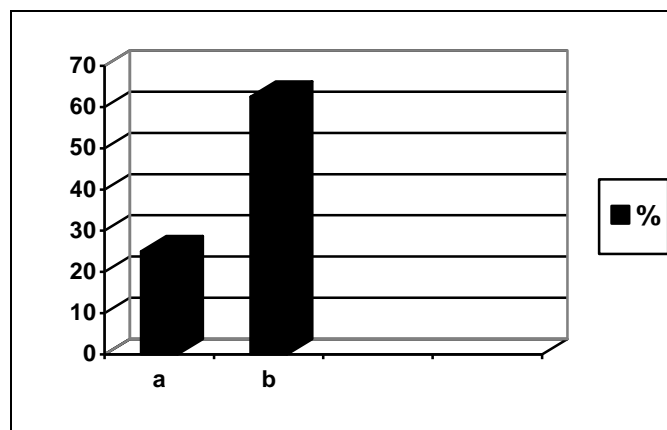


Figure 5: Students and the Teacher Relationship

Table (3) shows that (62.5%) of the students have no relationships with their teacher of Oral Expression. However, (32.5%) say that a good relationship exists between them and their teacher of Oral Expression.

4- Who does most of the talk in the classroom in Oral Expression?

a- Teacher

b- Students

Option	N	%
a	15	37.5
b	25	62.5
Total	40	100

Table 4: Students and the Teachers' Amount of Talking

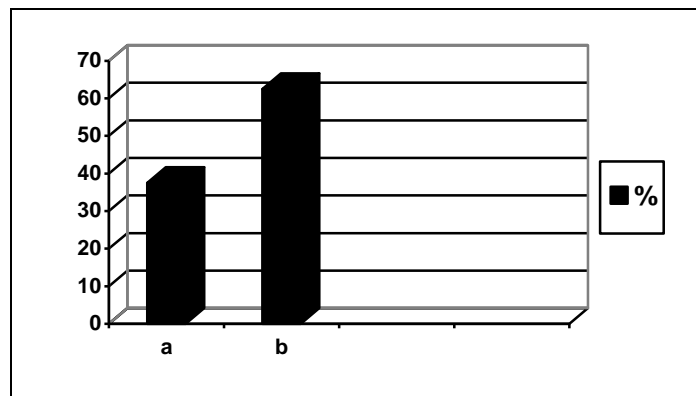


Figure 6: Students and the Teachers' Amount of Talking

The results obtained denote that (25) students state that it is the student who does most of the talk in Oral Expression. On the other hand (15) students say that the teacher is the one who talks most in the classroom

5- How often the teacher gives you the opportunity to interact (give and take) with him?

- a- Always
- b- Sometimes
- c- Never

Option	N	%
a	13	32.5
b	20	50
c	4	10
Total	40	100

Table 5: Frequency of Teacher-Learner Interaction

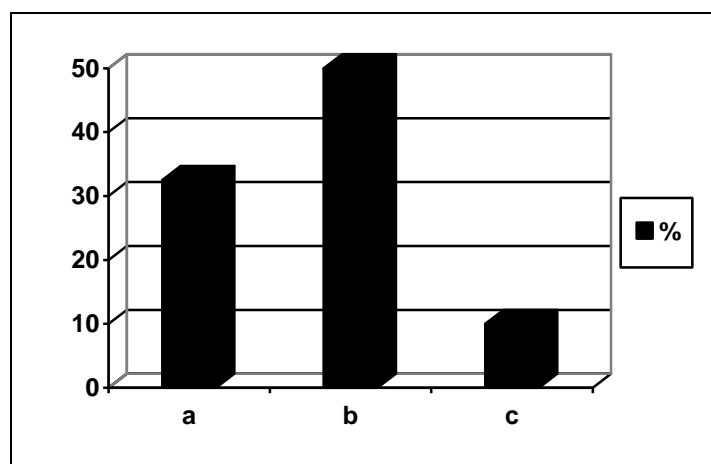


Figure 7: Frequency of Teacher-Learner Interaction

Half of the students (20) state that they are sometimes given the opportunity to interact with their teachers, and those who say always are (13) students. Other (4) students state that teachers never give them the opportunity to interact with them.

6- Does your teacher always provide comprehensible input that is suitable to your level?

a- Yes

b- No

Option	N	%
a	34	85
b	06	15
Total	40	100

Table 6: Teacher's Comprehensible Input

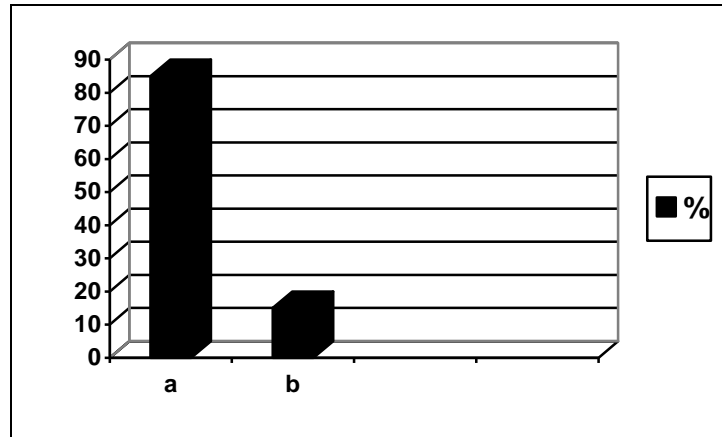


Figure 8: Teacher's Comprehensible Input

It is obvious from the table above that most of the students (85%) state that their teacher always provides comprehensible input. However (15%) say no.

7- How often you interact with your classmates inside the classroom?

- a- Always
- b- Sometimes
- c- Never

Option	N	%
a	13	32.5
b	23	57.5
c	4	10
Total	40	100

Table 7: Frequency of Learner-Learner Interaction

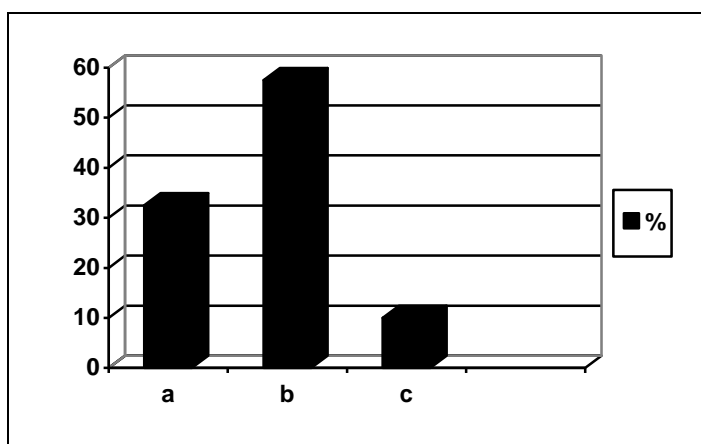


Figure 9: Frequency of Learner-Learner Interaction

The table above shows that (23) students say that they sometimes interact with other learners in the classroom, other (13) students state that they always do that. However, those who say never are (4) students.

8- Do you interact in English with your classmates outside the classroom?

- a- Always
- b- Sometimes
- c- Rarely
- d- Never

Option	N	%
a	0	0
b	14	35
c	18	45
d	8	20
Total	40	100

Table 8: Frequency of Outside Classroom Interaction

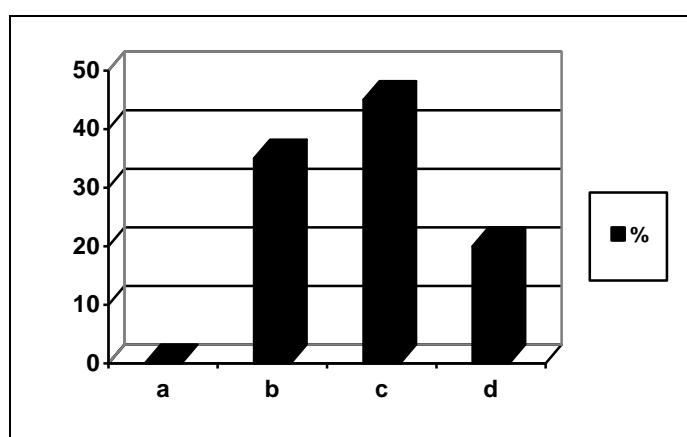


Figure 10: Frequency of Outside Classroom Interaction

Regarding students answers, (18) say that they rarely interact in English outside the classroom, while (14) students state that they sometimes do so. The remaining (8) students respond that they never interact outside the classroom. However, none of them interact in English outside the classroom.

(31) Students explained that they sometimes, rarely or never interact in English outside the classroom because:

- English is not spoken outside, it is considered as second foreign language (11 students).
- To improve the speaking skill (7 students).

- Some other students do not know how to create meaningful everyday utterances (5 students).
- Some students find it difficult to express themselves in the presence of their teachers; however they can do so outside the classroom (3 students).
- The teacher does not give the students many opportunities to interact inside the classroom (3 students).
- Some students want to imitate English native speakers (2 students).

9- When you interact in the classroom, it is

- a- You who wants
- b- The teacher who asks you

Option	N	%
a	32	80
b	8	20
Total	40	100

Table 9: The Students' Contribution in Interaction

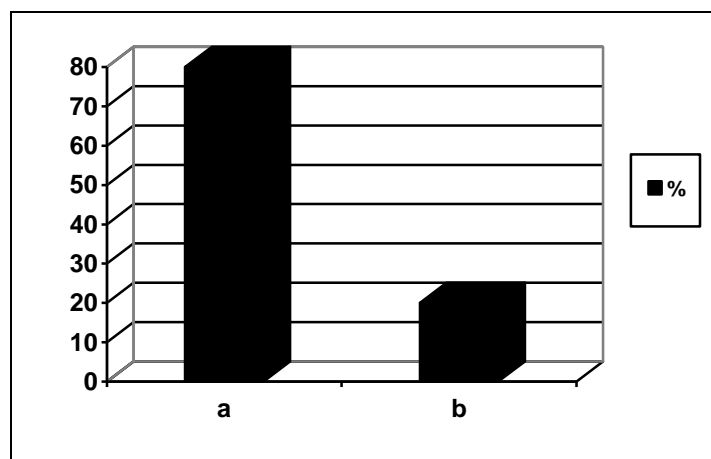


Figure 11: The Students' Contribution in Interaction

As shown in the table above, (80%) of the respondents want to interact by themselves, while (20%) of them are pushed by the teacher to do so.

10- Which of the four language skills you wish to master most?

- a- Listening
- b- Speaking
- c- Reading
- d- Writing

Option	N	%
a	9	22.5
b	20	50.5
c	4	10
d	7	17.5
Total	40	100

Table 10: The Most Desired Language Skills to be Mastered

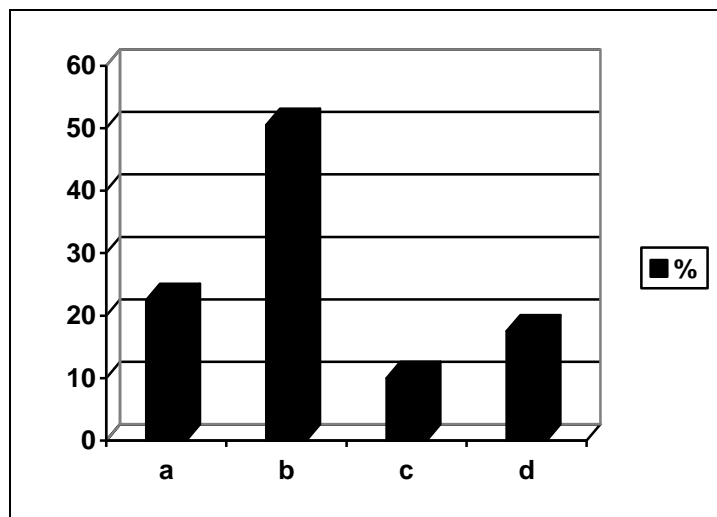


Figure 12: The Most Desired Language Skills to be Mastered

The table indicates that (20) respondents (50.5%) prefer the speaking skill to master most, other (9) respondents (22.5%) state that they wish to master the listening skill; while some others (7) respondents (17.5%) wish to master the writing skill. The remaining (4) respondents (10%) like to master the skill of reading.

11- How do you judge your speaking ability as a result of classroom interaction?

- a- Very well
- b- Well
- c- Not so well
- d- Bad

Option	N	%
a	11	27.5
b	22	55
c	5	12.5
d	2	5
Total	40	100

Table 11: Students' Speaking Ability as a Result of Classroom Interaction

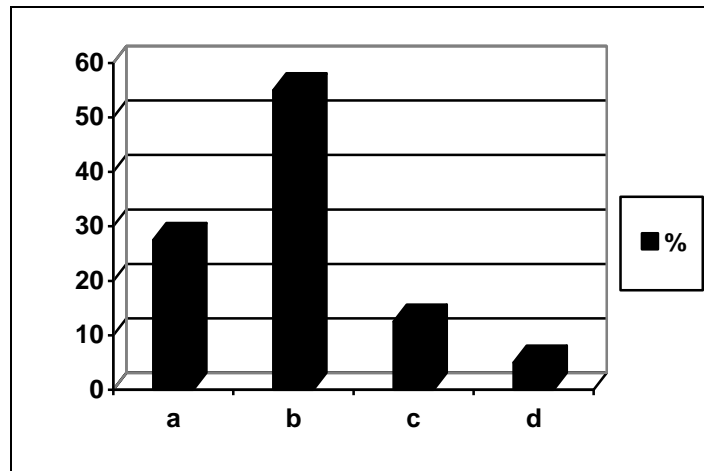


Figure 13: Students' Speaking Ability as a Result of Classroom Interaction

The answer tabulated above reveals that while (05%) of the students evaluate their speaking ability as being bad as a result of classroom interaction. More than half (55%) state that their speaking level is well, (27%) students say very well. The remaining (12.5%) of the students evaluate their speaking ability as not so well as a result of classroom interaction.

12- How often your teacher interrupts you to correct your speaking mistakes?

- a- Very often
- b- Sometimes
- c- Rarely
- d- Never

Option	N	%
a	4	10
b	19	47
c	13	32
d	4	10
Total	40	100

Table 12: Teachers' Interruptions for Students' Correction

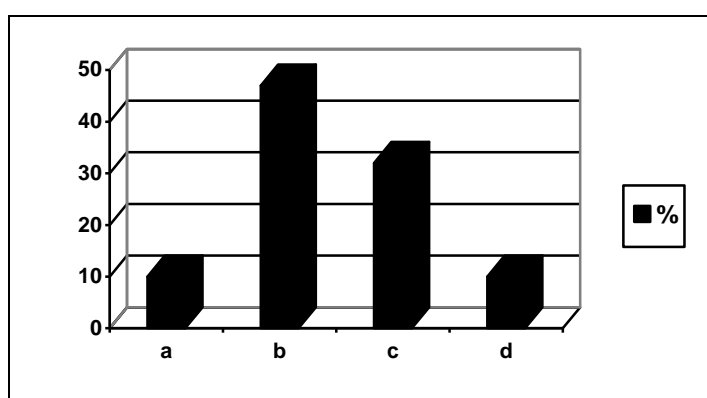


Figure 14: Teachers' Interruptions for Students' Correction

We can notice that the highest percentage of students (47%) claims that the teacher sometimes interrupts his students to correct them when they interact. Others (32%) show that the teacher rarely does so, and (10%) of the students say 'never'. The same percentage of the students (10%) state that the teacher very often interrupts them to correct their speaking mistakes.

13- How do you react?

- a- You like it
- b- You do not like it
- c- You are indifferent

Option	N	%
a	34	85
b	4	10
c	2	5
Total	40	100

Table 13: Students' Reactions to the Teachers' Correction

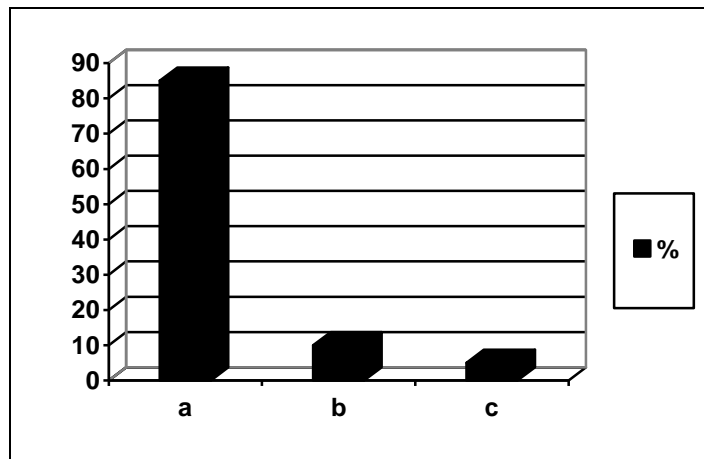


Figure 15: Students' Reactions to the Teachers' Correction

The common shared reaction between the majority of students (85%) is that they like to be corrected by the teacher sometimes or rarely. Whereas (10%) of the students state that they do not like to be corrected, however, the remaining (5%) are indifferent.

14- Does regular interaction in the classroom help you to reduce your speaking mistakes?

a- Yes

b- No

Option	N	%
a	37	92.5
b	3	7.5
Total	40	100

Table 14: Regular Interaction as a Help to Reduce Speaking Mistakes

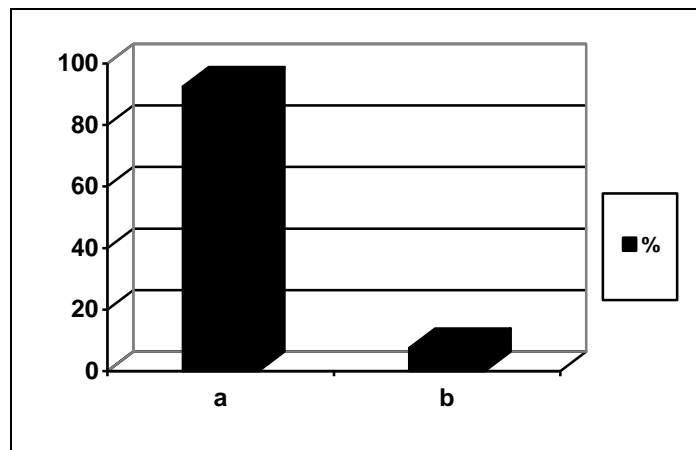


Figure 16: Regular Interaction as a Help to Reduce Speaking Mistakes

As Table (14) shows, (92.5%) of the respondents find that regular interaction in the classroom may lead them to reduce their speaking mistakes, however, (7.5%) of students say ‘no’

(28) Students explained that their speaking mistakes are reduced when they regularly interact because:

- The teacher calls them to these mistakes, so, they avoid them in the future participation (23 students)
- They develop their passive vocabularies and sentence structures (3 students)
- They achieve automaticity in speaking (2 students)

15- If you do not interact, it is because:

- a- You are not talkative

- b- The topic is not interesting
- c- The teacher does not motivate his students
- d- You fear to make mistakes

Option	N	%
a	5	12.5
b	16	40
c	12	30
d	7	17
Total	40	100

Table 15: Students' Reasons Behind not Interacting

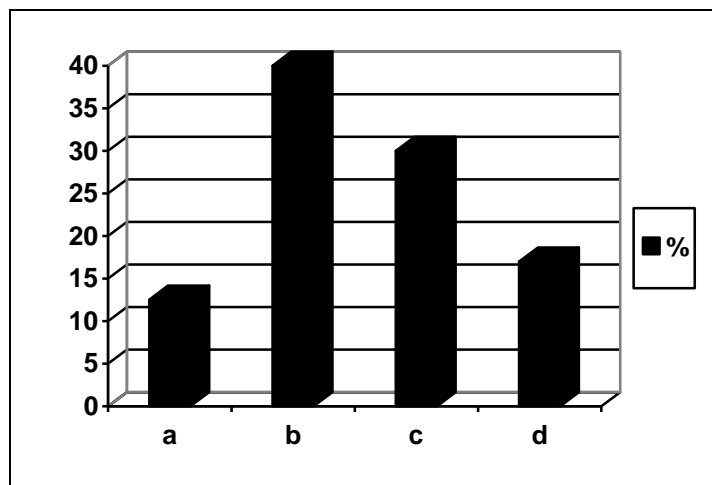


Figure 17: Students' Reasons Behind not Interacting

One can notice from the results shown that (40%) of the students do not interact because the topic is not interesting. Others (30%) state also that the teacher does not motivate his students, however, (17%) of the students fear to make mistakes. The remaining percentage (12.5%) of the students says that they are not talkative in the classroom, that is why they do not participate.

1.4. Interpretation of the Results

First of all, the chosen sample in this study reveals that females (70%) are dominant over males (30%), this may be due to the fact that females are more interested to study foreign languages and English language particularly than males who often choose to carry on scientific studies. The current level of the students also allows us to rely on them in investigating this study since more than half of them say that their level in English is between average and good (11 “a”+ 18 “b”) as shown in Q2. Teacher-Learner interaction could be more successful if the learners feel at ease with their teachers, i.e. a good relationship must exist between the students and the teacher. However, most of the students (62.5%) have no relationship with their teacher of Oral Expression (Q3) and this may be due to the personality of both of them; some teachers do not allow such relationship in order to maintain respect. On the other hand (32.5%) students state that there is a good relationship between them and their teacher of OE; that is because they have a good level in speaking or they regularly participate. Teachers then, need to know that their students should feel at ease in OE to interact positively, but if they will have some problems with the teacher, then they will keep silent most of the time, and this will prevent them from activating their oral skills.

One of the main characteristics of classroom interaction is that it is learners’ centered, that is to say teacher’s amount of talking should be less than of the learners. On the basis of the students’ previous answers, especially to Q4, (62%) of them state that they are the students who do most of the talk in the classroom interaction, whereas for (37.5%) of them it is the teacher who does so. This shows clearly that the teacher is aware of the learners’ time of talking in classroom interaction. Moreover, the majority of learners (32.5 “a” +50 “b”) in Q5 confess that their teacher of Oral Expression gives them the opportunity to interact with them. This also indicates that the teacher really wants his students to be involved with him in such type of interaction which has an impact on the students’ performance in speaking. A high percentage (85%) state that their teacher of OE

always provides comprehensible input that is suitable to their level. The comprehensible input is essential because it is at the core of any interactive activity, and students are usually in need to them from their teacher since the latter is considered as the only source in the classroom. A considerable percentage of students (32.5% “a” +57.5% “b”) in Q7 state that they always/ sometimes interact with their classmates. This is an indication that the learners find that learner-learner interaction is the best and the easiest way to speak freely.

Learners must be given ample practice to activate their speaking skill. The interactive activities are the best practice in the classroom since the learners do not interact always in English outside the classroom, as it is shown in the answers of Q8. Students’ main reason behind not interacting in English outside the classroom is that English is not spoken outside the classroom, it is considered as a second foreign language. Therefore, this reveals that the classroom is the only and the best context to communicate for English learners. Many students (80%) seem to be aware that when they interact in the classroom with the teacher or other learners, this will enhance their oral capacities, that is why they prefer to engage in interactions by themselves and not to be pushed by the teacher (see Q09).

In the learning of the four language skills, half of the learners (50%) wish to master the speaking skill most, as it is shown in Q10, this is due to the fact that speaking a language is considered as a synonymous with knowing this language. So, in the classroom interaction the students are supposed to speak and listen (aural skills) much more than write and read. As a result of classroom interaction, (33) students judge their speaking ability as being well and very well, this judgment indicates that keeping silent all the time in classroom will limit the students’ chance to learn or to speak the foreign language. Moreover, (92%) of the students in Q14 claim that a regular participation in the classroom could help them to reduce their speaking mistakes, they explain that if the teacher calls their attention to particular mistakes, then the learners will avoid them in the future

participation. A small percentage of students (10%) state that the teacher very often interrupts them to correct their speaking mistakes, and the same percentage (10%) show “never”. However, those who say “sometimes” and “rarely” are (80%), this indicates that the teacher is aware when to interrupt his students because too much interruption for correcting the mistakes will affect the students’ fluency and sometimes they take decision not to participate again. From the previous answers of the learners in Q13, (34) students state that they like when the teacher corrects them, because receiving feedback from the teacher is the focal and essential part in learning. Whereas others (4 students) do not like, and this may be due to the fact that they are very often interrupted by their teacher of OE.

Students’ reasons behind not participating and then not taking a part in any interaction are different. (40%) of learners state that the topic is not interesting, this shows clearly that the chosen topic is crucial for a successful interaction. On the other hand (30%) of them say that the teacher does not motivate his students, in such case even the strong participators will show no interest to interaction. Other (17.5%) of the learners fear to make mistakes, this indicates that those learners could have a low self-esteem. The remaining (12.5%) of the students are not talkative, this is because they used to keep silent all of the time.

On the whole, the learners showed some interest to the value of classroom interaction, their previous answers revealed that it can successfully lead them to enhance their speaking skill, but this can happen if they frequently interact with their teacher to draw on his experience or with some other learners. Because avoiding classroom interaction and showing no participation will naturally affect the students’ speaking capacities.

2. The Teachers' Questionnaire

2.1. The Sample

The questionnaire is administrated to eleven (11) teachers of OE at the Department of English, University of Constantine. The selection of such sample was based on the consideration that the teachers of OE will benefit us more than other teachers since they teach students how to develop the oral skills which are our concerns.

2.2. Description of the Questionnaire

The teachers' questionnaire consists of 16 questions which were divided into three main sections. The questions are either closed questions, requiring from the teachers to choose "yes" or "no" answers, or to pick up the appropriate answer from a number of choices, or open questions where teachers are requested to give explanation or suggest other alternatives.

Section One: Background Information

This section is devoted to get background information about the chosen sample of teachers. They are asked in (Q1) to specify their gender, and (Q2) is about the degree(s) held to see if the high degrees are needed or it is sufficient to be a fluent speaker with a first degree (i.e. a licence) to teach Oral Expression, without any consideration to the high degrees. Teachers are also asked how many years they have been teaching Oral Expression in (Q3), because we need to know whether those teachers have already experienced in teaching the oral skills or not.

Section Two: Classroom Interaction

The aim of such section is to investigate teachers' knowledge of classroom interaction. First

of all, they are asked in (Q4) about the amount of their talking in the classroom because learners are supposed to talk more than teachers during interaction. (Q5) is put to know whether all teachers know about the value of classroom interaction, that is why they are asked to specify some of its characteristics if they know it, and to justify whether they apply it when teaching the oral skill or not in (Q6). Then, the aim of (Q7) is to show if teachers and students have the same responses about how often the teacher invites his students to interact with each others (Learner-Learner interaction), and whether the learners enjoy this type of interaction or not. Because if they really enjoy that, then they will participate regularly and they achieve automaticity in speaking. (Q9) is designed to get information about the teachers' decisions to push silent students interact in the classroom.

Section Three: Teaching Speaking

The objective of this section is to obtain information from teachers of OE concerning the main speaking aspects teachers usually focus on in classroom interaction, i.e. fluency, accuracy or both because these are also the main objectives behind teaching speaking. Teachers are asked then to explain why they focus on a particular aspect (see Q10). (Q11) concerns the speaking activities teachers focus on most to create a successful interaction, and whether it is possible to make all the students participate in these activities (Q12). Moreover, teachers are asked in (Q13) about the speaking problems that the students most face in OE. (Q14) is designed to get teachers' opinion on when to correct the students' mistakes during the interaction activities and whether they use implicit or explicit feedback (Q14). In the last question of section three (15), teachers are asked whether the speaking mistakes and problems last, reduce progressively or disappear completely in classroom interaction.

2.3. Analysis of the Results

Section One: Background Information

1- Specify your gender:

a- Female

b- Male

Option	Number	Percentage
a	6	54.54
b	5	45.46
Total	11	100

Table 16: Teachers' Gender

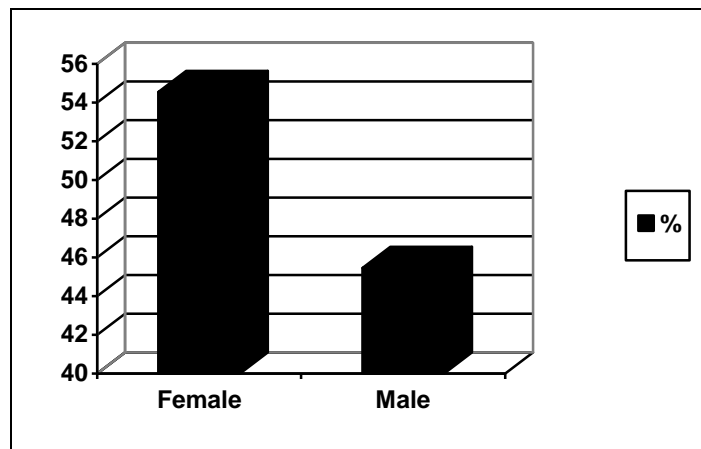


Figure 18: Teachers' Gender

The table above illustrates that (6) respondents out of the chosen sample of the study are females whereas the remaining respondents (5) are males.

2- Degree(s) held

a- BA (Licence)

b- MA (Master/ Magister)

c- PHD (Doctorate)

Option	N	%
a	0	0
b	6	54.54
c	5	45.46
Total	11	100

Table 17: Teachers' Degree

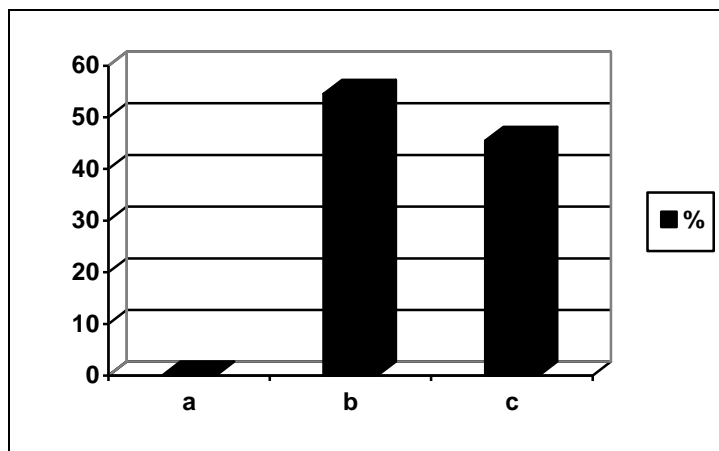


Figure 19: Teachers' Degree

(54.54%) of the teachers have MA (Master/ Magister) degree, however, (45.46%) have PHD (Doctorate).

3- How many years have you been teaching Oral Expression?

Years	N	%
1-5	6	54.54
10-15	2	18.18
15-20	3	27.28
Total	11	100

Table 18: Teaching Experience of OE Teachers

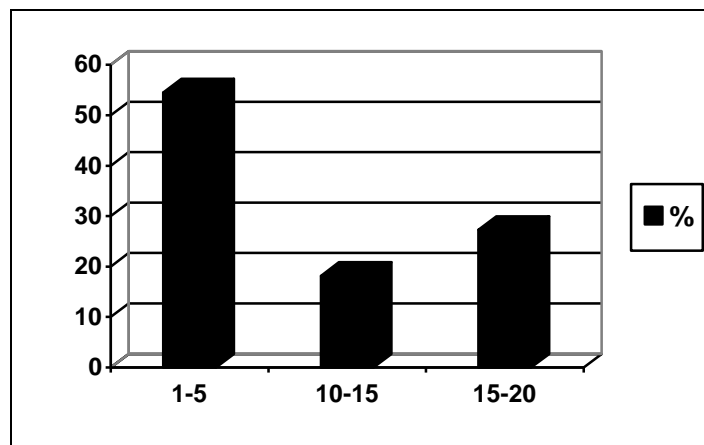


Figure 20: Teaching Experience of OE Teachers

One can notice from the results shown above that five teachers have a long teaching experience in OE since they have spent from 10-20 years. However, six teachers have a short experience in teaching Oral Expression.

Section Two: Classroom Interaction

4- In the classroom, are you

- a- Talking
- b- Average talking
- c- Less talking

Option	N	%
a	3	27.28
b	6	54.54
c	2	18.18
Total	11	100

Table 19: Teachers' Amount of Talking

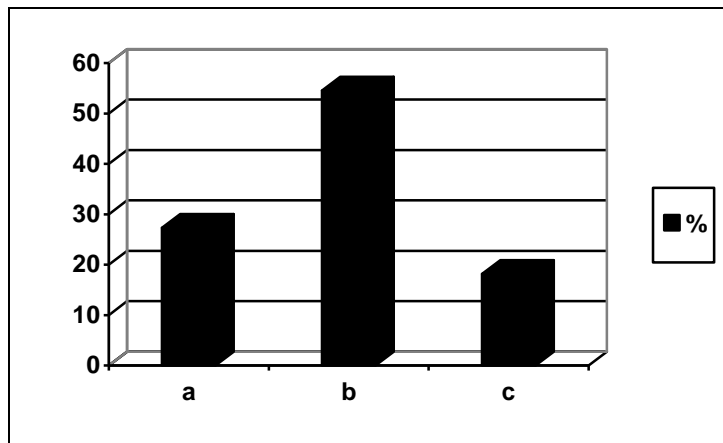


Figure 21: Teachers' Amount of Talking

The results obtained denote that six teachers state that they are average talking in the classroom. On the other hand three teachers state that they are talking. Two teachers have chosen option “c” that is to say, they are less talking.

5- Do you know about the value of classroom interaction?

a- Yes

b- No

Option	N	%
a	11	100
b	0	
Total	11	100

Table 20: Teachers' knowledge about Classroom Interaction

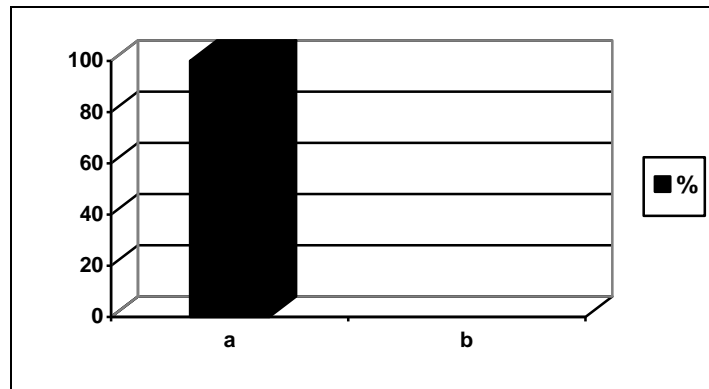


Figure 22: Teachers' knowledge about Classroom Interaction

The common shared answer between all the teachers is that they all know about the value of classroom interaction.

Only seven (7) teachers, who specify some of the characteristics of classroom interaction, they are the following:

- Classroom interaction is learners' centered (4 students)
- Negotiation of meaning is highly highlighted (3 teachers)
- Classroom interaction means collaborative learning (3 teachers)
- It helps develop communication (2 teachers)
- Teachers are guides only (1 teacher)
- Peer interaction is favorized (1 teacher)
- Students are supposed to use the language naturally and spontaneously (1 teacher)

6- Do you often apply it when teaching the oral skills?

a- Yes

b- No

Option	N	%
a	11	100
b	0	0
Total	11	100

Table 21: Teachers' Application of Classroom Interaction in Teaching OE

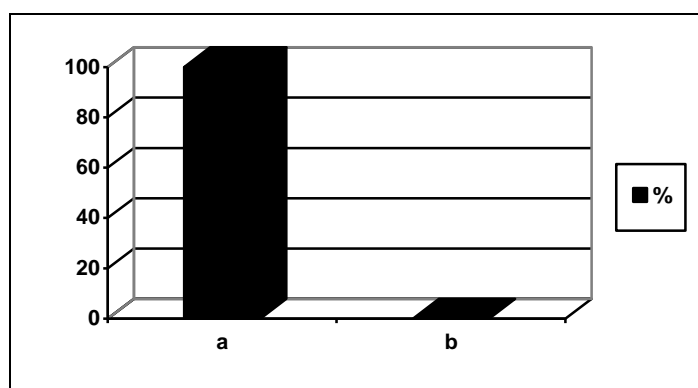


Figure 23: Teachers' Application of Classroom Interaction in Teaching OE

All the teachers (11) apply classroom interaction when they teach the oral skills.

(8) Teachers explained that they apply classroom interaction in teaching OE because:

- Learners need to speak and listen to each others, and then acquiring speaking techniques such as taking turn and interruptions (3 teachers)
- Learners feel less inhibited (2 teachers)
- It is helpful to develop communicative competence (2 teachers)
- Learners will be able to argue their thoughts and ideas (1 teacher)

7- How often do you invite your students to interact with each other?

- a- Always
- b- Sometimes
- c- Never

Option	N	%
a	9	81.81
b	2	18.19
c	0	0
Total	11	100

Table 22: Students Frequency of Engagement in Classroom Interaction

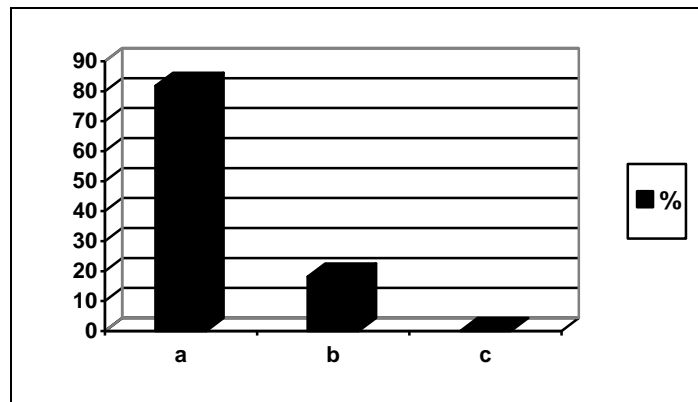


Figure 24: Students Frequency of Engagement in Classroom Interaction

A clear majority of teachers (81.81%) claim that they always invite their students to interact with each other. On the other hand only (18.19%) who said “sometimes”.

8- Do students enjoy this type of interaction (learner-learner interaction)?

- a- Yes
- b- No

c- Somehow

Option	N	%
a	9	81.81
b	0	0
c	2	18.19
Total	11	100

Table 23: Students' Enjoyment of Learner-Learner Interaction

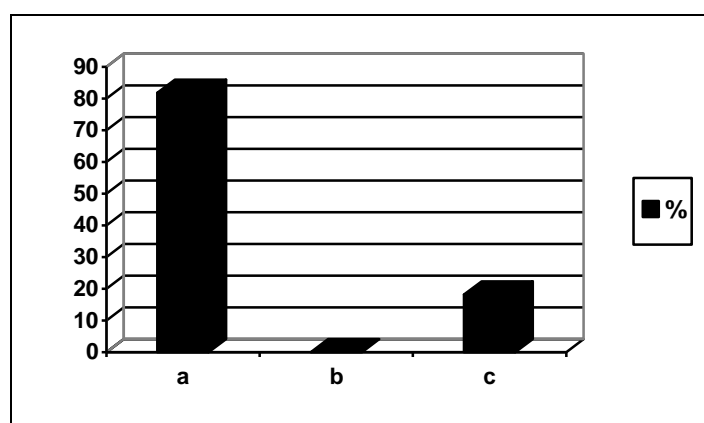


Figure 25: Students' Enjoyment of Learner-Learner Interaction

Regarding teachers' answers, about 82 percent of them state that learners do really enjoy this type of interaction. However, 18 percent said "somehow".

(6) Teachers explained that learners enjoy the type of learner-learner interaction because:

- It is a stress-free situation; students feel less inhibited (2 teachers).
- It creates a funny, friendly and relaxing atmosphere (2 teachers).
- It provides learners with self-confidence and self-evaluation (1 teacher).
- Learners always try to participate and take risks to use the language naturally (1 teacher)

9- What do you do to make silent students interact in the classroom?

- a- Design groups and pairs
- b- Choose interesting topics
- c- Add additional marks
- d- Use other means

Option	N	%
a	7	63.63
b	8	72.72
c	2	18.18
d	3	27.27
Total	11	100

Table 24: Teachers’ Decisions to Make Silent Students Interact

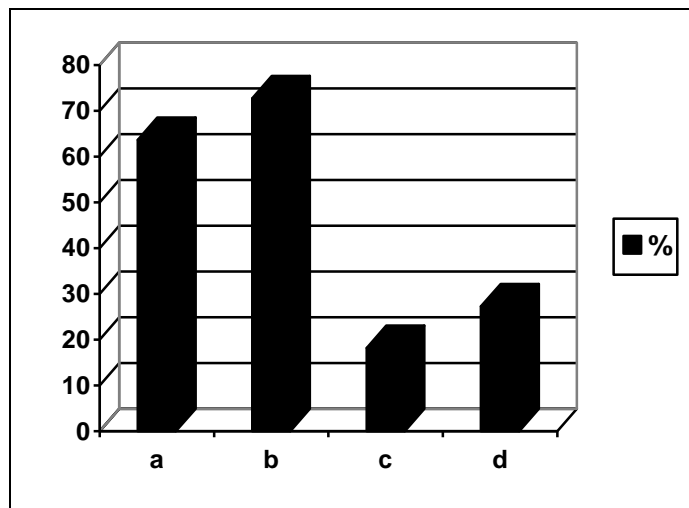


Figure 26: Teachers’ Decisions to Make Silent Students Interact

The answer tabulated above reveals that while (18.18%) of the teachers add additional marks to make silent students participate and interact. Most teachers (72.72%) respond by saying that they choose interesting topics to do so, and (63.63%) of them choose option “a”, i.e. design groups and

pairs. The remaining (27.27%) use other means such as assigning tasks for individual learners who are supposed to present their contribution to other learners.

Section Three: Teaching Speaking

10- Which of these aspects do you focus on in classroom interaction?

- a- Fluency
- b- Accuracy
- c- Both

Option	N	%
a	3	27.27
b	1	9.10
c	7	63.63
Total	11	100

Table 25: Teachers' Focuses in Classroom Interaction

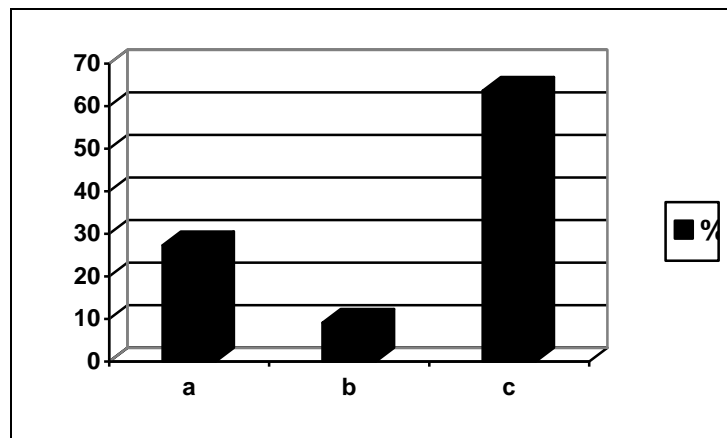


Figure 27: Teachers' Focuses in Classroom Interaction

Here we can notice the highest percentage of teachers (63.63%) claims that they focus on both accuracy and fluency, whereas (27.27%) of the teachers focus on fluency and only (9.10%) of them

choose accuracy.

(10) Teachers justified their answers saying:

- Learners need to speak continually and correctly at the same time to achieve a high level of interaction (6 teachers).
- Fluency is important in order to get the communicative message, and it is primary in all learning stages, however, accuracy is secondary and would be more important in higher level (3 teachers).
- Accuracy has to come first because once students are able to speak correctly in English, they start working on fluency. This latter could be developed anywhere, however, accuracy needs much more of teachers' attention in the classroom (1 teacher).

11- What are the speaking activities you focus on most to create a successful interaction?

- a- Dialogues
- b- Debates and discussions
- c- Presentations
- d- Role-plays and simulations
- e- Telling stories

Option	N	%
a	4	36.36
b	11	100
c	5	45.46
d	2	18.19
e	2	18.19
Total	11	100

Table 26: Teachers' Focuses on Speaking Activities

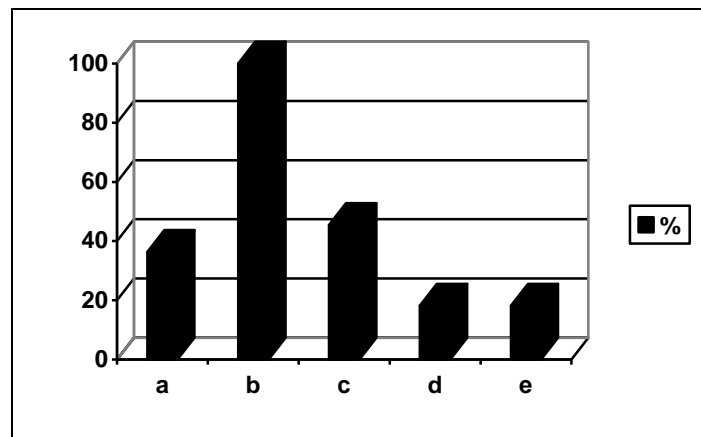


Figure 28: Teachers' Focuses on Speaking Activities

The table above illustrates that all of the teachers (11) focuses on debates and discussions to create a meaningful interaction. On the other hand (5) teachers prefer presentations, other (4) teachers focus on dialogues, (2) teachers choose option “d”, i.e. role-plays and simulations. The remaining (2) teachers focus on telling stories as an interactive activity.

12- Is it possible to make all the students participate in the speaking activities?

- a- Yes
- b- No

Option	N	%
a	7	63.64
b	4	36.36
Total	11	100

Table 27: The Possibility of Having All of The Students Participate in the Speaking Activities

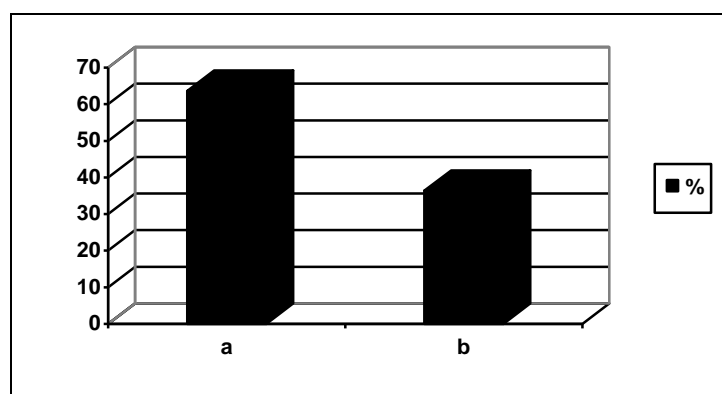


Figure 29: The Possibility of Having All of the Students Participate in the Speaking Activities

(63.64%) of the teachers consider that it is possible to make all the students participate in the speaking activities. However, (36.36%) of the teachers state that it is impossible to do that.

5 Teachers among those who say “yes” explain that it is possible to make all the students participate in the classroom as follows:

- It depends on the type of the activity (2 teachers).
- “I oblige students to perform tasks individually” (1 teacher).
- “This happens through the appropriate design of tasks” (1 teacher).
- When the topics are interesting all of the students engage in the activity by themselves (1 teacher).

The four (4) teachers who state “no” agree that:

- The time and the number of the students in the classroom prevent them from involving all of the

students in the interactive activities. In addition to the attitudes of some learners who are not talkative at all.

13- What is the speaking problems students most face in Oral Expression?

- a- Inhibition because of shyness, anxiety and stress..
- b- Nothing to say about the chosen topic.
- c- Low participation.
- d- Mother tongue use.
- e- Other problems (please justify).

Option	N	%
a	8	72.72
b	4	36.36
c	2	18.18
d	6	54.54
e	1	9.10
Total	11	100

Table 28: Students' Most Speaking Problems

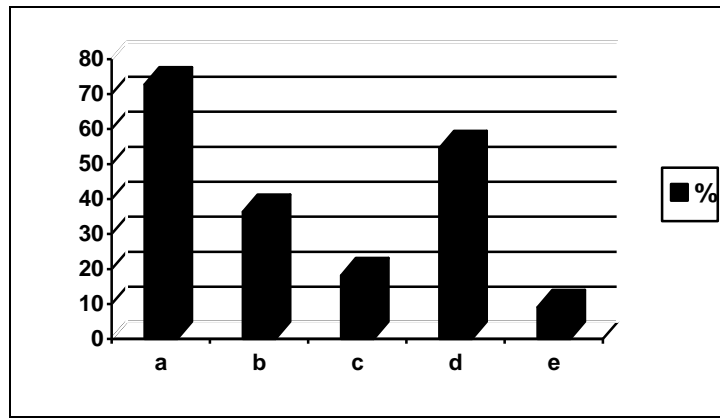


Figure 30: Students' Most Speaking Problems

The common shared idea between the majority of teachers (72.72%) is that students have the problems of inhibition because of shyness, anxiety and stress. On the other hand (54.54%) of them confirm that students still use their mother tongue in second language classroom and especially in OE. Other teachers (36.36%) state that some students have nothing to say about the chosen topic. Some other teachers (18.18%) choose the option “c”, that is to say low participation problem. The remaining (9.10%) state other problems.

Only one teacher who mentioned a further problem which is the authoritative teachers.

14-If your students say anything wrong during interaction, do you

- a- Interrupt them to correct them
- b- Correct them later
- c- Ask students to correct each other
- d- Do not correct at all

Option	N	%
a	3	27.27
b	8	72.72
c	7	63.63
d	1	9.10
Total	11	100

Table 29: Teachers' Attitudes towards Correcting Students

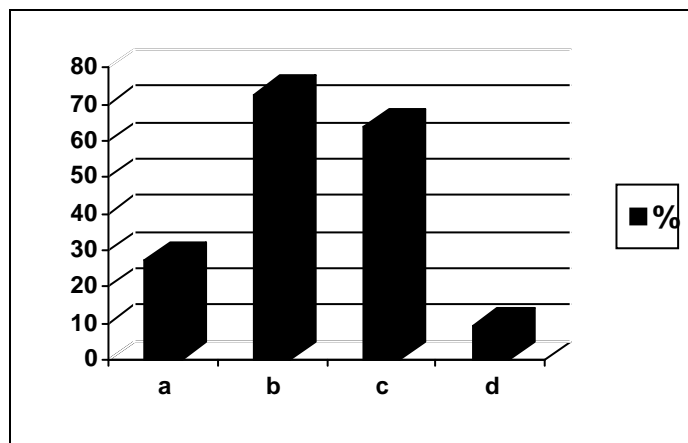


Figure 31: Teachers' Attitudes towards Correcting Students

It is obvious from the table above that most of the teachers (72.72%) prefer to correct their students later. Some others (63.63%) ask other students to correct each other, however, (27.27%) of the teachers state that they interrupt their students to correct them. The remaining of the teachers (9.10%) do not correct at all their students.

15- When you give corrective feedback to your students, do you

a- Tell them about the form of their mistakes (explicit feedback).

b- Reformulate what they said correctly (implicit feedback).

Option	N	%
a	8	72.72
b	3	27.28
Total	11	100

Table 30: Types of Feedback Given by Teachers

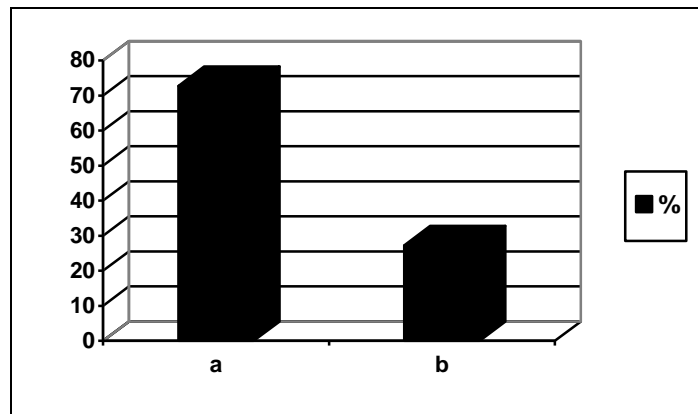


Figure 33: Types of Feedback Given by Teachers

While (8) teachers prefer to give their students explicit feedback, i.e. telling the learners about the form of mistakes they have done. Only (3) teachers state that they give implicit feedback, that is to say that, the teachers here reformulate what learners said correctly instead of mentioning the linguistic form of the mistakes and errors.

16-In classroom interaction, do speaking problems and mistakes

- a- Last
- b- Reduce progressively
- c- Disappear completely

Option	N	%
a	0	0
b	9	81.01
c	02	18.19
Total	11	100

Table 31: Interaction’s Effect on Speaking Problems and Mistakes

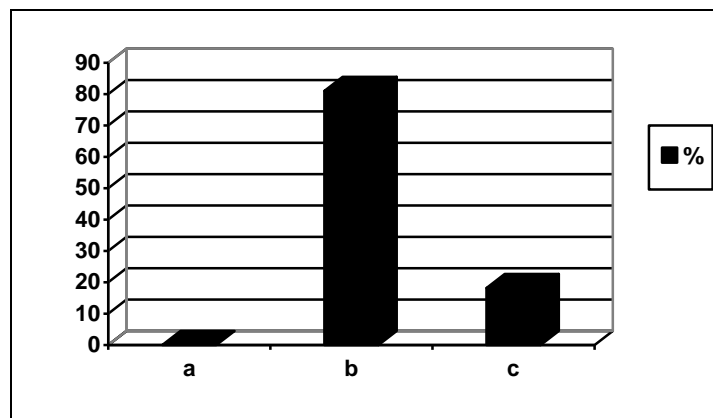


Figure 32: Interaction’s Effect on Speaking Problems and Mistakes

The vast majority of teachers (9) claim that speaking problems and mistakes may be reduced progressively in classroom interaction. And (2) teachers chose option “c”, i.e. these speaking problems and mistakes can disappear completely.

2.4. Interpretation of the Results

In background information, the teacher’s responses reveal that the chosen sample contains more females (54.54%) than males (45.46%). This may be due to the fact that women are more interested in teaching the OE than men (see Q1). Concerning (Q2), most who responded to our questionnaire have MA (Master/ Magister) or PHD (Doctorate), this mainly means that the module

of OE is of more importance. The results of (Q3) are interesting too because five teachers have a long experience in teaching OE since they have spent about 15 years. So, their responses will be of great importance in comparison with that of six teachers who have a few or short experience.

In classroom interaction, more than half teachers (54.54%) classified themselves as average talking and (18.18%) as less talking this may be because they give their students more chances to use the language in the classroom. However (27.28%) of the teachers state that they are talking, one can notice that such teachers are not aware of the students talking time in classroom interaction because they speak more than their students. Thus, compared to students' answer to a comparable question, both teachers and learners have approximately similar responses concerning the question who is talking most in the classroom.

All the teachers state that they know about classroom interaction, they experienced it in their teaching and learning of SL, that is why they find it easy to specify some of its characteristics. They mentioned that it is learners'centered; this means that learners are supposed to talk more than teachers. Negotiation of meaning is another characteristic that teachers also have stated, i.e. if learners are not sure of the message they are communicating, then they move to negotiate meaning for a better comprehension. Classroom interaction also creates collaborative learning through the communicative processes that happen between learners.

Concerning the focus on interaction as a pedagogical strategy to teach the oral skills, all of the teachers state that they really encourage it as a mean to teach OE. They explained that learners need to speak and listen to natural language and then acquiring effective speaking techniques such as taking turns and interruptions. Moreover, in classroom interaction learners feel less inhibited and are able to develop argumentations, and finally as one teacher mentioned, classroom interaction is helpful to develop communicative competence.

Compared to students responses, (81.81%) of teachers confirmed that they always invite their

students to interact with each other (Q7), and the same percentage in (Q8) state that learners usually enjoy this type of interaction, i.e. (learner-learner interaction) because it is a stress-free situation where learners feel less inhibited. Besides, it creates a funny, friendly and relaxing atmosphere. Learner-learner interaction also provides learners with self-confidence and self-evaluation. To encourage such interaction, the vast majority of teachers (72.72%) choose interesting topics to make silent learners interact, because the topic is a crucial factor to create a positive interaction in the classroom. Other teachers (63.63%) prefer to design groups and pairs where silent students find themselves in an obligation to speak with the other learners. (18.18%) of teachers add additional marks to encourage the interaction among learners. However, (27.27%) of teachers state that they use other means such as assigning tasks for individual learners who are supposed to present their contribution to other learners.

In teaching speaking, more than half of teachers (63.63%) focus on both accuracy and fluency when they teach OE. They argue that learners need to speak continuously and correctly at the same time to achieve a high level of interaction. So, fluency and accuracy are the main aspects of teachers' objectives behind encouraging classroom interaction. However, (27.27%) of teachers consider that fluency is the major aspect to be developed because it is important to get the communicative message, it is also primary in all learning stages, however, accuracy is secondary and would be more important in high levels. (9.10%) of teachers state that accuracy is the most important aspect and it has to become first because once students are able to speak in English correctly, they start working on fluency. This latter could be developed anywhere, however, accuracy needs much more of teachers' attention in the classroom.

Concerning the speaking activities which create a successful interaction. All the teachers state that they focus on debates and discussions; this may be due to the fact that the learners in such activities speak more freely through giving or receiving others' opinions, here learners also can

learn some of the speaking techniques of how to initiate, take turn, interrupt and close the topic. Other (5) teachers focus on presentations to give learners confidence in themselves. Moreover, (4) teachers focus on dialogues because they are also the best activities for interaction management. Only (2) teachers who choose role-play and simulations and other two teachers also focus on telling stories. This may be because advanced learners need to speak freely and deal with interesting topics rather than performing roles and telling stories. With regard to teachers responses in (Q12), (63.64%) of them confirm that it is possible to make all the students participate in the speaking activities, and this depends on the type of the activity. Some teachers oblige students to perform tasks individually to ensure that all of them will participate. However, other teachers state that when the topics are interesting all of the students will engage in the activity by themselves. For (36.36%) of teachers it is impossible to make all the students participate in the classroom because the time is not enough and students are more than forty. In addition to the attitudes of some learners who are not talking at all.

Most second language learners have some problems in OE. (72.72%) of teachers claim that students have the problem of inhibition because of shyness, anxiety and stress, and this may be due to the ill development of communicative skills and the feeling of linguistic inferiority. Other (54.54%) of teachers complain that their students use their mother tongue when they interact in L2. This happens because learners do not still achieve automaticity in L2. Nothing to say about the chosen topic is another problem that learners most face; this may be because of the poor practice of the language and the limited knowledge of the learners. Few teachers say that learners do not participate too much in the classroom, and only one teacher who adds a further problem which is the authoritative teacher –according to him- this latter may affect the classroom interaction through his behavior.

(72.72%) of teachers insists on correcting students speaking mistakes later on, i.e. delaying the correction at the end of the activity. This shows that teachers are aware of the time of correction.

Giving explicit corrective feedback is supported by (8) teachers, this may be because learners should know the form of their linguistic errors or mistakes, rather than implicit feedback where teachers reformulate correctly what students said incorrectly without calling student's attention to the form of errors.

Almost all of the teachers (81.81%) agree that classroom interaction could reduce progressively the speaking problems and mistakes, (18.19%) of teachers consider that they could be disappeared completely. This means that, a regular interaction with the teacher or other learners lead to achieve speaking automaticity that is free of mistakes, since the interlocutors whom the learners interact with will contribute in giving feedback. So, learners will have the opportunity to notice the gap between the language they are using and the correct or target-like, and through interactions they seek to use the appropriate language that make them be understood by others

Conclusion

The present study reveals that both learners and teachers know about classroom interaction, they consider that promoting it can have a positive impact on learners' speaking capacities. It primarily gives the opportunity to receive comprehensible input and feedback. So, through a regular interaction with others, learners can try new hypothesis about how English works and then increase the pace of their speaki

Conclusion

Enhancing the speaking skill of foreign or second language learners is a difficult task. It requires some experience and regular practice to produce the language accurately and encode the intended messages of other speakers. The best way to do that –according to many teachers- is to encourage verbal interactions inside the classroom, since learners do not use L2 frequently outside the classroom.

The current study focuses on the learners' production opportunities given by the teachers to acquire the characteristics of effective second language speakers. This is confirmed by the results obtained from the analysis of data gathered from Oral Expression teachers and Third year LMD students' questionnaire. So, the ultimate aim of this study is to show whether it is possible to develop the speaking skill of learners through classroom interaction. We have shown that during regular interactions in the classroom, learners can reduce their speaking mistakes, produce new grammatical forms and words, thus strengthening their language ability. Moreover, they can test their hypothesis about language forms and receive immediate feedback from the teachers or other learners on whether or not their predictions are correct.

The analysis of students and teachers' questionnaire showed that the learners are really given chances to use the language through engaging in interactions which prevent them merely from listening passively to the teacher. Even if there are some problems which learners still have as inhibition because of shyness, anxiety, and stress in addition to some other problems. However, the analysis showed that such problems can be reduced progressively or disappear completely. Teachers and learners showed a considerable awareness about the impact of classroom interaction on developing the learners speaking skill through teachers' provision of comprehensible input which helps learners to understand and the spoken language accurately and then use it

appropriately. Moreover, receiving corrective feedback especially the explicit one where learners can recognize their linguistic errors or mistakes. The analysis also revealed that learners must be forced to interact in order to master the art of talk which is difficult, since learners who keep always silent in the classroom will feel at a loss for words when they find themselves in situations that require talk for interaction.

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Appendices

Appendix I: The Students' Questionnaire

Appendix II: The Teachers' Questionnaire

Appendix I

The Students' Questionnaire

Dear students,

We are preparing a research on a classroom interaction as an educational strategy to enhance learners' speaking skill. We would be grateful if you could answer these questions to help us in our research. Please, use a cross (×) to indicate your chosen option, and specify your answer when needed.

May I thank you in advance for your collaboration.

1- Specify your gender

a- Female

b- male

2- Is your level in English

a- good

b- average

c- less than average

d- I don't know

3- What type of relationship exists between you and your teacher?

a- Good

b- No relationship

4- Who does most of the talk in the classroom in Oral Expression?

a- Teacher

b- Students

5- How often the teacher gives you the opportunity to interact (give and take) with him?

a- Always

b- Sometimes

c- Never

6- Does your teacher always provide comprehensible input that is suitable to your level?

a. Yes

b. No

7- How often do you interact with your classmates inside the classroom?

a. Always

b. Sometimes

c. Never

8- Do you interact in English with your classmates outside the classroom?

a. Always

b. Sometimes

c. Never

Justify your answer

.....

.....

.....

.....

9- When you interact in the classroom. It is

a. You who wants

b. The teacher who asks you

10- Which of the four language skills you wish to master most?

a. Listening

b. Speaking

c. Reading

d. Writing

11- How do you judge your speaking ability as a result of classroom interaction?

a. Very well

b. Well

c. Not so well

d. Bad

12- How often does your teacher interrupt you to correct your mistakes?

a. Very often

b. Sometimes

c. Rarely

d. Never

13- How do you react?

a. You like it

- b. You do not like it
- c. You are indifferent

14- Does regular interaction in classroom help you to reduce your speaking mistakes?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Justify your answer

.....

.....

.....

.....

15- If you do not interact, it is because:

- a. You are not talkative
- b. The topic is not interesting
- c. The teacher does not motivate
- d. You fear to make mistakes

Appendix II

The Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear teachers,

This questionnaire is devised to collect information about the effect of classroom interaction on the development of the learners' speaking skill. We would be grateful if you could answer these questions to help us in our research for the Master's degree in Language Sciences.

Please, use a cross (×) to indicate your chosen answer and specify your option when needed.

May I thank you in advance for your collaboration.

Section One: Background Information

1- Specify your gender:

a. Female

b. Male

2- Degree (s) held:

a. BA (Licence)

b. MA (Master/ Magister)

c. PHD (Doctorate)

3- How many years have you been teaching Oral Expression?

.....

Section Two: Classroom Interaction

4- In the classroom, are you

a. Talking

b. Average Talking

c. Less Talking

5- Do you know about the value of classroom interaction?

a. Yes

b. No

If yes, could you specify some of its characteristics?

.....

.....

.....

.....

6- Do you often apply it when teaching the oral skills?

a. Yes

b. No

Justify your answer

.....

.....

.....

.....

7- How often do you invite your students to interact with each other?

a. Always

b. Sometimes

c. Never

8- Do students enjoy this type of interaction (Learner-Learner interaction)?

a. Yes

b. No

c. Somehow

Please, explain

.....

.....

.....

.....

9- What do you do to make silent students interact in the classroom?

a. Design groups and pairs

b. Choose interesting topics

c. Add additional marks

d. Use other means (please justify)

.....

.....

.....

Section three: Teaching Speaking

10- Which of these aspects do you focus on in classroom interaction?

- a. Fluency
- b. Accuracy
- c. Both

Please, explain why

.....

.....

.....

.....

11- What are the speaking activities you focus on most to create a successful interaction?

- a. Dialogues
- b. Debates and discussions
- c. Presentations
- d. Role-plays and simulations
- e. Telling stories

12- Is it possible to make all the students participate in the speaking activities?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Please, explain

.....

.....

.....

.....

13- What is the speaking problems students most face in Oral Expression?

- a. Inhibition because of shyness, anxiety and stress
- b. Nothing to say about the chosen topic
- c. Low participation
- d. Mother tongue use
- e. Other problems (please justify)

.....

.....

.....

14- If your students say anything wrong during interaction, do you:

- a. Interrupt them to correct them
- b. Correct them later
- c. Ask students to correct each other
- d. Do not correct at all

15- When you give corrective feedback to your students, do you

- a. Tell them about their mistakes (explicit feedback)
- b. Reformulate what they said correctly (implicit feedback)

16- In classroom interaction, do speaking mistakes and problems

- a. Last
- b. Reduce progressively
- c. Disappear completely