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Evaluating Teaching the Speaking Skill to 3<sup>rd</sup> Year  
Secondary School Students under the Competency-Based  
Approach: The Case of EFL Teachers in 5 Secondary  
Schools in Bejaia

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements  
for a **Master Degree in Linguistics**

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## **Dedication**

This humble work is dedicated to:

- \* My dear parents who have always been there to encourage and motivate me
- \* My beloved wife who supported me a lot throughout this work
- \* My daughters Hiba and Houda
- \* My brothers Abd elhalim, Abd eladhim, Abd elmounaim and Abderahim
- \* My sisters Hanane and Kawther
- \* My best friend Mehrez and his sons Ayman and Rayane
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## **Abstract**

The research at hand aims to evaluate the implementation of the Competency-Based Approach which has been introduced at the secondary school level in Algeria since 2003. More particularly, it aims to explore how the speaking skill is taught to third year secondary school students under this approach. Besides, it tries to depict the main constraints encountered by the teachers when teaching speaking and how it can be improved to enable the students to be effective communicators inside and outside the classroom. The present research is a case study. We adopted a descriptive research design based on a mixed methodology which is both quantitative and qualitative. For the sake of triangulation, three data collection tools are used; classroom observation, questionnaire and interview. The questionnaire was administered to twenty five (25) teachers of English in different secondary schools while only five (5) teachers were interviewed. The findings revealed that secondary school teachers consider that CBA plays an important role in fostering students' learning autonomy and raising their awareness towards their learning responsibilities in addition to enabling them to be competent users of English in real life situations. However, as clearly stated in the results, the process of teaching the speaking skill under the CBA framework constitutes a big challenge since many constraints are facing the teachers such as the lack of effective training that enables them to be familiar with CBA principles, the inadequacy of teaching resources, lack of ICT resources and the overcrowded classrooms. To this regard, in order to give CBA a reasonable chance to succeed in the secondary school in Algeria, it is recommended that teachers update their teaching competences and techniques in a way that responds to the needs of the approach. Besides, teachers have to raise their students' mindfulness towards the importance of the speaking skill and should make them aware of their learning responsibility. Likewise, selecting, providing and adapting teaching materials to the needs of the students is of a great prominence to the success of any speaking lesson under the CBA framework.

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## List of Abbreviations

- ALM:** Audio-Lingual Method
- CBA:** Competency-Based Approach
- CBE:** Competency-Based Education
- CLT:** Communicative Language Teaching
- DM:** Direct Method
- EFL:** English as a Foreign Language
- GTM:** Grammar-Translation Method
- ICT:** Information and Communication Technology
- PPP:** Presentation-Practice-Produce
- Q:** Question
- SS:** Students-Students
- ST:** Students-Teacher
- STT:** Students Talking Time
- TBLT:** Task-Based Teaching Approach
- TTT:** Teachers' Talking Time
- ZTP:** Zone of Proximal Development

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### **Definition of Key Terms**

**Approach:** Miliani (2003: 20) stated that approach is “the sum of assumptions course designers make about language and language learning. This term gives a description of the many ways psychologists and linguists look at language”.

**Competence:** The Oxford Learners’ Dictionary (2018: 85) defines the word “competence” as “the ability to do something successfully and efficiently”.

**Competency:** It is defined in the Cambridge Advanced Learners’ Dictionary and Thesaurus (2018: 85) as “an important skill that is needed to do a job”. Competence, then, refers to a person’s general ability while competency is used to describe a person’s ability to perform a given task.

**Skill:** The Oxford Learners’ Dictionary (2018: 414) defines the word “skill” as “the ability to do something well”

**Speaking:** According to Chaney (1998:13), speaking is: “process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, in a variety of contexts”. In the same vein, Burns and Joyce (1997: 42) put forth that “speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing and receiving and processing information”. Likewise, Kramsch (2006: 24) stated that “speaking means negotiating intended meaning and adjusting one’s speech to produce the desired effect on the listener”.



# **General Introduction**

## **1. Statement of the problem**

Teaching English as a foreign language is a major challenge for teachers and educators since English has nowadays become the language of technology, and innovation and a medium of instruction in different university programs. Therefore, learning English has become a big necessity in a large scale. To meet the learners' needs, educators relied on different approaches and sought how efficient they are in teaching the four language skills. However, developing oral communication skill today becomes at the centre of the learning process. Since people are increasingly in a great need to engage in oral conversations in English which becomes a world language. To this regards, different attempts had been made in Algeria to update teachers' practices to optimise students' learning. The major evidence being the movement of reforms undertaken by the government since independence in 1962 such as the educational reforms of 1971 and 2000 which unexpectedly "led the younger generations to encounter real problems in foreign languages' learning" (Miliani,2003:04). To this effect, in 2003, a new reform was introduced adopting the principles of the Competency-Based Approach which aims to foster autonomous learning and to render learning more students centered. As such, it would be interesting to evaluate this reform after fifteen years since its introduction by investigating the implementation of CBA in the classroom when teaching the oral skill, the obstacles met by the teachers and the way they suggest to improve it.

## **2. Research questions**

The major concern of the study is to answer the following questions:

- 1- How is the speaking skill taught to 3<sup>rd</sup> year secondary school students under CBA?
- 2- What are the difficulties teachers face when teaching speaking to 3<sup>rd</sup> year secondary school students under CBA?

- 3- How can teaching speaking to 3<sup>rd</sup> year secondary school students be improved under CBA?

### **3. Aims of the study**

The aim of the present work is first to explore how the speaking skill is taught to 3<sup>rd</sup> year secondary school students under the Competency-Based Approach. Besides, it seeks to investigate the difficulties teachers encounter when teaching the speaking skill under this approach and how it can be improved in order to help students break the barriers between the knowledge they acquire in the classroom and its implementation in the real life situations and to be more fluent and accurate in their speaking.

### **4. Significance of the study**

The major objective of the present study is to explore the implementation of CBA when teaching speaking to 3<sup>rd</sup> year secondary school students by depicting the obstacles met and the way in which oral expression sessions can be improved to attain the objectives set. The study is of great importance at more than one level.

- First, the findings would be used to evaluate the reform after more than a decade since CBA has been launched in the Algerian educational system since 2003. It should be regarded as a necessity to keep pace with the advances of research conducted, in general, and with the challenges faced by the Algerian students, in particular.
- Second, the study would help decision-makers to gain knowledge about the obstacles met in the implementation of CBA in the teaching of speaking. This information is extremely important since they could find out ways to optimize the teaching of the oral skill by using the principles of CBA.
- Third, the study would give the teachers the opportunity to put the accent on the elements that should be reviewed and reconsidered in order to succeed in teaching

oral under CBA. The teachers' voice, here, is extremely important since the success of any reform cannot be attained if they are marginalized.

- Fourth, the present research is expected to contribute to the literature that relates CBA to the teaching of the speaking skill.

## **5. Research design and procedures**

In this research, we try to describe how speaking skill is taught under the CBA and to determine the difficulties teachers face in implementing the principles of CBA in the teaching of speaking skill to third year secondary school students. Besides, we strive to find how the teaching of speaking can be improved by using CBA. To this end, the adopted research design is descriptive based on a mixed methodology both quantitative and qualitative. For the sake of triangulation, three data collection tools are used. First, classroom observation is selected as a primary tool to observe not only the way teachers deliver the speaking lesson under CBA, but how the students interact with the way their teacher presents them as well. Second, a questionnaire is administered to depict the difficulties met by the third year secondary school teachers when applying the CBA principles in teaching the English speaking skill. Third, an interview is conducted to collect data on how the teaching of speaking under CBA can be enhanced.

The population selected constitutes of English teachers working at the secondary school level in Bejaia in charge of the 3<sup>rd</sup> year students. A sample of twenty five (25) teachers who had already taught third year classes is chosen. The study is not intended to generalize its findings. It is a case study that attempts to provide a bird's eye view on the implementation of CBA when teaching EFL speaking.

## **6. Organisation of the study**

The present research is composed of two main chapters. The first one provides a theoretical overview of the two variables dealt with which are the speaking skill and the Competency-Based Approach while the second deals with the research design and methodology as well as the data analysis and interpretation. Hence, each chapter is divided into two sections.

The first section of the first chapter strives to provide the readers with an overall picture of the speaking skill, shedding light on its aspects, components and functions. Additionally, it attempts to highlight the importance of speaking and the main difficulties EFL learners face in its learning process. Some principles that may help them get rid of these learning problems are then, provided. Similarly, it provides a set of speaking activities and the different types of speaking assessment teachers may use in their classrooms. Finally, we will try to cover the different approaches that the teaching of speaking knew throughout history which are completing one another. The second section attempts to give an overview of the Competency-Based Approach (CBA). It provides some definitions to some related terms and highlights its historical background. Additionally, it tries to point out its main features focusing on clearing up the concept of the problem-solving situation and the roles both teachers and students play under CBA. At the end, an overview of the CBA in Algeria will be provided.

In the second chapter, the first section is devoted to present the research design and methodology. It includes a short reminder of the research objectives and points out the study's variables, design, as well as its population and sample. At the end, it describes the three data collection tools used in the research. The second section deals with the data analysis and interpretation. It provides a number of pedagogical implications and certain recommendations for further study. Finally, a general conclusion is drawn followed by some limitations of the study.

## **Chapter one: The theoretical part**

## **Introduction**

English today, is used as a "lingua franca" among speakers of different languages all over the world. To this regard, teaching it in the Algerian school has become a priority. It aims to form students who manage to engage in oral communication inside school as well as to enable them to apply their oral competencies to the various situations they will meet in their social and professional lives. To reach this aim, the Algerian government undertook some reforms. The most recent one is certainly the introduction of the Competency-Based Approach in 2003.

The first chapter of this paper will be devoted to these two issues. The first section deals with the speaking skill. At the beginning, we will define it shedding light on its aspects and components. Besides, we will emphasize on showing how important the speaking skill is to EFL students within their learning settings and outside classrooms. Then, we will scrutinize the most frequent difficulties students encounter when they engage in oral communication in English as a foreign language. After that, we will suggest some activities that may help them be more comfortable and fluent in speaking. Finally, we will devote a short space to point out some of the teaching speaking approaches and methods. The second section is concerned with the Competency-Based Approach (CBA).we will attempt to cope with this new teaching approach to provide the readers with a comprehensive definition that explains how teaching takes place under this framework. Likewise, we touched on a brief historical background of the CBA, how it emerged and how it spread throughout the world. Importantly, this chapter also presented its most pertinent features and characteristics and the elements on which any CBA lesson delivery is based by highlighting the roles of both teachers and students in the teaching as well as the learning processes.

## **Section One: The Speaking Skill**

### **1.1. Definition of speaking**

Speaking is one of the language productive skills; it is the oral delivery of any language. To speak means to produce combined sounds that convey meaning using some parts of the body such as the lungs, the vocal cords, the teeth and the lips to carry a message or to interact with participants. So, it is the means through which people can communicate with others to express their intentions and viewpoints. According to Chaney (1998:13) speaking is: “process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, in a variety of contexts”. In the same vein, Burns and Joyce (1997:42) put forth that “speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing and receiving and processing information”. Likewise, Kramsch (2006:24) stated that “speaking means negotiating intended meaning and adjusting one’s speech to produce the desired effect on the listener”. Equally, Suwandi (2009:08) claimed that “it is a form of oral correspondence between the speaker and the hearer in transforming ideas for reaching the goal of communication”.

### **1.2. Aspects of speaking**

Speaking displays some characteristics that make it distinct from other language skills. Thus, being aware of these aspects may facilitate the identification of the strategies to be used in order to deliver a successful speaking lesson as well as to help students communicate effectively. These aspects can be summarized into:

#### **1.2.1. Speaking is face to face**

Most of the time, speakers receive an immediate feedback in their conversations indicating whether their interlocutors understand, sympathize, agree or disagree. Accordingly, this aspect fosters the continuity of the talks and makes the views clearer. Usually, when

speaking, both the speaker and the listener are present, the fact that lets them use some non-verbal expressions in their talks such as gestures, body movements and facial expressions to have an effective communication. (Shiamaa, 2006: 27).

### **1.2.2. Speaking is interactive**

When speaking, it is necessary to involve the listeners in what the speaker is saying and to check their understanding using some interactive strategies by way of making eye contact or asking check questions. Moreover, in an interactive talk, participants are turn taking; they start speaking when someone else stops, they may ask for clarification, or give an explanation. So, most of them take part in the conversation. However, participants of different cultures and languages may face some communication difficulties in their discussions. Consequently, people who share the same mother tongue interact more restfully than those who speak distinct languages. Mc Donough and Mackey (2000:84 cited in Shiamaa, 2006 : 35) indicated that “turn takings are handled and signaled differently across different cultures, thus causing possible communication difficulties in conversation between people of different cultures and languages”.

### **1.2.3. Speaking happens in real time**

As speaking takes place in real time, it both imposes pressures on the speakers who give spontaneous and unplanned responses in their conversations and affects the speaker's language planning, control and organization. (Foster et al, 2000: 368). Miller (2001: 27) stated that “speakers occasionally forget things they intended to say; or they may even forget what they have already said, and so they repeat themselves”.

These imposed pressures have a negative impact on the organization and the planning of the language being used. However, “the use of formulaic expressions, hesitation devices, self-



correction, rephrasing and repetition can help speakers become more fluent and cope with real time demands” (Bygate, 1987: 21).

### **1.3. Components of the speaking skill**

The mastery of the speaking skill in a foreign language and particularly in English depends on how fluent and accurate speakers are in their talks. These two criteria are the ultimate goals of all speakers. To this effect, they sharpen their focus towards fluency and accuracy when delivering speeches.

#### **1.3.1. Fluency**

Hedge (2000: 54) indicated that “fluency means speaking easily, smoothly, naturally and reasonably quickly without lots of pauses and stops”. He added that “it is the know-how to arrange words, sentences and ideas appropriately together... It is the ability to link units of speech together with facility and without strain or inappropriate showiness, or undue hesitation” (*ibid*). Furthermore, Richard et al. (1985 cited in Hiouani, 2016: 36) argued that “fluency is a range of features that give a speech the characteristics of normality and naturality, such as native-like use of pausing, rhythm, intonation, stress, rate of speaking and use of interjections and interruptions”. Hence, a speaker is fluent as long as s/he is able to fill the time with talk provided that s/he manages to talk in coherent, reasoned sentences and to have appropriate things to say in a wide range of contexts as well as to be creative and imaginative in language use (Fillmore, 1979: 64).

#### **1.3.2. Accuracy**

EFL students achieve a high level of speaking accuracy only if they communicate without committing mistakes in grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary. In this sense, it is necessary to know about the language rules . However, the know-how to use them in authentic situations is of a paramount importance. According to Yuan and Ellis (2003: 02),

accuracy in speaking is “the extent to which the language produced conforms to target language norms”, so it is the extent to which correct grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary are used.

### **a. Grammar**

Grammar, in *The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (2000: 193), is defined as “the rules by which words change their forms and combine into sentences”. According to Hughes (2002 cited in Belhabib, 2015: 15), “grammatical accuracy refers to the ability to use the grammatical structure in appropriate ways and situations including the control of length and complexity of the utterances”.

In almost all languages, feelings, thoughts and ideas are generally expressed in full sentences, which are in their turn composed of words which are systematically arranged to achieve a certain degree of grammatical accuracy. In this regard, grammar is considered as the study of words in sentences.

Obviously, grammar plays a crucial role in learning the structure of any language. However, EFL Students may often make mistakes in their spoken English though they are good enough at grammar in reading and writing. As Larsen (2001: 34-41) stated, “it is rather difficult for EFL learners to transfer the correct grammar to their speaking”.

To this regard, Thornbury (2005: 21) listed some features of spoken grammar that differ from written grammar. First, the clause is the basic unit of construction. Also, direct speech is favored. Additionally, a lot of ellipsis and many question tags are used as well. Other key features of spoken grammar are the use of performance effects such as hesitation, repeats, false starts, incompleteness, and syntactic blends.

## **b. Pronunciation**

In the Oxford Learners' Pocket Dictionary (2008: 352), pronunciation refers to "The way in which a language or a particular word is spoken". Goh (2007:129) stated that "Pronunciation plays an important role in intelligibility". Hence, the good pronunciation of a word helps the interlocutors get the intended meaning. However, mispronouncing a sound may be the primary source of unintelligibility. Zhiqin (2013: 111) warned that "mispronouncing a single sound causes the listener's misunderstanding, and various uses of stresses as well as intonations result in totally different meanings".

Accuracy in terms of pronunciation is greatly affected as long as EFL students commit mistakes in sounds, stress and intonation, due mainly to the fact that their mother tongues differ a lot in sound systems from English. These differences may cause big troubles in their speaking.

## **c. Vocabulary**

Vocabulary is defined as "a list of words with their meaning especially in a book for learning a foreign language" (Oxford Learners' Pocket Dictionary, 2008: 495).

In order to achieve accuracy in terms of vocabulary, EFL students need an appropriate selection of words while they speak. However, they often find difficulties to find the suitable words, the fact that hinders them to communicate and express their ideas effectively. To this effect, language teachers had better focus on enriching their students' vocabulary so as to put it into productive use. "If the receptive vocabulary is rather limited, learners can hardly put the receptive vocabulary knowledge into productive use.....without grammar, very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary, nothing can be conveyed" (Nation, 2001: 129).

## **1.4. Speaking functions**

Brown and Yule (1983 cited in Richards, 2008: 22) classified the functions of speaking in human interaction. They distinguished between the interactional functions and the transactional ones. The former tends to establish and maintain social relations and the latter refers to the exchange of information. In addition to these two functions, Richards (2008: 27) added a third one which he named “performance”.

### **1.4.1. Talk as interaction**

Talk as interaction serves mainly social functions. It is the most common form of speaking all EFL learners have to be familiar with. It covers both formal conversations, with teachers at schools or universities where a sense of politeness is clearly seen and informal ones, with family members, friends, colleagues at work, and with people on the streets, at parties or other occasions. “When people meet, they exchange greetings, engage in small talk, recount recent experiences, and so on because they wish to be friendly and to establish a comfortable zone of interaction with others” (*ibid*: 22).

The conversations’ styles are affected by some factors such as age, sex and status of the participants. “...Different styles of speaking reflect the roles, age, sex, and status of participants in interactions and also reflect the expression of politeness” (*ibid*: 21). “The focus of talk as interaction is more on the speakers and how they wish to present themselves to each other than on the message” (*ibid*: 22).

According to Richards (*ibid*), talk as interaction is characterized by the following features:

- 1- It has a primarily social function
- 2- It reflects role relationships
- 3- It reflects speaker’s identity
- 4- It may be formal or casual

- 5- It uses conversational conventions
- 6- It reflects degrees of politeness
- 7- It employs many generic words
- 8- It uses conversational register
- 9- It is jointly constructed

To foster the continuity of talks, participants give constant feedback including even laughter to render the conversation highly interactive.

### **1.4.2. Talk as transaction**

The primary concern of talk as transaction is the message conveyed in the discourse which has to be accurately and clearly understood. “Participants and social interaction are not the central focus; it rather sharpens interest on what is said or achieved, on how to transmit meaning and how to make it comprehensible” (Richards, 2008: 22).

This is exemplified in the work undertaken by Richards (*ibid*) stating some situations that can be performed in classroom in role-plays, where talk as transaction is clearly illustrated as follows:

- Discussing needed computer repairs with a technician.
- Discussing sightseeing plans with a hotel clerk or tour guide.
- Making a telephone call to obtain flight information.
- Asking someone for directions on the street.
- Buying something in a shop.
- Ordering food from a menu in a restaurant.

Accordingly, talk as transaction serves as a means to give and receive information or to ask for services or goods where language accuracy is not stressed on by participants provided that meaning is successfully understood. In this regard, “the key aspect of talk as transaction is primarily information focus rather than participants or participants’ social interaction. They

may make use of communication strategies such as asking questions to make sure the meaning is comprehensible by their interlocutors”( Richards, 2008: 22).

### **1.4.3. Talk as performance**

For Richards (*ibid*), talk as performance refers to the speech delivered before an audience such as making a sales presentation, giving a speech of welcome or giving a lecture. Unlike the first two types of talk, talk as performance focuses on both the message and audience as well as on language form and accuracy. Talk as performance tends to be monologic and it is evaluated in terms of its effectiveness and impact on the audience. It differs from the previous types of talk as it has an appropriate format with a correct pronunciation and grammar and appropriate vocabulary. Importantly, talk as performance is delivered to have an effect on the audience.

## **1.5. Importance of speaking**

Speaking is the most often used skill inside the classroom. It is a means of communication and interaction, and any gap in communication may lead to misunderstanding. Learners speak more than they write; they ask or answer questions, give feedback, express themselves and share their thoughts with their teachers and mates via speaking.

Harmer (1984: 167) argued that it is very important to stick to the target language in the classroom in order to develop the capability of using it not just in the class, but also outside.

To many students, success in learning a foreign language corresponds to the extent to which they manage a verbal conversation in the target language (Toumi, 2015:26).In this regard, the improvement of the speaking skill can serve as a good source of motivation and as an incentive to foster learners’ interest inside the classroom.

Importantly, the more knowledgeable EFL students are in their speaking skills, the less frustrated in conveying messages to others. Moreover, good speaking can assist students in

job interviews and it widens their options in job choices. It helps them communicate well in business, at work or at school. Consequently, the mastery of the speaking skill helps students in different areas of life; communications, learning, group discussions, presentations, sales, business, management, marketing, customer service, administration, law, reception, industry and so on since “through talk, students explore and come to understand ideas and concepts; identify and solve problems; organize their experience and knowledge; and express and clarify their thoughts, feelings, and opinions.” (Rivers,1968: 120).

## **1.6. Speaking difficulties in foreign language learning**

Many EFL students are unfamiliar with English since they use it only within the classroom with their teachers and classmates and lack opportunities to use it outside the learning setting. This leads them to encounter some difficulties to communicate in English.

Throughout this chapter, we try to shed some light on the major speaking difficulties students face when they strive to deliver an oral speech in EFL or in any other foreign language.

### **1.6.1. Inhibition**

Ur (2000: 111) stated 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 loosing face, or simply shy of the attention that their speech attracts”. Thus, failure in speaking may be due to different factors, including both limited vocabulary and poor grammar. Some students do not manage to find the right words when speaking and face the dilemma of making their speeches more accurate to avoid making humiliating errors. Thus, poor grammar slows down the rate of speech.

Moreover, the learning atmosphere may hinder the students from practicing their oral skills. This may be due to lack of appropriate interactive learning environment or because of shortage of chances to practise.

### **1.6.2. Nothing to say**

In some cases, even fluent students feel unable to share their opinions or to formulate relevant comments. So, they feel uncomfortable to take part in classroom interaction. For this reason, some of them prefer to keep silent while others say “*I have no idea*” or “*no comment*”. Baker and Westrup (2003: 28) stated that “it is difficult for many students to respond when the teachers ask them to say something in a foreign language because they might have little ideas about what to say”.

To remedy the situation, Rivers (1968:122) suggested that “teachers should opt for congenial topics and known subjects to motivate their students to interact with their classmates, otherwise they will be incapable to express themselves neither in their native language nor in a foreign one”. Hence, teachers’ pre-selection of suitable topics to be discussed in the classroom is crucial. The topics should match students’ interests, abilities and interests.

### **1.6.3. Low or uneven participation**

Students are encouraged to actively participate in the classroom. However, many of them are still reluctant to speak as a minority of talkative participants tends to be dominant and takes a long time speaking aiming to develop their fluency. In this regard, teachers have to be aware of a fair distribution of students’ talking time. Belahbib (2015: 16) stated that “classroom discussion is dominated by a minority of talkative participants and contributions are not evenly distributed. This may be due to the mixed ability groups”.



#### **1.6.4. Mother-tongue use**

To maximize the students' talking time, teachers tend to set them work in pairs or in small groups. But if they share the same native language, they sometimes prefer to use their mother tongues rather than the foreign language as they feel more comfortable. Lado (1957:02) indicated that "individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings and the distribution of forms and meanings of their native language and cultures to the foreign language and culture." Hence, lack of vocabulary in the target language leads the students to face some challenges in using it correctly as long as they keep on borrowing forms and meanings from their mother tongues.

#### **1.6.5. Deficient vocabulary**

Vocabulary is viewed as the glue that holds communication and comprehension together. It is the means that facilitates access to meaning for students. Without vocabulary they can neither express their thoughts nor understand their interlocutors. Sedita (2005: 01) stated that "students with limited or no knowledge of English, those who do not use English outside school, and those who enter school with inadequate English vocabulary will certainly face problems in delivering verbal discourses or in engaging in oral communications".

#### **1.7. Principles helping students overcome EFL speaking difficulties**

To help EFL students overcome their speaking difficulties and engage effectively in oral communication, Rivers (1968: 134 cited in Belehbib, 2015: 15) recommended that teachers select appropriate, interesting and attractive topics which are related to their students' real-life situations to stimulate them to participate and to get rid of boredom.

Moreover, it is recommended that teachers take into account their students' background knowledge to prepare the stage for a successful lesson delivery. Bransford, et al. (1999: 10) warned that "If a student's initial ideas and beliefs are ignored, the understandings that they

develop can be very different from what the teacher intends” since, for him, “students’ background knowledge, attitudes, skills and beliefs will shape input interpretation and organization” (Bransford, et al. 1999: 10).

In the same vein, Montalvo (1998: 78) asserted that it’s of paramount importance to motivate students to participate in classroom discussions. Involving all students in every speech activity plays a crucial role in helping them get rid of shyness and fear and makes them capable of breaking the psychological barriers that hinder them to engage in oral communications. By the same token, teachers need to focus much more on developing students’ self-confidence by providing positive feedback even in case they give a wrong answer. Then, they may say: “*Your contribution was interesting*”; “*I really appreciate it*”, “*good job!*” “*I liked your English... you sound American!*”. This makes them interested in learning English and encourages them to do much effort.

## **1.8. Speaking activities**

Students probably find difficulties to speak spontaneously because of lack of practice. Accordingly, teachers always try to select the most appropriate activities that fit their needs and help them be more fluent and confident. The aim behind these activities is to create situations and atmospheres where they can engage in oral discussion with their peers to express their thoughts and share their personal experiences.

### **1.8.1. Role play**

Role play is an activity that provides the students with a variety of social roles. The teacher puts the students in a particular social context giving them information about who and what they pretend to be. S/he may provide them at the beginning with some relevant vocabulary to help them act better. To exemplify, the teacher may ask the students to play the roles of a hotel receptionist and a tourist who needs to book a room in the hotel or to take the

roles of a waiter and his customer in a restaurant. “These roles provide the students with authentic situations which keep their interests alive and enable them to be better listeners” (Sabry, 2016: 112).

Students should be encouraged not to write the whole scripts. They may write some headings only to be referred to while they perform. After that, the teacher has to keep an eye over their performances without interfering not to interrupt the speaking flow. Then, at the end, the teacher provides them with feedback (*ibid*).

### **1.8.2. Debate**

Debates can be extracurricular speaking activities assigned by teachers for all the students to give their views and attitudes towards a particular issue. The topics to be discussed are chosen by the students so as to make sure they fit their interests and needs.

The aim behind this activity is not only to improve students’ ability to communicate with people in real life situations but to develop their confidence in different communicative contexts as well. Additionally, it enables them to organize their ideas coherently and speak fluently about a specific issue (*ibid*: 113).

### **1.8.3. Interview**

Interview is another useful classroom activity that can be used to improve students’ oral fluency. Teachers set the learners to work in pairs and provide them with a rubric to help them design the questions to ask and to guide them find the path to follow. Then, each student in each pair chooses to be either the interviewer or the interviewee. After that, the teacher accords them few minutes to reflect on the topic so as to prepare relevant questions to ask. Topics are selected by the teachers in accordance to the learning objectives in order not to let students waste time in chatting on irrelevant things. Shrouf (2004: 37) argued that, this

activity tends to socialize the students and provides them with opportunities to practise their speaking abilities in class as well as outside the classroom.

#### **1.8.4. Simulation**

Simulation is an activity that bridges the gap between the classroom and the real world. It is similar to role-plays but they differ in terms of elaboration (Shrouf, 2004: 37). Simulations are more elaborated than role-plays since students make their performances seem more real by creating realistic atmospheres within the classroom. To illustrate, if the student aims to act as a waiter in a restaurant, s/he may bring real menus, slates, spoons and forks to the classroom to seem as if they are in a real restaurant. In this regard, simulations render the speaking lesson more interesting, challenging and even entertaining. This activity may motivate the students much more in their learning process and help them raise self-confidence.

#### **1.8.5. Storytelling**

Narrating stories is one of the most effective tools that keeps the students engaged to learning as they feel, most of the time, they are taking part in the process of storytelling. For this reason, teachers sometimes resort to this activity during their oral sessions (*ibid*). They either tell a short tale then ask the students to summarize it or they may ask them to create their own stories to tell their classmates in order to develop their creative thinking. Storytelling provides the students with an open space to narrate freely the events of the story using their own words.

### **1.9. Assessing speaking**

Bachman (1991: 301-330) claimed that assessing students' oral performances plays an important role in the language teaching process since it gives the teacher an exhaustive report regarding their overall performances. However, the teacher decides on the type of speaking

assessment depending on many factors, such as the number of students, the time allotted, the learning objectives, whether it is an individual or a collective assessment...etc. To this regard, Bachman (1991: 301-330) described two basic kinds of speaking assessment, the holistic and the analytic ways. The former is concerned with the way the overall situation is handled by the student. He argued that “Teachers cannot see grammatical and other language functions that take place in the students’ minds. We have to judge the functions we are able to observe: the learner’s ability to perform in a given task” (*ibid*). So, it is a score which is based on an overall impression of students’ performances on a given speaking task. The latter focuses on some predetermined language points, such as grammar, pronunciation, rhythm...etc. Knight (1992: 300) pointed out that “it is important that the teachers know what exactly needs to be improved in the learners’ speech”. Accordingly, analytic assessment provides more detailed feedback on the language components which are assessed independently.

In the same vein, Thornbury (2005: 127) stated that when making students’ oral performance, “there are”re two main ways: either giving a single score on the basis of an overall impression (called **Holistic scoring**) or giving separate score for different aspects of the task ( **Analytic scoring**)”. The teachers may refer to holistic assessment whenever they deal with a large group in a very limited time. This kind of scoring “has the advantage of being quicker and probably is adequate for informal testing of progress” (*ibid*). Analytic assessment, however, is seen as a way to evaluate the students’ performances in terms of accuracy as it allows teachers to test language aspects independently and in a detailed way. “Analytic scoring takes longer, but compels testers to take a variety of factors into account and if these factors are well chosen, is probably both fairer and more reliable” (*ibid*)

However, focusing mainly on language aspects may lead the teachers to lose sight of the overall picture and fail to assess the students’ speaking performance as a whole since one of

disadvantages of analytic assessment is that “the scorer may be distracted by all the categories and lose sight of the overall picture” (Thornbury, 2005: 127).

To conclude, the holistic as well as the analytic assessments are necessary for the development of the students’ speaking proficiency. Without assessment, the process of achieving the speaking lessons’ goals remains incomplete since testing raises the students’ awareness towards the importance of their oral sessions the fact that renders them more serious and sincere enough to perform properly.

## **1.10. An overview on different teaching speaking approaches**

The process of teaching speaking benefited greatly from the various teaching approaches and methods throughout history which were completing one another. Each of them has its own contribution and each has left its mark in this field. The coming space will be devoted to provide an overview on what teaching approaches and methods added to the process of teaching speaking skills to non-native speakers.

### **1.10.1. The Grammar-Translation Method (GTM)**

Richards and Rodgers (1999: 03) argued that “Grammar-Translation is a way of studying a language that approaches the language first through detailed analysis of its grammar rules followed by application of this knowledge to the task of translating sentences and texts into and out of the target language”. This method of language teaching focuses on systematic analysis of grammar and on the use of translation of literary texts in the target language to the native language. “The students’ native language is the medium of instruction. It is used to explain new items and to enable comparisons to be made between the foreign language and the student's native language” (*ibid*). Additionally, as far as GTM is concerned, learning a foreign language depends not only on rote learning of vocabulary and extensive use of translation but also on the extent to which learners manage the memorization of the target

language's grammatical rules so as to be able to use them in their oral and written productions. Hence, it "views language learning as consisting of little more than memorizing rules and facts in order to understand and manipulate the morphology and syntax of the foreign language" (Richards and Rodgers, 1999: 03) .

Developing speaking skills under GTM received less attention since the main focus was on improving the learners' reading and writing skills for the sake of accurate translation. However, though teaching speaking received less interest in GTM, teachers concentrated on grammatical accuracy and on the students' accurate selection of words' lists used in their talks, accuracy errors were, then, not allowed. In addition, teachers were regarded as the unique knowledge holders and providers while students were considered as passive learners who have to imitate models and memorize lists of words by heart to reproduce them during their oral communications. Besides, students were allowed to use their mother tongues in the learning process, the fact that disabled GTM to form effective communicators in target languages.

### **1.10.2 The Direct Method (DM)**

The direct method emerged in Germany and France against the principles of the Grammar-Translation Method which focused in the foreign language teaching process on translating literary texts and on a detailed analysis of grammar as well as on the use of mother tongues for the sake of clarifications. From this perspective, "foreign language could be taught without translation or the use of the learner's native tongue if meaning was conveyed directly through demonstration and action" (*ibid*: 04).

Actually, various attempts have been made throughout the history of foreign language teaching to make second language acquisition like the first language learning. L. Sauveur (1826-1907) was among the first reformers who attempted to render second language learning more natural. These natural language learning principles paved the way for the emergence of

what came to be known as the Direct Method. He considered the use of oral interaction in the target language and asking questions to elicit its components as fundamental principles in second language acquisition. Accordingly, this latter is best achieved as long as students are directly exposed to the target language which ought to be actively used within the classroom to encourage its direct and spontaneous use and to help students induce its grammatical rules. Thus, developing students' oral competencies was one of the main concerns of DM focalized on pronunciation and on using the known words to teach vocabulary as well as on referring to pictures and demonstration as means of illustration rather than mother tongues. Richards and Rodgers (1999: 10) stated that within DM, "oral communication skills were built up in a carefully graded progression organized around question-and-answer exchanges between teachers and students in small, intensive classes". Besides, to deliver an effective speaking lesson, the DM adopted the following set of principles illustrated in Richards and Rodgers (*ibid*):

- Never translate: demonstrate
- Never explain: act
- Never make a speech: ask questions
- Never imitate mistakes: correct
- Never speak with single words: use sentences
- Never speak too much: make students speak much
- Never use the book: use your lesson plan
- Never jump around: follow your plan
- Never go too fast: keep the pace of the student
- Never speak too slowly: speak normally
- Never speak too quickly: speak naturally
- Never speak too loudly: speak naturally
- Never be impatient: take it easy..."



Though the Direct Method gave great importance to improving the speaking skill, it was criticized for its naturalistic view of the second language acquisition putting aside the practical realities of the classroom. Besides, it requires either teachers who were native speakers or those who were as fluent as natives the fact that hindered its full implementation in certain foreign language learning settings.

### **1.10.3 The Audio-Lingual Method (ALM) (Aural-Oral approach)**

The Audio-Lingual Method (ALM) appeared during the Second World War and became a foreign language teaching method by the mid 1950's. It is based on the behaviorists' view that language learning is a process of acquiring a set of correct language habits. This method gives primacy to the learning of oral skills by means of stimulus-response and reinforcement model associated with intensive repetitions until learners can use the language spontaneously. As shown in the example below (Harmer, 2007: 64), teachers may provide students with a subject, verb and complement model within a dialogue then let them repeat intensively until they memorize it.

*“Teacher: There’s a cup on the table...repeat.*

*Students: There’s a cup on the table.*

*Teacher: Spoon.*

*Students: There’s a spoon on the table.*

*Teacher: Book.*

*Students: There’s a book on the table.*

*Teacher: On the chair.*

*Students: There’s a book on the chair.”*

By means of words' substitutions and teachers' reinforcement, students manage to form new sentences. “By using the stimulus-response-reinforcement model, it attempted, through a continuous process of such positive reinforcement, to engender good habits in language

learning” (Harmer, 2007:64). He added that “audio-lingualism relied heavily on drills to form these habits; substitution was built into these drills so that, in small steps, the student was constantly learning and, was shielded from the possibility of making mistakes by the design of the drill” (*ibid*).

Accordingly, repetition and memorization are regarded as an effective way to form good verbal habits. Teachers provide learners with immediate feedback since good verbal habits are not acquired by incorrect responses. Hence, foreign language learning is based on a system of habit formation while the mastery of grammar rules that combine structural elements of the language is implicitly acquired. So, grammar within the framework of the ALM consists of a set of structures rather than a collection of rules.

Despite its promises, ALM was criticized on the basis that it failed to form competent communicators as it emphasized much more on language structures rather than on developing learners’ functional and communicative language potential the fact that initiated the emergence of the communicative language teaching approach.

#### **1.10.4. The Communicative Language Teaching Approach (CLT)**

Evidently, the aim behind teaching a foreign language is to enable the learners to communicate effectively in that target language. However, some educators during the 1970’s, noticed that their students managed to produce accurate sentences in the classroom while they failed to use them appropriately when conversing in real life situations. Thus, they clearly noted that the mastery of linguistic structures alone is inadequate to make them good communicators. Hence these observations were the direct reason behind the shift from a linguistic-centered approach to a communicative-centered approach in the field of foreign language teaching in the late 1970’s and early 1980’s (Larsen, 2003: 121).

This approach revolutionized the field of language teaching. It assumed that learners need to know when, where and how to say what to whom in a social context. The concern of

CLT “was with spoken functions as much as with written grammar, and notions of when and how it was appropriate to say certain things were of primary importance” (Harmer, 2007: 69).

Language, from a communicative approach viewpoint, is a means of communication. Thus, it is necessary for learners to master other functions and other communicative competences to engage in genuine conversations such as the sociolinguistic competence which helps them select the appropriate vocabulary and style in accordance to the given situation (congratulating, inviting, promising and expressing sorrow...etc.). Likewise, the discourse competence plays a paramount role in an effective communication. It enables the learners to join language structures appropriately to make cohesive and coherent texts in their talks. Additionally, learners require a mastery of the strategic competence which lets them employ non-verbal expressions such as gestures and body movements to overcome certain communicative constraints (Richards and Rodgers, 1999: 71)

In CLT, the target language is the only means of interaction. Group and pair works are favored to involve all the students in the learning process. Students are no longer passive observers but rather active participants who share their thoughts and beliefs with their partners.

#### **1.10.5. The Task-Based Language Teaching Approach (TBLT)**

Harmer (2007: 71) stated that “the ask-Based Teaching Approach aims at providing students with opportunities to interact in the target language within distinct natural situations to help them acquire the language in a more communicative way”. He added that “students work in groups or in pairs asking and answering questions to their partners as well as their teachers, seeking for clarifications and trying to explore the unknown within the new language” (*ibid*). Tasks are presented to the students as problems to be solved where negotiations are of a great importance. Within this approach, “learners work to complete a task. They have abundant opportunity to interact. Such interaction is thought to facilitate

language acquisition as learners have to work to understand each other and to express their own meaning” (Larsen, 2003: 144). In this approach, “students are given a task to perform and only when the task has been completed does the teacher discuss the language that was used, making corrections and adjustments which the students’ performance of the task has shown to be desirable” (Harmer, 2007: 71).

Teachers had better choose topics that interest their students. Then, before presenting the tasks, they provide them with some relevant vocabulary; words or phrases that help them understand the task instruction. After that, the students work in pairs or in groups discussing the issue, trying to find a solution to the problem and planning how to present their results to their classmates while the teacher plays the role of a helper who directs them to reach the task’s objectives, then s/he gives feedback at the end of their presentations. The aim behind giving tasks is to create a situation where students feel in need to negotiate, to discuss and to share their findings with their partners first then with teachers and the rest of the class in an interactive way. Moreover, tasks provide the students who are unwilling to talk in front of an audience with opportunities to express their ideas to their classmates or group members. Additionally, simulations and role plays enable the students to perform different social roles they may encounter outside classroom, such as ordering a meal in a restaurant or conducting a job interview to help them develop their fluency and raise self-confidence.

## **2. Section two: Competency-Based Approach**

### **2.1. Definition of: “Approach”, “Method” and “technique”**

Some students are likely to find it ambiguous to make a distinction between these three concepts, they often use them interchangeably (Diaz, 2004: 144). However, if we examine the three terms, we will clearly notice the difference that resides between them.

#### **a. Approach**

Diaz (ibid: 145) defined approach as “Theoretically well-informed positions and beliefs about the nature of language, the nature of language learning, and the applicability of both to pedagogical settings”. Similarly, Miliani (2003: 20) stated that it “is the sum of assumptions course designers make about language and language learning. This term gives a description of the many ways psychologists and linguists look at language”. Similarly, Anthony (1965: 94 cited in Miliani (*ibid*)) argued that “it is a set of correlative assumptions dealing with the nature of language teaching and learning....It describes the nature of the subject matter to be taught”. He added “It states a point of view, a philosophy which one believes but cannot necessarily prove” (*ibid*).

Hence, an approach can be defined as “a set of logical perspectives, beliefs or assumptions that design the general framework in which language teaching and learning are proceeded” (*ibid*).

#### **b. Method**

Diaz (op cit: 146) stated that a method is “a generalized set of classroom specifications for accomplishing linguistic objectives. Methods tend to be concerned primarily with teacher and student roles and behaviors and secondarily with such features as linguistic and subject-matter objectives, sequencing and materials”. Anthony (1965: 95 cited in Miliani, 2003: 22) claimed that a method is “the way of presenting a language material to the students. It deals

with the practical side of foreign language teaching. Besides it lists the strategies derived from a particular approach". According to Miliani (2003: 22), "an approach can have several methods which are dependent on the nature of the students, their age, their cultural background, their previous experience in English, their needs and the place and status English occupies in the school systems".

To this effect, the procedures teachers follow, the lesson plan, the outline of actions they to undertake, the selection of textbooks as well as the curriculum, all contribute in designing the foreign language teaching method which should be in a harmony with the basic principles of the approach it derives from.

To sum up, a method is a set of procedures and plans based on a certain approach that aim at achieving foreign language learning objectives. The inductive method, deductive method and the audio lingual method are some examples of foreign language teaching methods.

### **c. Technique**

Anthony (1965: 96 cited in Miliani 2003: 24) argued that a technique can be defined as "a particular trick, stratagem, or contrivance used to accomplish an immediate objective. Techniques must be consistent with a method, and therefore in harmony with an approach as well". He added, "techniques depend on the teacher, his individual artistry and on the composition of the class" (*ibid*). Miliani (*ibid*: 24) put forth that, " audio-visual aids such as language laboratories, tape recorders, television sets, slides, video-recorders are techniques.... A technique may work with a given learner and not with another".

Accordingly, a teaching technique is seen as the teacher's personal tricks s/he uses to attain his/her teaching goals and to make teaching more effective.

In this sense, the terms: Approach, Method and Technique refer to three interrelated concepts that design the general teaching process framework, the plans, the procedures to follow as well as the ways how teaching procedures are carried out. As shown in the following figures:

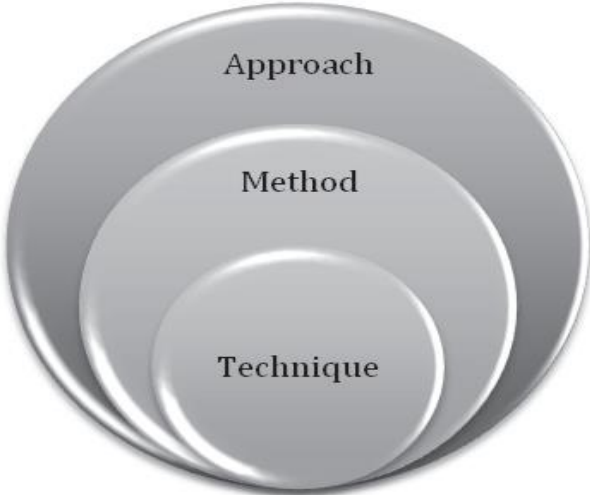


Figure 01: Approach, method and technique. (Anthony,1965: 96 cited in Miliani, 2003:23)

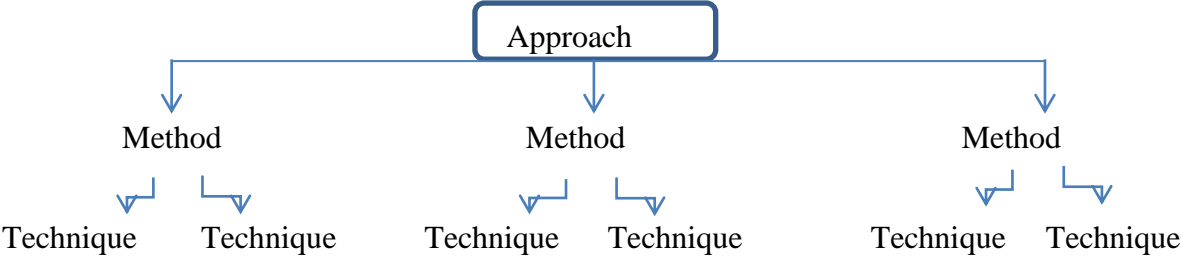


Figure 02: Elements and sub-elements that constitute an approach (*ibid*)

## **2.2. Definition of the Competency-Based Approach (CBA)**

### **2.2.1. Competence and Competency**

The terms competence and competency are often used interchangeably. However, they don't usually stand for the same sense. The Oxford Learners' Dictionary (2018: 85) defines the word "competence" as "the ability to do something successfully and efficiently" while the word "competency" is defined in the Cambridge Advanced Learners' Dictionary and Thesaurus (2018: 170) as "an important skill that is needed to do a job". Competence, then, refers to a person's general ability while competency is used to describe a person's ability to perform a given task. Chilly (2010: 03) put forth that:

"...Competence is a cluster of related abilities, commitments, knowledge and skills that enable a person to act effectively in a job or a situation in comparison to competency which refers to a cluster of abilities relating to excellence in a specific activity..."

### **2.2.2. The Competency-Based Approach**

The growing need for learning foreign languages during the last century led to the emergence of various teaching methods and different approaches that attempt to provide the students with the most efficient and appropriate ways to make foreign language learning acquisition as efficacious and successful as possible. The CBA is among the most recent teaching approaches that revolutionized the field by its principles. It is an educational movement that aims to define the precise knowledge, behaviors and skills the students would acquire at the end of each learning sequence. Thus, it is referred to as an outcomes approach (Chilly, *ibid*). It focuses on what students are expected to be able to do with the target language rather than the learning process. In CBA, "the focus moves from what students know about language to what they can do with it" (Wong, 2008: 04). Since Klein (2013: 88)



stated “an educated person is one who not only knows a lot of information but can also put that knowledge to work”.

To this end, it is necessary to set the learning goals before designing the curriculum, text books, teaching aids and all the learning conditions that enable the students to attain the expected learning outcomes. Nkwetisama (2012: 519) stated that “the CBA is also referred to as the pedagogy of integration or to an outcomes approach. This approach entails the putting together of all the knowledge, know-how and attitudes required for the solution of real life problems or situations”.

### **2.3 A Brief History of the Competency-Based Approach**

The adoption of the competency-Based Approach in the field of foreign languages teaching can be traced back to the late 1960’s and early 1970’s in the United States of America. It emerged to reform teacher education and training in the 1960s (Brown, 1994: 09). Beforehand, teaching was based on the traditional methods that relied much more on rote learning. Moreover, students’ grading was based on the time spent in class (seat time) rather than on the extent to which they manage their knowledge outside classroom. “several developments in K-12educationregarding outcomes-based learning and mastery learning set the stage for CBA implementation in post-secondary education”.( Nodine, 2015:01).

According to Brown (1994: 10), the Competency-Based Approach appeared first during the First World War and passed through five converging generations, the first generation aimed at developing workers’ skills to support machinery and equipment during the First World War:

“...The first generation of competencies mirrored the developments and application of scientific management to the workplace. These were formed in the context of the efficiency movement and included the models of training developed to

support the waging of the First World War. This training was designed to provide 'farm hands' with the skills to support the machinery and equipment in what was considered to be the first mechanized war..." (Callaghan et al, 1962 cited in Brown, 1994: 10).

The second generation of competences accentuated the achievement of the learning mastery of predefined content independently from the time spent on the task. Brown (*ibid*) argued "This approach emphasized achievement of success or mastery of preset content and separated this achievement from timetabling or scheduling, thus making it independent of time spent on the task."

The third generation was characterized by the enactment of vocational education and training programs in addition to the adoption of psychology's principles within the process of training to help armed services develop their potentials during the Second World War. "The third variation was created by the application of psychology to the design and implementation of vocational education and training programs. The training methods developed for the armed services for the Second World War were highly formative" (*ibid*).

The fourth generation witnessed the first appearance of the word 'competency'. "It was within this generation that the word 'competency' first appeared" (*ibid*). Additionally, it both defined the performance that would be achieved by learners at the end of the training. "This described the performance (or behavior) that the learner would be able to demonstrate at the end of the training" (*ibid*). And put emphasis on the surrounding environment, the tools and equipment that ought to be supplied for the learners so as to achieve the learning goals. He added: "Also listed were the tools, equipment or other necessary items which needed to be supplied, these provided the conditions under which the training was to occur". (*ibid*)

Today, the approach knows its fifth generation which focuses mainly on learning outcomes. It also stresses the prominent role course design plays in helping learners achieve their target competences. Additionally, this generation witnesses a notable adoption of the approach in so many countries' educational systems for it produces more skilled learners and competent users of the acquired knowledge. Klein-Collins (2013: 79) argued that the re-emergence of Competency-Based Education (CBE) programs in U.S.A during the recent years is due to the fact that it focuses much more on what learners are able to do with what they already learned. Likewise, its re-emergence had a direct impact even on the design and delivery of vocational education in the UK and Australia where all teaching programs are competency-based. (Foyster, 1990: 01 cited in *op cit*)

#### **2.4. Features of the Competency Based Approach**

The Competency-Based Approach has become an appropriate alternative to other teaching methods and approaches in Algeria during the current years Chelli (2010: 02). It displays some features that make it distinct from other teaching methods and approaches which can be summarized into:

- 1- The CBA emphasizes on what the learners can actually do rather than on what they know. Its main focus, then, is on the students' outcomes rather than on the learning processes.
- 2- The CBA recognizes learners' prior knowledge. Teachers build their lessons on the basis of what their learners already know about the topic so as to facilitate the assimilation of the new content they are going to learn. Piaget (1970 cited in Chelli, 2012: 52) explained that learners "make sense of the new information by associating what they already know, that is attempting to assimilate it into their existing knowledge".
- 3- The CBA helps the learner be engaged in the process of teaching and learning.
- 4- Within the CBA's framework, courses are designed in accordance to the learners' needs and interests to enhance their collaboration during the whole learning process.

5- The CBA seeks to understand how the learners learn. It takes into account the learners' learning styles whether they are visual, auditory, kinesthetic or tactile to help them reach the learning objectives easily.

6- The CBA facilitates rather than controls learning.

7- Learning under the CBA is learner-centered. It "fosters autonomous learning and improves learners' analytical, creative, systemic, reflective and critical thinking as well as it raises their self-confidence" (*op cit*: 04).

8- Assessment is a major feature of the CBA. Teachers have to assess their learners before delivering the lesson (diagnostic or placement assessment) to be aware of their learners' prior knowledge related to the field of study. Also, teachers assess their learners' progress during the learning process (formative assessment). Then, they assess them after learning (summative assessment) to measure what competencies they have gained.

9-CBA is a problem-solving approach. It "places learners in situations that test/ check their capacity to overcome obstacles and problems, and makes learners think and learn by doing" (*op cit*: 48).

## **2.5. The problem-solving situation**

Bader (2007: 35) argued that "the Competency-Based Approach urges teachers to place learners in front of problems to reflect on, instead of requiring them to regurgitate information presented by the teacher". It is expected that "In front of problem-situations, learners capitalize on their previously acquired knowledge to find a solution, and this will result in the construction of new knowledge" (*ibid*). In the same trend, Bounab (2018: 01) defined the problem-solving situation as "a process of working on facts, details, information and knowledge to reach a solution. It is an ongoing activity in which we use what we know to discover what we don't know". He complemented that the situation "includes expectable

obstacles by generating hypotheses, predictions, and arriving at satisfactory solutions”(Bounab, 2018: 01). Thus, the problem solving situation puts students in front of a difficulty to make them feel responsible for their own learning and to let them make their own decisions towards a situation that requires their analytical and reflective thinking. Bounab highlighted the importance of the problem solving situation as “it provides students with opportunities to use their newly acquired knowledge in meaningful, real-life activities and assists them in working at higher levels of thinking” (*ibid*). Additionally, learners are likely to effectively learn a foreign language provided that they use it to solve a certain communicative problem. Accordingly, they would be competent language users who manage to solve communicative problems outside the classroom.

However, to help students be effective problem solvers, teachers have to take some vital factors into account. First, it is necessary to assess students’ prior knowledge to measure their linguistic abilities, to assign them a suitable problem solving situation and to enable the teachers to adapt the learning objectives to their needs, interests and capacities. Second, the aim of problem solving situation is to make the students feel responsible for their own learning, thus, teachers have to foster autonomous learning to develop their critical, creative and analytical thinking on one hand, and to help them raise self-confidence on the other. Also, teachers have to guide their students in a way that directs their reasoning towards the learning goals’ achievement by giving them some suggestions whenever necessary. Likewise, it is worth mentioning that fostering autonomous learning doesn’t disregard collaborative work. Teachers had better encourage group and pair work to let the students exchange and share ideas as well as to make it clear that the problem they face may be solved in different ways. (*ibid*)

Prominently, the process the students follow to resolve a problem is so central as the problem resolution itself since regular attempts to solve different problems enables the

students to develop certain strategies to be used in problem solving situations outside the classroom.

## **2.6. Teacher's Role in the Competency- Based Approach**

The Competency-Based Approach is learner-centered. It fosters autonomous learning and encourages the students to rely on their skills and competencies to face problem solving situations and to apply the knowledge they acquire in the classroom in genuine life situations. To this regard, learning should not be a spoon-feeding process. Teachers have to provide their students with the appropriate strategies that may help them acquire knowledge and achieve the learning objectives. Bader (*op cit*:46 ) stated that “teachers are no more just transmitters of knowledge whose unique duty is to fill in empty vessels, but rather are assigned the role of facilitators who engage learners in tasks, and help them develop learning strategies for an effective learning”.

Accordingly, to enable the students achieve their learning goals, teachers are assigned different roles and tasks. First, they should seek their students' needs, interests and learning styles to design their lessons accordingly and to appropriately select the teaching materials to be used. Ameziane, (2005: 12 cited in Chelli, 2012: 49) argued that “all learners can learn equally well if they receive the kind of instruction they need”. So, “it is the teachers' responsibility to analyze their students' needs seeking a kind of improvement appropriate to the changing world” (Chelli, *ibid*). Besides, observation is viewed as an important aspect in the teachers' job. It permits to determine the students' weaknesses and the learning aspects that need teachers' support. Also, observation lets the teachers have a general overview about the learning techniques they should use in accordance to the students' learning styles. Importantly, observation helps teachers raise their awareness about their students' individual differences to be able to tailor their teaching process in such a way that suits the diverse students' abilities.

Similarly, scaffolding is considered as a perfect means that enables the students perform beyond their current capacities. Thus, teachers have to provide brainstorming activities to challenge the students to achieve higher levels of performance. Hammond and Gibbons (2001: 14 cited in Chelli: 50) defined scaffolding as “high challenge, high support enabling students to achieve beyond their abilities”. However, unchallenging tasks get the students demotivated and bored. Vygotsky (1978 cited in Diaz, 2004: 40) introduced the learner's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) that is “The difference between what learners can do by themselves and what they can do with the help of others”. Hence, the gap between what the students can do themselves and what they cannot, can be bridged by means of scaffolding tasks and activities.

Likewise, within the framework of the CBA, teachers have to design the syllabus and the learning activities that serve the competences students are expected to acquire reinforced by positive and constructive feedback. Furthermore, creating a healthy environment for learning is central to the success of learning objectives achievement. Teachers have to make the students feel comfortable in their classes by showing them that no matter if they make errors or have doubts so as to get rid of the barriers standing between them and their target outcomes. In addition to monitoring and evaluating the students, teachers had better involve all the students in the learning process by means of group works or by applying the ‘*Think-Pair and Share*’ principle, the fact that develops their communicative and social competences and eases introvert students’ integration. (Bounab, 2018: 03)

## **2.7 Student’s Role in the Competency-Based Approach.**

The Competency-Based Approach aims to form students who manage to apply the knowledge they acquire in classroom in real life circumstances. It focuses on what they can do with the knowledge and skills they learned rather than on the knowledge itself.

To this end, students have to play a major role in the learning process. “The CBA has a considerable impact on the role of students”(Chelli, 2012: 63). Firstly, they should ensure an active participation in the classroom; they have to take part in the discussions and debates through asking and answering questions of both their teachers and peers, and by expressing themselves and sharing their ideas about the subject. Besides, the students should exhibit a high rate of motivation, interest and commitment to achieve their learning objectives and to help their teachers accomplish their roles appropriately. Additionally, they should be responsible for their learning as their teachers are no more than facilitators. So, they ought to take advantage of their help and guidance and not to totally rely on them. Moreover, by means of permanent questioning, and through other cognitive strategies, they succeed to revise their prior knowledge through consulting numerous sources of information. Chelli (*ibid*: 64) affirmed that “the learner will appeal to cognitive, affective and motivational strategies in order to set a balance between his previous knowledge and his newly acquired knowledge”. She added that “The reflection the learner will operate on his own learning processes will assure the quality of his acquisition and facilitate his retention” (*ibid*). In this sense, they should be autonomous and active actors in their learning process. However, autonomy doesn’t negate nor deny the benefits of collaborative learning. Students should work cooperatively in order to develop their social and communicative competences as well as to help their mates overcome shyness and get rid of some other affective barriers that hinder them from learning since “the collaboration and dialogic action with others is a key to developing awareness, experience and opportunities for reflection” (*ibid*).

## **2.8. Competency-based Approach in Algeria**

The world today, in the era of information and technology, is constantly evolving. To cope with this speedy growth, countries have to improve their educational systems. Since, modernizing the sector of education is the key to success in the formation of well-trained and



knowledgeable workforce that, in its turn, effectively contributes to the prosperity and development of the countries in all aspects. However, if educational policies were not reconsidered, then, these countries would be left behind. In this sense, education goes to the crux of the matter. It is critical to any nation's growth as it not only develops its individuals' minds, but renders them confident in their knowledge, tolerant and open-minded as well.

In an attempt to develop the field of education and to cope with the globalization's requirements, various stages and different teaching methods and approaches were adopted in Algeria since independence in 1962 which can be summarized in what follows:

Benadla (2012: 145) highlighted that:

....since the independence (1962), the Algerian educational system has witnessed many changes according to the most 'said efficient' teaching methods in the world. The Grammar Translation Method was inherited from the already prepared French colonization syllabi. The Audio lingual Method was soon adopted, then, because of its behaviorist approach, relying on the principle of stimulus-response, the learner was treated as a 'machine' that responds to the teacher's stimuli to learn. This proved to be unable to form learners who can communicate effectively as far as language teaching is concerned. For this reason, recourse was called from the communicative approach in the 1980s, with the 'teaching with objectives method'. However, little was done to prepare the Algerian classrooms to adopt this teaching method, mainly in terms of classroom density and teaching tools. As a result, it proved to be a failure.

Hence, great efforts were made during the second half of the last century to improve the quality of teaching in general and the teaching of EFL in particular in Algeria. However, they were not as fruitful as expected since students were assigned a passive role while the teachers played the major role in the teaching process. Besides, they were graded on the basis of their seat time rather than on their achievements. Bouhadiba, (2006: 179) argued that “EFL learning has reached an alarming situation in which it was divorced from its communicative nature. It became, thus, treated by the learners as a mere subject to be restricted to classroom use and never go beyond its boundaries”. She added “it became learnt solely on purely instrumental motives such as getting the average grades to pass to the next level”(ibid). On this basis, it was necessary to reform the Algerian educational system by adapting it to a pattern that matches the requirements of the modern age in order to overcome all the previous system’s obstacles that impeded the good conduct of education. For Benadla, “The previous teaching method; ‘the teaching with objectives’, relied on teaching units to be accomplished in a definite period of time, marginalizing the learners’ achievements. It was substituted by a teaching method adopting the CBA principles”. (Benadla, 2012:146)

To this end, Algeria introduced fundamental reforms in education since 2003, the reforms knew the introduction of ICT’s in the teaching process and the focus on foreign languages’ development principally English which is regarded the language of globalization, science, technology, commerce and business. For this reason, English language instruction starts from the first year middle school striving to enable the students to confront any difficulty and to solve any communicative problem. Importantly, the reforms witnessed in parallel, the adoption of the Competency Based Approach aiming at modernizing and developing the educational system to meet the requirements of globalization. The Ministry of National Education in the national program of English as a Second Foreign Language in the First Year Middle school teachers’ guide (2003:03) defined the Competency-Based Approach

as “... a know how to act process which interacts and mobilizes a set of capacities, skills and an amount of knowledge that will be used effectively in various problem- situations or in circumstances that have never occurred before”. Therefore, the reason behind the implementation of CBA in the Algerian educational system is to form competent and skillful students who bring about a relation between what they acquire at school and their genuine life. In order to form students who are responsible, autonomous, tolerant, creative and critical thinkers. The students who rely on themselves to resolve their learning problems. However, these goals can be achieved as long as teachers do not give their students ready-made conclusions. Benadla (2012: 146) clarified that “through his learning, the learner ‘learns how to learn’ .... he learns how to master some cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies that enable him to learn by himself. The learners, also, are encouraged to seek information relying on their reasoning”. Principally, students through the CBA are expected not to keep their language knowledge inactive, but rather, they should employ it in their oral and written communications.

To conclude, the adoption of the CBA in the Algerian educational system can be fruitful provided that teachers and students show a certain familiarity with its principles, and as long as Algerian school provides the necessary conditions for its success.

## **2.9. Conclusion**

Throughout the theoretical chapter, we attempted to provide a general overview of the research variables, the speaking skill and the Competency-Based Approach. We tried to define them shedding light on their aspects and features. The aim behind it is to show how efficacious CBA is in teaching the speaking skill to EFL students. In 2003, Algeria introduced central reforms in the educational system adopting the Competency-Based Approach principles to foster learners’ autonomy and to raise their awareness towards their own learning responsibilities. Hence, it would be interesting to investigate how this approach is

implemented when teaching the speaking skill to third year secondary school students and to depict the main difficulties encountered by teachers when adopting it. The following chapter will then, be devoted to present the methodology used in our study, its results and pedagogical implications.

## **Chapter Two: Practical Part**

## **Introduction**

The current research investigates the speaking skill taught under the CBA framework from the viewpoint of EFL teachers of 3<sup>rd</sup> year secondary school students. To this end, the second part of the study encloses two sections. The first provides a short reminder of the objectives and the variables of the study. A general description of the research design and methodology is, then, presented including the population and the sample chosen as well as the data collection tools. The second section is devoted to interpret and analyze the findings collected throughout the research. Besides, it includes some pedagogical implications and suggestions for upcoming studies. A general conclusion is, then, drawn followed by the limitations of the study at hand.

## **Section One: Research Methodology**

### **1.1. Objectives of the Study**

The Competency-Based Approach (CBA) was implemented in the Algerian educational system in 2003 introducing new teaching strategies to improve the students' learning process and to cope with the modern scientific and technological world growth as well as to meet the globalization's requirements. The current study is carried out to have a bird's eye view on the teaching of the speaking skill within the CBA framework sharpening focus on three main issues that are clearly exposed in the following research questions:

- 1-How is the speaking skill taught to 3<sup>rd</sup> year secondary school students under the CBA framework?
- 2- What are the constraints teachers of third year secondary school level encounter in teaching the speaking skill using the CBA principles?
- 3- How can the teaching of the speaking skill under CBA be improved?

## **1.2. Research variables**

Throughout the present study, we can clearly distinguish the two variables. The independent variable is the Competency-Based Approach that is recently adopted by the Algerian educational system. The dependent variable is the English speaking skill.

## **1.3. Research design**

The main concern of the current work is to shed light on the process of presenting a speaking lesson under the CBA framework and to highlight the constraints that impede an effective application of the CBA principles in teaching the speaking skill as perceived by third year secondary school level teachers of English. Moreover, it aims to depict teachers' perceptions of how the teaching of the speaking skill can be improved. As such, a descriptive study is used.

### **1.3.1. Research population and sample**

The research population who participated in the present study includes the secondary school level teachers of English who had already taught third year students through the “*New Prospect*” textbook.

However, the study of the whole population is not possible. Sampling, in such a case, is “an indispensable technique of behavioral research; the research work cannot be undertaken without the use of sampling. The study of the total population is not possible and it is also impracticable” stated Yogesh (1981: 81). He defined sampling as “the process of selecting the fractional part of the respondents” (*ibid*). Hence, we worked with a group of twenty-five (25) teachers from different high schools in Bejaia, who had been working in the field for more than five years. This experience helped them have an overall picture on the process of teaching the speaking skill under the CBA in the Algerian context and let them confront some constraints in applying CBA principles in their teaching process.

### **1.3.2. Data collection tools**

As mentioned earlier, the present research is a descriptive study based on a mixed methodology; qualitative and quantitative. It relies on three distinct data collection tools:

- a. Classroom observation
- b. Questionnaire
- c. Interview

“The mixing of data types, known as data triangulation, is often thought to help in validating the claims that might arise from an initial pilot study”. (Wendy, 2004: 03). Triangulation strives to uncover the three main issues clearly stated in the research questions above. In what follows, we try to present the reasons and the objectives behind the choice of each research instrument employed in the present study.

#### **a. Classroom observation.**

Kawulich (2012:1) defined classroom observation as “a way of gathering data by watching behavior, events or noting physical characteristics in the natural setting”. She added that “observation is a primary tool to help you document what is going on in that setting” (ibid). Additionally, Schmuck (1997 cited in Kawulich, 2005: 03) put forth that “it provides researchers with ways to check for nonverbal expression of feelings, determines who interacts with whom, grasps how participants communicate with each other, and checks for how much time is spent on various activities”. Marshall and Rossman (1989: 79 cited in *op cit*) argued that “observation is the systematic description of the events, behaviors, and artifacts of a social setting”. In the same vein, Kawulich (*ibid*) stated that “In any case, systematically observing your surroundings, paying attention to the activities taking place, and writing down what you have learned in the setting will be an important piece of the data collection process”. Thus, classroom observation as a data collection tool plays a central role in gathering data in



our research since it permits to investigate the process of presenting a speaking lesson within the framework of the CBA in a live situation and authentic context where both teacher and students act naturally and spontaneously. Prominently, the advantage of classroom observation resides in helping the researcher be as factual as possible. It enables him to collect data objectively and neutrally as he does not depend on the respondents' direct contributions to collect data. To this regard, during three oral sessions with a third year group of thirty students at Massinissa high school in Bejaia and with an experienced teacher who was acquainted with a satisfactory knowledge of CBA principles through regular trainings and seminars held by secondary inspectors, the researcher is particularly interested in observing some basic criteria in delivering a speaking lesson. As clearly seen in Appendix A, the observed items can namely be presented as follows: The speaking lessons' framework, themes and focus, interaction patterns, the teacher's role, the students' role, the types of activities, talking time management, giving feedback and speaking assessment.

Accordingly, the classroom observation is the appropriate data collecting tool that enables the researcher to collect the needed data to describe how CBA principles are applied in teaching the speaking skill in a third year secondary school level classroom.

## **b. Questionnaire**

Abawi (2013: 03) defined research questionnaire as “a data collection instrument consistent of a series of questions and other prompts for the purpose of gathering information from respondents”. He added that “a well-designed questionnaire meets the research objectives and reaches statistically significant and reliable conclusions from what a researcher is planning to investigate, mainly when resources are limited”. He argued that “it is thus a good instrument that can measure both qualitative and quantitative data, but is it more appropriate for quantitative data collection” (*ibid*). The respondents prefer to answer to a research questionnaire rather than interviews. This is due to the fact that the former provides

them enough time to reflect on the questions, to fill in it and then to hand it back to the researcher. Besides, it keeps their answers anonymous.

The current space is devoted to give a full picture of the questionnaire we used in our study focalizing on the main investigated criteria and on the motives behind the choice of the questions aiming to elicit third year secondary school level teachers' perceptions towards the difficulties they confront in implementing the CBA principles in the process of teaching the speaking skill. To this end, twenty-five (25) questionnaires were distributed during the first week of the third term of the academic year 2017/2018 to EFL secondary school teachers who are in charge of third year students. All the copies were returned the same week and all the questions had been answered.

The questionnaire we administered includes Twenty eight (28) items dealing with different criteria. The first four were designed to collect teachers' general information regarding their gender (Q1), age (Q2), instructional level (Q3) and the school levels they teach (Q4). The second part deals with the dependent variable i.e. the speaking skill. It aims at eliciting the teachers' perceptions on its importance (Q5). Concerning the last part which is composed of twenty three (23) items, it is devoted to indicate the difficulties teachers face when applying the Competency-Based Approach in teaching the speaking skill to third year students. The questions are statements which were set in the form of a lickert-scale of: Strongly agree, Agree, undecided, Disagree, Strongly disagree. Importantly, this part in turn is divided into five (5) small sections; the first section encloses six (6) items representing difficulties related to students' abilities. The second section covers four (4) items demonstrating difficulties related to the teachers' abilities. The third section includes five (5) items showing difficulties related to the teaching resources. The fourth section encompasses three (3) items indicating difficulties related to the overall teaching atmosphere and the last section contains five (5) items highlighting difficulties related to other factors.

The goal behind designing these questions and statements is to help participants find out the difficulties that really hamper the teaching of the speaking skill process under CBA in the Algerian context. And as the researcher is a teacher of English in the middle school, he is in a daily direct contact with other teachers of English. This helped him collect a set of constraints related to different factors through casual discussions or formal debates during seminars held by English inspectors.

### **c. Interview**

Alshenqeti (2014: 02) defined interview as “an extendable conversation between partners that aims at having an ‘in-depth information’ about a certain topic or subject, and through which a phenomenon could be interpreted in terms of the meanings interviewees bring to it”. Dörnyei and Skehan (2003 cited in *ibid*: 03) argued that “interviews have widely been used as a method of data collection in recent linguistic research. Various studies showed that interviews are one, if not the primary, method of investigating linguistic phenomena.”

In the research at hand, we used an interview that consists of five direct questions addressed to five experienced teachers of English. It is conducted to investigate the factors that teachers consider of paramount importance to improve the teaching of speaking under CBA. These factors can be interpreted first, through the extent to which students are familiar and ready to accept the CBA principles. Second, it deals with the extent to which the teachers have adequate knowledge and are familiar with CBA principles. Then, the third question concerns the role teaching resources play in the attainment of the teaching objectives. Finally, the two last questions deal with the teaching environment general conditions and some other external factors that may prepare the ground for CBA to enhance the speaking teaching quality.

## **Section two: Data Analysis and Interpretation**

### **2.1. Classroom observation**

Instead of asking teachers about how they implement the CBA in teaching the speaking skill to third year students, the researcher opted for using classroom observation as a main data collection tool, since it allowed him to gather data in authentic context and live situations. Moreover, classroom observation let him be more neutral and objective in describing the natural and spontaneous teacher's and students' performances.

During three oral sessions delivered by an experienced teacher at Massinissa high school in Bejaia, the researcher attentively listened, looked and observed the whole teacher's presentation of the oral sessions under the CBA framework. Stress was put mainly on some of the criteria that are central in any speaking lesson delivery which are: **a.** the speaking lessons' framework, themes and focus; **b.** interaction patterns; **c.** the teacher's role; **d.** the students' role; **e.** the types of activities, **f.** talking time management, **g.** giving feedback and speaking assessment (see Appendix A).

#### **a. The speaking lessons' themes, framework and focus**

The third year English textbook "*New prospect*" encloses six units dealing with the six themes endorsed in the syllabus. However, the foreign languages stream is expected to deal only with the following four units: '*Ancient civilization*', '*Ethics in business*', '*Education in the world*' and '*Feeling and emotions*'. It is worth mentioning that each unit includes only one speaking lesson which means that the teachers of English are supposed to teach their pupils only four speaking lessons per year. This fact contradicts the CBA principles that tend to prepare the students to become competent communicators who manage to apply their English linguistic knowledge outside the classroom.

The researcher attended three speaking lessons whose themes were attentively selected by the teacher. The first one covered the students' preferences regarding counterfeit and genuine goods. The second unveiled the advantages and drawbacks of using smartphones in education. Then, the third lesson was devoted to talk about teenagers who suffer from emotional deficiency. Accordingly, the students showed great interest and enthusiasm to take part in the different lessons' stages since the lessons addressed their own issues and covered sensitive authentic life topics.

Concerning the lessons' framework, since speaking is regarded as a productive skill, the teacher adopted the **PPP** framework (**P**resentation-**P**ractice-**P**roduce) during the three observed oral sessions. As a starting point, he initiated his lessons by five minute warming up activities, either by asking the students about the previous lessons, about the unit's topic or by setting some educational games. The aim behind this activity is to activate the students' schemata, to attract their attentions and to make them ready to learn. In what follows, we try to focus on describing the way the second lesson '*the advantages and drawbacks of using smartphones in education*' was delivered since the three lessons had the same framework and the same phases. Next, the teacher moved to presenting the lesson topic in a form of a problem solving situation. To better clear the matter, during the second lesson for instance, the teacher exhibited, by means of a data-show, some pictures of modern technological inventions such as lap-tops, tablets and smartphones assigning some pupils to describe and define them. This activity aimed at relating their prior knowledge in the field of new technologies to the lesson themes and to provide them with some relevant vocabulary they may need in their conversations. After that, he showed pictures of some pupils using their smartphones as pedagogical materials to look up words in online dictionaries or to google some definitions. In the counterpart, he showed other pictures of pupils who were chatting on messenger while their teacher was delivering a lesson. Through these pictures, the teacher

succeeded to implicitly introduce the lesson's subject matter to be discussed during the whole oral session.

Throughout the lesson's second phase "Practice" that lasted for around twenty minutes, the teacher urged his students to discuss with him the role smartphones play in education. Importantly, he frequently opposed their views to make them feel challenged and to let them in situations that require finding evidences and proofs to convince their teacher and to defend their viewpoints regarding smartphones' use in education. The aim behind opposing the students' views is also to raise their critical thinking and to let them learn how to engage in social debates and discussions.

All through the last lessons' phase "Produce", the teacher set his students to work in pairs to discuss both the positive and negative aspects of smartphones' use in education. In each pair, there should be a defender and an opponent to the idea. During this phase, the teacher provided a free space for the pupils to express, share and defend their opinions with their mates. The aim behind this activity is to foster their creative thinking and to enable them to relate their background knowledge of new technological inventions to the current speaking lesson. Moreover, it helps them to improve their communicative skills.

Regarding the teacher's main focus during his lessons, it was to help his students be as projective as possible in speaking. They were never interrupted by their teacher when they committed errors related to accuracy. So, fluency according to the teacher is prior to accuracy in teaching the speaking skill.

## **b. Interaction patterns**

Interaction patterns are the different ways teacher and students interact in the classroom. They vary depending on the lessons' stages and activities. Besides, they are fundamental to achieve the ultimate lessons' objectives.

### **b.1. Teacher- Students interaction (TS)**

During the “warming-up and presentation” phases, the teacher dominated a high proportion of classroom talk. This let him initiate the topic and helped the students recall their prior knowledge related to it.

### **b.2. Students -Teacher interaction (ST)**

In the second phase of the lesson “Practice”, the researcher noticed a high portion of the students’ interaction with their teacher. It was the best way that enabled them to elicit their teachers’ and classmates’ ideas related to the lessons’ themes and to enrich their discussions about the main lessons’ concern.

### **b.3. Students - Students interaction (SS)**

To ensure that all the students took part in the speaking lesson, the teacher resorted in the last phase “Produce” to pair-work. He assigned in each pair a defender and an opponent to the use of smartphones in education. Accordingly, the last fifteen minutes were devoted to let the students engage in free discussions which took the form of dialogues about the subject matter. This activity aimed to develop their communicative skills and to help the students who were impeded by shyness and fear of speaking in public to get rid of these psychological barriers.

### **b.4. Language of interaction**

The teacher was keen to make English the only means of interaction in the classroom during all the lessons’ phases mainly during the presentation and the practice phases where interaction was between the teacher and the pupils. However, during the last phase - the produce stage - and as the whole students shared the same mother-tongue “Tamazight”, they sometimes resorted to use it instead of English. Similarly, though the teacher did his best to

make all the students interact, the huge number of students and the short time allotted were the main obstacles that hindered making sure that all students interact orally during lesson.

### **c. The teacher and the students' roles**

Highlighting the roles of the teacher and his students during the oral sessions is one of the researcher's main concerns. The teacher did not give his students ready-made conclusions, but rather, he was there to give them opportunities to interact orally either with him or with their classmates. Additionally, he didn't provide them with the missing words to maintain the speaking flow but rather he helped them think, paraphrase and use synonyms or even gestures and body movements to carry meaning whenever they felt unable to keep speaking. Furthermore, the teacher recommended that they had to raise their hands and to hold on until he permitted them to talk, for the sake of a fair and equal distribution of talking opportunities to all students to let them all interact and make their viewpoints clearer. In addition, guiding the conversations by means of asking questions was among his main concerns in order not to let the students discuss irrelevant issues.

From another angle, the observer noticed that the students played an active role during the whole oral sessions mainly when the themes interested them; they were highly motivated to take part in the discussions. The majority of them kept raising their hands to ask and answer questions and even to argue or to oppose others' opinions. Using mobiles and smartphones in the classroom is prohibited in the Algerian schools. This is what urged the students to engage in debates with the teacher and classmates be it defenders or opponents to the matter. Likewise, the students did not find difficulties to relate their background knowledge to the lesson's theme as many of them had been subjected to the withdrawal of their smartphones by their teachers so as not to distract their attentions.

Despite the teachers' efforts to make his students autonomous, some of them sometimes asked for their teacher's help to provide them with the needed words or



expressions in English or they resorted to use French, Arabic or even to Tamazight to make their ideas clearer. Also, during the last phase of the lesson, the observer noted that many of the pupils used their mobile dictionaries to translate some words.

#### **d. Types of activities**

The three oral sessions the researcher observed were not rich in terms of activities' variety. They were limited to debates and discussions because of time constraints and the big number of students in the group. The teacher's reason behind the choice of debates and discussions is to let the students give their views and attitudes toward the use of smartphones in the classroom and to develop their self-confidence to speak in different communicative and social contexts.

#### **e. Talking time management**

Even though the teacher did his best to fairly give equal opportunities to all his students to speak by means of raising hands and asking for a permission to interact, some talkative students who seemed eager to word in every instant, tried to dominate talk either by asking questions, answering questions addressed to the teacher or by commenting their mates contributions. Many other students, however, seemed unwilling to talk. All their answers were either '*I don't know*' or '*I have nothing to say*'. But regarding the Teacher's Talking Time (TTT), it was maximized during the presentation phase only but in the practice phase, he shared more or less the same amount of talking time with his students and he kept silent during the produce phase to let them work in pairs. His main contributions were limited to correcting them or guiding their discussions. However, the students Talking Time (PTT) was minimized during the first phase and maximized in the produce phase as clearly shown in the following figures:

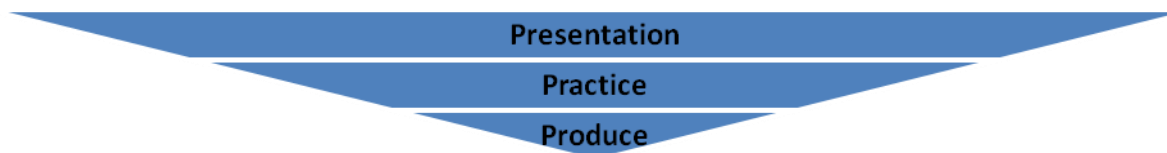


Figure e.1. Teacher's Talking Time.



Figure e.2. Students' Talking Time

### **f. Giving feedback**

The researcher noted that the students received mostly four different kinds of feedback; teacher's feedback, peers' feedback, delayed feedback and echo corrections. Though the teacher focused much more on speaking fluency he didn't marginalize correcting errors related to grammar, pronunciation or vocabulary but not on the spot. Importantly, he favored the echo corrections as they let the students reflect on their errors and help them reformulate and correct them themselves.

### **g. Speaking assessment**

Inopportunately, during the whole sessions being observed, the researcher noted that the teacher did not make any oral examination and did not set any speaking test. However, he relied on his overall impression about the students' oral performances and participation to give them the ongoing assessment's marks. On this basis, speaking assessment did not receive much attention due to the big number of students in the group and to time constraints. Similarly, third year high school English examinations are not based on oral proficiency since the Baccalaureate examination does not include any of the speaking tasks.

## **2.2. Summary of the findings of classroom observation**

Classroom observation permitted the researcher to have an overall picture of the way speaking lessons are delivered under CBA principles in the Algerian secondary school. The teacher was keen to select interesting and authentic speaking topics to meet his students' needs. The PPP framework was used to help present the lesson's topic and engage the students in discussions with their teacher, first, and then with their mates. A smooth transition was remarkable through the different lesson's phases. Importantly, the teacher sharpened his focus on developing students' oral fluency and never interrupted them for errors related to language accuracy. In the same vein, the researcher stressed on portraying the interaction patterns. He remarked that the teacher did his best to give equal talk opportunities to all students and to help less performing students participate. Regarding talk time management, teachers' talking time was maximized during the presentation phase and minimized in the produce phase while the students' talking time was minimized in the first phase and optimized in the last phase. It is worth mentioning that during the three observed oral sessions, the teacher never gave his students ready-made conclusions, rather, he always tried to help them think, paraphrase and use synonyms and even to resort to using gestures and body movements to maintain the speaking running flow. In return, his students' motivation and enthusiasm were very noticeable as they kept raising their hands to take part in the whole discussions.

Essentially, four types of feedback were employed: teacher's feedback, peers' feedback, delayed feedback and the most favored type was the echo feedback which let the students reflect on their errors to correct them themselves. Unexpectedly, the lesson was poor in terms of speaking activities which were limited to debates and open discussions because of time constraints. Similarly, the researcher noticed that speaking assessment did not receive due attention. The teacher did not set any oral test to assess his students' progress on the pretext that oral examinations are not part of the Baccalaureate exam.

## 2.3. Questionnaire

A questionnaire was administered to twenty-five secondary school teachers of English in Bejaia to elicit their perceptions toward the constraints that may stand against a full implementation of the CBA principles in teaching the speaking skill to third year secondary school students. This section is designed to analyze and interpret the findings gathered throughout this questionnaire through absolute frequency and relative frequency in separated tables.

### 2.3.1. Factual information

#### a. Teachers' gender distribution

##### Item 1: What is your gender?

The majority of participants were females. they were eighteen (18). They represent 72% of the whole participants exceeding the males who were seven (07) in number which represents 28% of the whole sample as shown in table 1. below :

| Participant's gender | Number    | Percentage  |
|----------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Females              | 18        | 72%,        |
| Males                | 07        | 28%         |
| <b>Total</b>         | <b>25</b> | <b>100%</b> |

**Table 1.** What is your gender?

#### b. Teachers' age distribution

##### Item 2. What is your age?

As highlighted in table 2. below, the age range was split into five (05) categories. The first one ranges from 22 to 27 which represents 12%, the second one is between 28 and 33 years old which represents 20%, the third one which ranges between 34 to 39 years old exhibits the majority of the participants with 40%, the fourth one extends between 40 and 45

years old and represents 16% and the last category which is over than 45years old is represented by 12% of the total.

| <b>Participants' age distribution</b> | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| <b>Between 22 and 27 years old</b>    | 03            | 12%               |
| <b>Between 28 and 33 years old</b>    | 05            | 20%               |
| <b>Between 34 and 39 years old</b>    | 10            | 40%               |
| <b>Between 40 and 45 years old</b>    | 04            | 16%               |
| <b>Over than 45 years old</b>         | 03            | 12%               |
| <b>Total</b>                          | 25            | 100%              |

**Table 2.** What is your age?

### **c. Teachers' instructional level distribution**

#### **Item 3: What is your highest level of instruction?**

Table 3 below indicates that eighteen (18) participants which represents 72% hold Bachelor's degrees while seven (07) of them representing 28% hold Master's degree.

| <b>Educational level</b> | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| <b>Bachelor's degree</b> | 18            | 72%               |
| <b>Master's degree</b>   | 07            | 28%               |
| <b>Others</b>            | 00            | 00%               |
| <b>Total</b>             | 25            | 100%              |

**Table 3.** What is your highest level of instruction?

### **d. The level (s) the teachers teach**

#### **Item 4: Which level (s) do you teach?**

As indicated in table 4, all the participant teach two different levels either first year and third year (48%) , first year and second year which represents the minority of the

participant which is 20 %, and second year and third year (40%).However, the 20% participants have already taught third level last years.

| School levels              | Number    | Percentage  |
|----------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| First year and third year  | 12        | 48%         |
| First year and second year | 05        | 20%         |
| Second year and third year | 08        | 32%         |
| <b>Total</b>               | <b>25</b> | <b>100%</b> |

**Table 4.** Which level (s) do you teach?

### **2.3.2. Teachers’ perceptions on the importance of teaching the speaking skill**

#### **Item 5: How important do you think it is to teach the speaking skill?**

All participants (100%) agreed upon the importance of teaching the speaking skill. According to them, communication is based on speech, when there is no speech, there is no effective communication, so it is an appropriate way to solve communicative problems either in the classroom or in real life situations. Besides, they argued that speaking enables the students to express their thoughts, opinions and feelings. In the same vein, they stated that through speaking, teachers manage to assess their students’ progress in language learning since speaking reflects the students’ linguistic knowledge and shows the extent to which they can use the language rules in their oral performances.

### 2.3.3. Difficulties faced when teaching speaking to 3rd year high school students under CBA

#### a. Difficulties related to students' abilities

**Item 6: It is difficult to apply CBA when teaching speaking to 3<sup>rd</sup> year students because they are unable to use their EFL knowledge.**

As shown in table 6 below, 76% of participants agree (60%) or strongly agree (16%) that it is difficult to apply CBA when teaching speaking to third year students because they do not manage to put their grammar and pronunciation knowledge into practice when speaking.

| Difficulties related to students' abilities                  | Options           | Number | Percentage |
|--|-------------------|--------|------------|
| <b>Students are unable to use their linguistic knowledge</b> | Strongly agree    | 04     | 16%        |
|  | Agree             | 15     | 60%        |
|  | Undecided         | 04     | 16%        |
|  | Disagree          | 02     | 08%        |
|  | Strongly disagree | 00     | 00%        |
| <b>Total</b>   |                   | 25     | 100%       |

**Table 6:** It is difficult to apply CBA when teaching speaking to third year students because they are unable to use their linguistic knowledge

**-Item 7: It is difficult to apply CBA when teaching speaking to third year students because they do not relate meaning with structure**

The results in the table 7 below indicate that 76% of participants agree (52%) or strongly agree (24%) that the student's inability to relate meaning with structure is one of the main factors that make it difficult to apply CBA when teaching speaking to third year students.

| <b>Difficulties related to students' abilities</b>    | <b>Options</b>    | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|---|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| <b>Students do not relate meaning with structure.</b> | Strongly agree    | 06            | 24%               |
|   | Agree             | 13            | 52%               |
|   | Undecided         | 03            | 12%               |
|   | Disagree          | 03            | 12%               |
|   | Strongly disagree | 00            | 00%               |
| <b>Total</b>  |                   | 25            | 100%              |

**Table 7:** It is difficult to apply CBA when teaching speaking to third year students because they do not relate meaning with structure

**-Item 8: It is difficult to apply CBA when teaching speaking to third year students because they have poor linguistic skill**

The majority of informants (88%) agree (80%) or strongly agree (08%) that the students' lack of linguistic skills is behind the difficulty to apply CBA when teaching speaking to third year students.

| <b>Difficulties related to students' abilities</b> | <b>Options</b>    | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| <b>Students have poor linguistic skills</b>        | Strongly agree    | 02            | 08%               |
|  | Agree             | 20            | 80%               |
|  | Undecided         | 03            | 12%               |
|  | Disagree          | 00            | 00%               |
|  | Strongly disagree | 00            | 00%               |
| <b>Total</b>                                       |                   | 25            | 100%              |

**Table 8:** It is difficult to apply CBA when teaching speaking to third year students because they have poor linguistic skill



**-Item 9: It is difficult to apply CBA when teaching speaking to third year students because they use their mother tongues rather than English**

It is clear from table 9 below that most of the participants (84%) agree (60%) or strongly agree (24%) that it is difficult to apply CBA when teaching speaking to third year students as they refer to use their mother tongues in their interaction rather than to English.

| <b>Difficulties related to students' abilities</b>           | <b>Options</b>    | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| <b>Students use their mother tongues rather than English</b> | Strongly agree    | 06            | 24%               |
|  | Agree             | 15            | 60%               |
|  | Undecided         | 02            | 08%               |
|  | Disagree          | 02            | 08%               |
|  | Strongly disagree | 00            | 00%               |
| <b>Total</b>   |                   | 25            | 100%              |

**Table 9:** It is difficult to apply CBA when teaching speaking to third year students because they use their mother tongues rather than English

**-Item 10: It is difficult to apply CBA when teaching speaking to third year students because they seem not ready to accept learner-centered approach**

Table 10 below shows that 72% of the informants agree that their students are still not ready to accept learner-centered approach even if CBA was implemented in the Algerian educational system since 2003.

| <b>Difficulties related to students' abilities</b>                 | <b>Options</b> | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--|----------------|---------------|-------------------|
| <b>Students seem not ready to accept learner-centered approach</b> | Strongly agree | 00            | 00%               |
|  | Agree          | 18            | 72%               |
|  | Undecided      | 01            | 04%               |
|  | Disagree       | 06            | 24%               |

|              |                   |    |      |
|--------------|-------------------|----|------|
|              | Strongly disagree | 00 | 00%  |
| <b>Total</b> |                   | 25 | 100% |

**Table 10:** It is difficult to apply CBA when teaching speaking to third year students because they seem not ready to accept learner-centered approach

**Item 11: It is difficult to apply CBA when teaching speaking to third year students because fear of negative evaluation and shyness prevent them from participation.**

As demonstrated in the table 11 below, 88% of participants agree (36%) or strongly agree (52%) that it is difficult to implement CBA in teaching speaking to third year students since fear of negative evaluation and shyness constitute a barrier that prevent them from participation in the classroom.

| <b>Difficulties related to students' abilities</b>                               | <b>Options</b>    | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| <b>Fear of negative evaluation and shyness prevent pupils from participation</b> | Strongly agree    | 13            | 52%               |
|  | Agree             | 09            | 36%               |
|  | Undecided         | 02            | 08%               |
|  | Disagree          | 01            | 04%               |
|  | Strongly disagree | 00            | 00%               |
| <b>Total</b>   |                   | 25            | 100%              |

**Table 11:** It is difficult to apply CBA when teaching speaking to third year students because fear of negative evaluation and shyness prevent them from participation

**\* Interpretation of the findings associated with difficulties related to students' abilities**

The six preceding items (6-7-8-9-10-11) dealt with constraints related to students' abilities that teachers face in implementing the principles of CBA in teaching the speaking

skill. The majority of participants (76%) see that students do not manage to use their EFL knowledge in terms of grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary in speaking and they are unable to relate meaning with structure. So this constitutes a big difficulty that prevents them from speaking fluently. In the same vein, 88% of informants stated that students have poor communicative skills this is what hinders them from expressing themselves effectively. Similarly, 84% of participants put forth that the majority of students resort to use their mother tongues rather than English in their interactions when they feel incapable to keep speaking. Additionally, 72% of the subjects claim that the students' unwillingness to accept the learner-centered approach and the fear of negative evaluation as well as shyness are among the main factors that prevent them from participation.

### **b. Difficulties related to teachers' abilities**

In what follows, we try to represent the numbers and the percentages of participants who strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, strongly disagreed or had no idea on the statements indicated in the four following items in the tables below.

#### **-Item 12: It is difficult to apply CBA when teaching speaking to third year students because teachers need intensive training to get familiar with its principles.**

Table 12 below indicates that 60% of the participants agree (40%) or strongly agree (20%) that it is challenging to implement CBA in teaching speaking to third year students because they need to be trained to know how to adopt it properly.

| <b>Difficulties related to teachers' abilities</b>                          | <b>Options</b> | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|---|----------------|---------------|-------------------|
| <b>Teachers need intensive training to get familiar with its principles</b> | Strongly agree | 05            | 20%               |
|   | Agree          | 10            | 40%               |
|   | Undecided      | 06            | 24%               |
|   | Disagree       | 04            | 16%               |

|              |                   |    |      |
|--------------|-------------------|----|------|
|              | Strongly disagree | 00 | 00%  |
| <b>Total</b> |                   | 25 | 100% |

**Table 12:** It is difficult to apply CBA when teaching speaking to third year students because teachers need intensive training to get familiar with its principles

**-Item 13: It is difficult to apply CBA when teaching speaking to third year students because teachers face the problem of classroom management.**

It is clear from table 13 below that most of the participants (72%) disagree that classroom management constitutes a difficulty to apply CBA when teaching speaking to third year students. Only 28% of them state that classroom management is one of the factors that make it unmanageable to implement CBA in teaching the speaking skill.

| <b>Difficulties related to teachers' abilities</b>       | <b>Options</b>    | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| <b>Teachers face the problem of classroom management</b> | Strongly agree    | 00            | 00%               |
|  | Agree             | 07            | 28%               |
|  | Undecided         | 00            | 00%               |
|  | Disagree          | 18            | 72%               |
|  | Strongly disagree | 00            | 00%               |
| <b>Total</b>   |                   | 25            | 100%              |

**Table 13:** It is difficult to apply CBA when teaching speaking to third year students because teachers face the problem of classroom management

**-Item 14: It is difficult to apply CBA when teaching speaking to third year students because teachers face the problem of talking time management.**

As shown in table 14 below, 68% of the informants agree (60%) or strongly agree (08%) that the problem of talking time management is one of the factors that makes it difficult

to apply CBA when teaching speaking to third year students against 32% who disagree on the statement.

| <b>Difficulties related to teachers' abilities</b>          | <b>Options</b>    | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|---|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| <b>Teachers face the problem of talking time management</b> | Strongly agree    | 02            | 08%               |
|   | Agree             | 15            | 60%               |
|   | Undecided         | 00            | 00%               |
|   | Disagree          | 08            | 32%               |
|   | Strongly disagree | 00            | 00%               |
| <b>Total</b>  |                   | <b>25</b>     | <b>100%</b>       |

**Table 14:** It is difficult to apply CBA when teaching speaking to third year students because teachers face the problem of talking time management

**-Item 15: Teachers' lack of vocabulary prevents them from being effective speaking teachers.**

Only 12% of participants agree that Teachers' lack of vocabulary prevents them from being effective speaking teachers. However, the majority (88%) see that teachers do not confront any vocabulary deficiency when dealing with teaching the speaking skill.

| <b>Difficulties related to teachers' abilities</b>                                       | <b>Options</b>    | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| <b>Teachers' lack of vocabulary prevents them from being effective speaking teachers</b> | Strongly agree    | 00            | 00%               |
|  | Agree             | 03            | 12%               |
|  | Undecided         | 00            | 00%               |
|  | Disagree          | 10            | 40%               |
|  | Strongly disagree | 12            | 48%               |
| <b>Total</b>   |                   | <b>25</b>     | <b>100%</b>       |

**Table 15:** Teachers' lack of vocabulary prevents them from being effective speaking teachers

**\* Interpretation of the findings associated with difficulties related to teachers' abilities**

The four precedent items (12-13-14-15) exposed the constraints related to teachers' abilities that impede them to effectively implement the principles of CBA in teaching the speaking skill. Accordingly, the majority of participants (60%) see that the foremost problem they confront in teaching the speaking skill under CBA is their unfamiliarity with its principles. They argue that they need intensive trainings so as to be able to deliver effective speaking lessons under the CBA framework. Besides, as clearly illustrated in table 14, 68% of informants claim that managing teacher's and students' talking time is a big challenge. Mainly in classes where brilliant students tend to dominate talk preventing introvert students to take part in the interactions. However, the majority of participants (72%) consider that classroom management does not constitute any problem in implementing the CBA in the process of teaching the speaking skill. Similarly, 88% of them argue that high school teachers do not face problems associated to their vocabulary. They are either bachelor's degree or master's degree holders who do not find any embarrassment in speaking English.

**c. Difficulties related to teaching resources**

The five coming tables represent the data collected regarding the numbers and the percentages of participants who either agree, strongly agree, disagree, strongly disagree or have no decision on the five following items indicating difficulties related to teaching resources.

**-Item 16: It is difficult to apply CBA when teaching speaking to third year students because the teaching/learning resources are inadequate to elaborate a good CBA lesson plan**

Regarding the results gathered in the table 16 below, it is clear that 56% of participants agree (48%) or strongly agree (08%) that the teaching/learning resources are inadequate to

elaborate a good CBA lesson plan against 20% who see that instructional resources do not pose any problem in teaching speaking.

| <b>Difficulties related to teaching resources</b>  | <b>Options</b>    | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| <b>The teaching/learning resources are inadequate to elaborate a good CBA lesson plan.</b> | Strongly agree    | 02            | 08%               |
|  | Agree             | 12            | 48%               |
|  | Undecided         | 06            | 24%               |
|  | Disagree          | 00            | 00%               |
|  | Strongly disagree | 05            | 20%               |
| <b>Total</b>   |                   | <b>25</b>     | <b>100%</b>       |

**Table 16:** It is difficult to apply CBA when teaching speaking to third year students because the teaching/learning resources are inadequate to elaborate a good CBA lesson plan

**-Item 17: The syllabus is so loaded that it is unlikely to be finished using the CBA**

According to the findings demonstrated in table 17 , the majority of the of informants (72%) agree (48%) or strongly agree (24%) that the overloaded syllabus does not permit teachers to completely implement the CBA in their teaching process for fear of not ending the program.

| <b>Difficulties related to teaching resources</b>                                    | <b>Options</b>    | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| <b>The syllabus is so loaded that it is not likely to be finished using the CBA.</b> | Strongly agree    | 06            | 24%               |
|  | Agree             | 12            | 48%               |
|  | Undecided         | 02            | 08%               |
|  | Disagree          | 05            | 20%               |
|  | Strongly disagree | 00            | 00%               |
| <b>Total</b>   |                   | <b>25</b>     | <b>100%</b>       |

**Table 17:** The syllabus is so loaded that it is unlikely to be finished using the CBA

**-Item 18: 3<sup>rd</sup> year textbook is complicated in terms of content organization and doesn't help teachers deliver an effective CBA speaking lesson**

Table 18 below indicates that 68% of participants do not think that the way the content of the 3rd year textbook is organized hinders the delivery an effective CBA speaking lesson.

| <b>Difficulties related to teaching resources</b>  | <b>Options</b>    | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| <b>3rd year textbook is complicated in terms of content organization and doesn't help teachers deliver an effective CBA speaking lesson.</b> | Strongly agree    | 00            | 00%               |
|  | Agree             | 03            | 12%               |
|  | Undecided         | 10            | 40%               |
|  | Disagree          | 10            | 40%               |
|  | Strongly disagree | 02            | 08%               |
| <b>Total</b>   |                   | <b>25</b>     | <b>100%</b>       |

**Table 18:** 3rd year textbook is complicated in terms of content organization and doesn't help teachers deliver an effective CBA speaking lesson

**-Item 19: The speaking topics provided in the third year curriculum and textbook do not fit the students' needs.**

It is clearly stated in table 19 below that most of the participants (76%) disagree (60%) or strongly disagree (16%) that the speaking topics provided in the third year curriculum and textbook do not fit the students' needs. In the counterpart, only 16% think that the speaking subject matters neither attract nor motivate the students to participate. This is what hinders a successful CBA speaking lesson's delivery.

| <b>Difficulties related to teaching resources</b>   | <b>Options</b> | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|---|----------------|---------------|-------------------|
| <b>The speaking topics provided in the third year curriculum and textbook do not fit the students' needs. This hinders a successful</b> | Strongly agree | 00            | 00%               |
|   | Agree          | 08            | 32%               |
|   | Undecided      | 02            | 08%               |



|  |                   |    |      |
|--|-------------------|----|------|
| <b>CBA speaking lesson's delivery.</b> | Disagree          | 15 | 60%  |
|  | Strongly disagree | 00 | 00%  |
| <b>Total</b>                           |                   | 25 | 100% |

**Table 19:** The speaking topics provided in the third year curriculum and textbook do not fit students' needs.

**-Item 20: Lack of ICT leads to low oral performances**

Table 20 below points out that the majority of the participants (72%) agree (32%) or strongly agree (40%) that the lack of use of information communication technology devices in the classroom hampers the process of teaching the speaking skill and leads to low oral performances.

| <b>Difficulties related to teaching resources</b>    | <b>Options</b>    | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| <b>Lack of ICT's leads to low oral performances.</b> | Strongly agree    | 10            | 40%               |
|  | Agree             | 08            | 32%               |
|  | Undecided         | 05            | 20%               |
|  | Disagree          | 02            | 08%               |
|  | Strongly disagree | 00            | 00%               |
| <b>Total</b>   |                   | 25            | 100%              |

**Table 20:** Lack of ICT leads to low oral performances

**\* Interpretation of the findings associated with difficulties related to teaching resources:**

The five preceding items (16-17-18-19-20) presented some constraints related to teaching resources which hamper an effective implementation of the CBA principles in teaching the speaking skill. Accordingly, the majority of informants (56%) argue that the teaching/learning resources are inadequate to elaborate a good CBA speaking lesson plan, and

72% state that it is not likely to finish the overloaded syllabus under the CBA principles. Similarly, 48% of participants assume that third year text book content's organization does not constitute any difficulty in the process of delivering speaking lessons under CBA. Additionally, 60% claim that the speaking lessons themes provided in the third year curriculum and textbook fit the students' needs as they deal with recent topics related to their everyday activities. However, the majority of participants (72%) regard the lack of ICT's as a major factor that leads to low oral performances.

#### **d. Difficulties related to the overall teaching atmosphere**

The three imminent tables below show the data collected regarding the numbers and the percentages of participants who either agreed, strongly agreed, disagreed, strongly disagreed or were undecided about the three following items indicating difficulties related to the overall teaching atmosphere.

##### **-Item 21: It is hard to deliver a CBA speaking lesson in an overcrowded classroom**

As it is clearly shown in table 21 below, all the participants (100%) agree (20%) or strongly agree (80%) that it is unmanageable to present a CBA lesson in overcrowded classrooms.

| <b>Difficulties related to the overall teaching atmosphere</b>                  | <b>Options</b>    | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|---|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| <b>It is hard to deliver a CBA speaking lesson in an overcrowded classroom.</b> | Strongly agree    | 20            | 80%               |
|   | Agree             | 05            | 20%               |
|   | Undecided         | 00            | 00%               |
|   | Disagree          | 00            | 00%               |
|   | Strongly disagree | 00            | 00%               |
| <b>Total</b>  |                   | <b>25</b>     | <b>100%</b>       |

**Table 21:** It is hard to deliver a CBA speaking lesson in an overcrowded classroom

**-Item 22: The large number of school subjects can constitute an obstacle to the success of teaching the speaking skill under CBA**

Almost all the participants (92%) agree (32%) or strongly agree (60%) that it is difficult to teach the speaking skill to third year high school students under CBA because they have a large number of school subjects.

| <b>Difficulties related to the overall teaching atmosphere</b>   | <b>Options</b>    | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| <b>The large number of school subjects can constitute an obstacle to the success of teaching the speaking skill under the CBA.</b> | Strongly agree    | 15            | 60%               |
|  | Agree             | 08            | 32%               |
|  | Undecided         | 02            | 08%               |
|  | Disagree          | 00            | 00%               |
|  | Strongly disagree | 00            | 00%               |
| <b>Total</b>   |                   | <b>25</b>     | <b>100%</b>       |

**Table 22:** The large number of school subjects can constitute an obstacle to the success of teaching the speaking skill under the CBA.

**-Item 23: Students' individual differences constitute an obstacle to teaching the speaking skill under the CBA**

Table 23 shows that 68% of the participants do not think that students' individual differences constitute an obstacle to teaching the speaking skill under the CBA as this latter takes into account the variant levels and capacities of all students.

| <b>Difficulties related to the overall teaching atmosphere</b>  | <b>Options</b> | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|---|----------------|---------------|-------------------|
| <b>Students' individual differences constitute an obstacle to teaching the speaking skill under the CBA</b> | Strongly agree | 00            | 00%               |
|   | Agree          | 06            | 24%               |
|   | Undecided      | 04            | 16%               |

|              |                   |    |      |
|--------------|-------------------|----|------|
|              | Disagree          | 15 | 60%  |
|              | Strongly disagree | 00 | 00%  |
| <b>Total</b> |                   | 25 | 100% |

**Table 23:** Students' individual differences constitute an obstacle to teaching the speaking skill under CBA

**\* Interpretation of the findings associated with difficulties related to the overall teaching atmosphere**

The three previous items (21-22-23) highlighted some difficulties associated with the overall teaching atmosphere. To this regard, all participants (100%) argued that it is quite unmanageable to deliver a speaking lesson under CBA in overcrowded classroom. Similarly, 92% state that the large number of school subject constitutes a chief problem to the success of any speaking lesson's delivery under CBA. However, only 24% of informants see that the difficulties are due to students' individual differences.

**e. Difficulties related to other factors**

The following tables present the data collected regarding the numbers and the percentages of informants who strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, strongly disagreed or were undecided about the items indicating difficulties related to other factors.

**-Item 24: Lack of exposure to English outside the classroom prevents the students from recalling the needed vocabulary when speaking**

Regarding to the findings exhibited in table 24 below, almost all the participants (96%) agree (36%) or strongly agree (60%) on the fact that lack of opportunities to use English outside the classroom prevents the students from recalling the needed vocabulary when speaking.

| <b>Difficulties related to other factors</b>   | <b>Options</b>    | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| <b>Lack of exposure to English outside the classroom prevents the students from recalling the needed vocabulary when speaking.</b> | Strongly agree    | 15            | 60%               |
|  | Agree             | 09            | 36%               |
|  | Undecided         | 01            | 04%               |
|  | Disagree          | 00            | 00%               |
|  | Strongly disagree | 00            | 00%               |
| <b>Total</b>   |                   | 25            | 100%              |

**Table 24:** Lack of exposure to English outside the classroom prevents the students from recalling the needed vocabulary when speaking

**-Item 25: It is difficult to apply CBA when teaching speaking to third year students because one hour is not sufficient to make all the students interact**

Almost all the participants (96%) see that it is not manageable to make all the students interact during one hour mainly when the groups are outnumbered.

| <b>Difficulties related to other factors</b>                         | <b>Options</b>    | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| <b>One hour is not sufficient to make all the students interact.</b> | Strongly agree    | 20            | 60%               |
|  | Agree             | 05            | 36%               |
|  | Undecided         | 00            | 04%               |
|  | Disagree          | 00            | 00%               |
|  | Strongly disagree | 00            | 00%               |
| <b>Total</b>   |                   | 25            | 100%              |

**Table 25:** It is difficult to apply CBA when teaching speaking to third year students because one hour is not sufficient to make all the students interact

**-Item 26: Teachers spend much more time completing administrative documents (the log book, the diary book, the sequence or file plan, the yearly distribution...etc.) than on preparing effective speaking lesson plans.**

Table 26 shows that 76% of participants see that completing administrative documents takes a long time. This fact prevents teachers from allotting enough time to prepare an effective lesson plan under CBA.

| <b>Difficulties related to other factors</b>   | <b>Options</b>    | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| <b>Teachers spend much more time completing administrative documents (the log book, the diary book, the sequence or file plan, the yearly distribution...etc.) than on preparing effective speaking lesson plans</b> | Strongly agree    | 00            | 00%               |
|  | Agree             | 15            | 60%               |
|  | Undecided         | 05            | 20%               |
|  | Disagree          | 05            | 20%               |
|  | Strongly disagree | 00            | 00%               |
| <b>Total</b>   |                   | <b>25</b>     | <b>100%</b>       |

**Table 26:** Teachers spend much more time completing administrative documents (the log book, the diary book, the sequence or file plan, the yearly distribution...etc.) than on preparing effective speaking lesson plans.

**-Item 27: The students prefer not to participate because they lack their teachers' positive feedback**

According to the results demonstrated in the table 27 below, 80% of participants disagree (60%) or strongly disagree (20%) that their students prefer not to participate because they do not provide them with positive feedback to encourage them.

| <b>Difficulties related to other factors</b>   | <b>Options</b> | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--|----------------|---------------|-------------------|
| <b>The students prefer not to participate because they lack their teachers' positive feedback.</b> | Strongly agree | 00            | 00%               |
|  | Agree          | 02            | 08%               |
|  | Undecided      | 05            | 20%               |

|              |                   |    |      |
|--------------|-------------------|----|------|
|              | Disagree          | 15 | 60%  |
|              | Strongly disagree | 03 | 12%  |
| <b>Total</b> |                   | 25 | 100% |

**Table 27:** The students prefer not to participate because they lack their teachers' positive feedback

**-Item 28: Third year students focus much more on developing grammar, reading and writing rather than on the speaking skill as it is not part of their Baccaulaureate exam**

It is clear from table 28 below that most of participants (80%) agree (40%) or strongly agree (40%) that third year students sharpen their focus on developing grammar, reading and writing rather than on developing their speaking skill as it is not part of their Baccaulaureate exam.

| <b>Difficulties related to other factors</b>   | <b>Options</b>    | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--|-------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| <b>The students prefer not to participate because they lack their teachers' positive feedback.</b> | Strongly agree    | 10            | 40%               |
|  | Agree             | 10            | 40%               |
|  | Undecided         | 03            | 12%               |
|  | Disagree          | 02            | 08%               |
|  | Strongly disagree | 00            | 00%               |
| <b>Total</b>   |                   | 25            | 100%              |

**Table 28:** Third year students focus much more on developing grammar, reading and writing rather than on the speaking skill as it is not part of their Baccaulaureate exam.

### **\* Interpretation of the findings associated with difficulties related to other factors**

The five last items (24-25-26-27-28) exposed some difficulties related to various factors. In this sense, most of informants (96%) argue that the lack of exposure to English outside the classroom prevents the students from recalling the needed vocabulary when speaking. Similarly, all participants (100%) assume that time constraints do not help the teacher to make all students interact. In the same vein, 60% regard that teachers are so busy by completing administrative documents. This prevents them to devote enough time to prepare effective speaking lesson plans. Besides, 80% of participants argue that most pupils focus much more on developing grammar, reading and writing skill rather than on the speaking skill as it is not part of their Baccalaureate exam. However, 72% of participants disagree on the fact that the students do not prefer to participate due to the lack of their teachers' positive feedback.

### **2.4. Summary of the findings of the questionnaire**

The aim behind the administration of the questionnaire at hand is to give an answer to the second research question namely: **what difficulties teachers face when teaching speaking to 3rd year secondary school students under CBA?**

To this effect, all participants contributed definitely in the process of collecting data associated with the constraints confronted by secondary school teachers of English in implementing the CBA principles in the process of teaching the speaking skill to third year students. As it is clearly stated in the findings above, most difficulties encountered by teachers are related to either their students' or their own abilities. Likewise, they argued that even teaching and learning resources are not adequately provided to ensure a successful CBA speaking lesson. Similarly, our informants accentuated both the negative impact the bad teaching setting had on the process of teaching and the few attention teachers and students



give to develop the students' oral proficiency. In this sense, it is very apparent that many factors are behind the incomplete implementation of CBA in the teaching process in Algerian high schools.

## **2.5. Interview**

The aim behind the interview at hand is to respond to the third research question which tends to highlight how the teaching of speaking can be improved under the CBA framework. To this regard, five secondary school teachers were asked five different questions related to the conditions that could be gathered in order to make of the teaching of speaking under CBA a successful enterprise.

### **2.5.1. How can students get ready to accept the learner-centered approach?**

The teachers being interviewed insisted on the view that it is of enormous importance to make from the learning process a source of fun and enthusiasm to make students love learning. Besides, they claimed that both teachers and parents play an important role in developing students' eagerness to explore and discover through the use of diverse authentic learning materials. Similarly, they also stressed the significance of a careful selection of the learning contents which have to meet their needs and interests and should be genuine and should respond to their daily requirements. Likewise, they highlighted that teachers should consider their students' distinct learning styles that may vary from visual, auditory, kinesthetic and tactile. Teachers' awareness of their students' learning styles enables them to tailor their teaching accordingly. Therefore, this would foster the students' autonomy and makes them feel responsible for their learning.

### **2.5.2. How can Algerian teachers of English be effective CBA users?**

All interviewees insisted on the fact that to perfectly manage the CBA principles, they need first a pre-service training that acquaint them with the needed knowledge related to CBA

and other constant trainings and seminars to let them know about any changes in the syllabus and to keep pace with the recent CBA teaching techniques and strategies. In the same vein, they showed a great interest in holding in-service workshops to let them meet each other to share their personal experiences and to help them determine their shortcomings as well as to learn more about the practical side of CBA. Importantly, they stated that it is necessary to make from the teachers' experiences in the field an important reference in setting teaching objectives and designing curriculums, syllabi and textbooks. So, teachers have to be consulted so as to design appropriate and effective learning contents.

### **2.5.3. Can teaching resources help teachers deliver a successful CBA speaking lesson?**

Our informants maintained that the technologies of information and communication provide teachers and students with the main teaching resources. Hence, they should be available at all schools. According to them, ICT facilitates the shift from teacher-centeredness to learner-centeredness as they ease the students' access to a wide world of information which helps them foster their autonomy in learning and encourages self-instruction. Accordingly, ICT helps students engage in language study through reading, listening, watching and having oral conversations with native speakers of English. Moreover, ICT helps students relate their prior knowledge to the various topics dealt with in the speaking sessions by means of pictures' interpretation and other interactive programs. In this sense, if adequate teaching resources are appropriately used in the process of teaching speaking, it will enable the students rely much more on themselves and will make them feel more responsible for their own learning.

#### **2.5.4. How can the teaching setting contribute to the success of teaching speaking under CBA?**

As clearly stated by the respondents, the overall teaching atmosphere is not in favor of an effective provision of a speaking lesson under CBA. To this regard, they argued that the number of students should be limited to no more than fifteen (15) per group to ease its management and to offer talking opportunities to all members. Additionally, small groups help teachers be aware of less performing students who need special care and more attention. They added that in small groups, it is easier to provide feedback to all students and to assess every single participant's performance. Importantly, some respondents claimed the necessity to teach speaking in well-equipped labs where students could have access to modern teaching equipment such as loudspeakers, voice recorders, video tapes...etc. to facilitate the learning process. From another angle, all participants complained about the huge number of school subjects. During the third year, students have to deal with ten different subjects, starting from 08:00 a.m. until 05:00 p.m. except for the week-ends which are in their turn devoted for extra-courses in almost all subjects. This is the fact that is behind the passive role most students seem to have during almost all the learning sessions and during the speaking lessons in particular. To this regard, the programs should be lightened and the learning time span should be reduced so as to keep the students' vivacity in learning and to help full implementation of CBA principles in the teaching process.

#### **2.5.5. Are there other factors that can pave the way for CBA to improve the teaching of speaking skill to third year secondary school students in Algeria?**

According to our informants, the success of CBA in improving the teaching of the speaking skill in Algeria does not depend solely on the provision of teaching materials and

resources and on enhancing the general teaching and learning settings but it depends also on changing students' and teachers' attitudes towards the importance of speaking among other language skills. They added that most third year secondary school students regard speaking as a secondary skill which is needless to score well in their English Baccalaureate Examination. To this effect, many teachers do not even bother to deliver speaking lessons on the pretext of lack of time, intensity of the program or because some of them do not even recognize the necessity to focus on it. They rather focus on teaching writing. Accordingly, the greater students and teachers' awareness of speaking importance is , the more effective CBA is in improving the teaching of oral proficiency.

In the same stream, the teachers added another issue of no less significance than the first. They stated that student need full exposure to English outside school walls by means of watching English films, reading English books and newspapers listening to English discourses...etc. This would help them acquire much more vocabulary from authentic resources and in genuine situations to be recalled during their conversations in and outside the classrooms.

## **2.6. Summary of the findings of the interview**

Throughout the current interview, we attempted to shed light on the factors that may help CBA improve the teaching of the speaking skill as perceived by secondary school teachers of English. To this regard, as clearly stated in the findings above, the success of CBA in improving the teaching speaking depends on the following three main factors: **a.** the students and teachers' readiness to adopt its principles; **b.** the positive attitudes towards the importance of teaching skill; **c.** the provision of appropriate and adequate teaching resources and materials as well as a healthy environment of teaching and learning that prepares the stage for effective CBA speaking lessons.

## **2.7. Pedagogical implications**

The competency-Based Approach revolutionized the field of didactics during the recent years. Nowadays, it has become one of the most adopted teaching approaches all over the world since it favors the shift from teacher-centeredness to student-centeredness and attempts to make of the students competent users of the knowledge they acquire outside the walls of their schools.

However, in the light of the findings gathered throughout the research study at hand, it seems clearly that the implementation of CBA in the Algerian secondary school did not receive much attention. In spite of being beneficial and very useful in enabling students develop their English oral communication strategies both inside and outside the classroom, it necessitates more adequate atmosphere to be more fruitful. In what follows, we try to suggest some recommendations to help improve the teaching of the oral communication skill under the CBA in the Algerian context.

1- Student-centeredness is a fundamental principle in CBA. As such, it is recommended that teachers raise their students' mindfulness towards its importance in their learning process. It is of an enormous significance to make them aware of their learning responsibility and to foster their autonomy in the learning process.

2- Many secondary school teachers are still using outdated teaching methods which they experienced before the introduction of CBA in the educational system. Therefore, they are in a great need to update their teaching competences and techniques in a way that responds to the needs of CBA.

3- Interaction of all students in the oral session is regarded as a major target. Thus, it is required to involve less performing and shy students in the learning process by giving equal talk opportunities to all students.

4- Raising students' motivation effectively helps achieve the learning goals. Accordingly, it is recommended that teachers select interesting, updated and authentic speaking topics that meet their students' needs and interests. Additionally, teachers should vary the types of activities introduced during the oral sessions such as role plays, storytelling, jokes, simulations...etc. so as not to limit them to open discussions only as noticed during the three observed sessions.

5- Much importance should be given to teaching the speaking skill in the Algerian secondary schools. To this effect, only one speaking session per unit of study is not enough. Students need multiple speaking opportunities to practice their English and to make their oral performances more spontaneous. Moreover, as noticed by the researcher, the third year textbook "*New prospect*" which is considered the teachers' roadmap lacks oral interactive strategies such as interpreting, summarizing, paraphrasing...etc. Similarly, the 'listening and speaking' parts' activities focus much more on developing listening rather than the speaking skill. To this regard, the design of the speaking lessons in the textbook ought to be reconsidered.

6- Assessment is the basic criterion that determines the extent to which the teaching goals are achieved. During the three observed oral sessions, the researcher noted the lack of any form of oral evaluation because of time constraints. For this reason, teachers have to focus more on assessing their students' oral performances to highlight their shortcomings for the sake of providing them with the appropriate remedy. To make the task easier, it is required to set small groups with a manageable number of students to help the teacher carefully assess all his/her students' oral output despite the short time allotted.

7- Teaching materials contribute effectively in the achievement of the learning goals and in helping teachers to bridge the gap between the students and the target competences. To illustrate, textbooks illuminate the path to be undertaken by the teachers. Besides, pictures interpretation helps students recall prior knowledge, select appropriate language and introduce

new vocabulary. In addition, video and audio tapes help expose the students to authentic language. As such, selecting, providing and adapting teaching materials to the needs of the students is of a great prominence to the success of any speaking lesson under the CBA framework.

## **2.8. General Conclusion**

Many educational reforms had been undertaken by Algerian decision-makers during the last years to improve the quality of EFL teaching and learning in a way that responds to the requirements of globalization, on one hand, and to the technological growth, on the other. As such, in 2003, the Algerian educational system adopted the Competency-Based Approach which emerged in the late 1970's in the United States of America to revolutionize the field of teaching. CBA aims at rendering learning more learner-centered by fostering learners' autonomy and raising their awareness towards their own learning responsibilities.

Throughout the current study, we attempted to shed light on how the English speaking skill is taught to third year secondary school students under the CBA framework highlighting the main constraints confronted by the teachers. Likewise, the study at hand strived to light up the issues that may help CBA improve third year secondary school students' speaking skill as perceived by their teachers.

Importantly, this study enabled us to draw significant conclusions regarding the teaching of speaking skill under CBA framework in the Algerian secondary schools. To this regard, a great work is still to be done to make the implementation of CBA as fruitful as expected and to make the conditions of the learning process more favorable. The findings revealed that less importance is given to teaching the speaking skill in the secondary school level in Algeria compared to the teaching of other skills. Much emphasis is on reading comprehension, grammatical accuracy and on developing writing since speaking is not part of

the Baccalaureate exam. Similarly, the results made it clear that most difficulties faced by the teachers are related to a number of factors. Some are related either to the students' abilities or to the teachers' abilities, such as students' linguistic incompetence, shyness and fear of negative evaluation, or to teachers' unfamiliarity with CBA principles due to lack of intensive training. Other difficulties are associated with the inadequate teaching resources and materials and the inappropriate teaching environment which is embodied in the overloaded classrooms, the big number of school subjects, time constraints and lack of ICT resources. Another chief problem encountered by the teachers resides in the fact that students have no opportunity to practice their English language outside the classroom. Significantly, speaking evaluation goes hand in hand with the teaching process as it allows teachers to evaluate their students' progress so as to determine their shortcomings. However, despite the important role it plays, speaking evaluation is not given due attention because of time constraints, and the overloaded classrooms. To this effect, the process of teaching the speaking skill to third year students in Algerian secondary schools has to be reconsidered. Much importance has to be given to teaching speaking to form competent communicators who manage to apply their knowledge outside school and in genuine situations. Additionally, due attention ought to be paid to speaking evaluation as it helps teachers be aware of their students' needs and as it is, undeniably, a good way to measure the validity of the teacher's instruction.

## **2.9. Recommendations for Future Research**

Throughout the current research, we attempted to shed some light on the teaching of the speaking skill within the principles of CBA highlighting the constraints faced by secondary school teachers. Likewise, the findings revealed how the implementation of CBA can be improved to optimize students' oral performances. As such, we would like to recommend other relevant areas worthy of research and investigation.



- 1- The research at hand can be replicated by investigating the role of CBA in enhancing the students speaking skill with large samples and relying on experimental methods.
- 2- Researchers can replicate the study with other populations and other levels.
- 3- The research at hand can be replicated by including even the students' perceptions towards teaching the speaking skill under CBA focusing on their challenges and perspectives.
- 4- CBA is a learner-centered approach. Thus, it is worth investigating the role it plays in fostering students' autonomy.

## **2.10. Limitations of the Study**

Any academic work may be subject to shortcomings and weaknesses either in content or in methodology though it achieved prominent results. Thus, the research at hand also comprises some limitations including:

- 1- Classroom observation is the main data collection tool the researcher depended on to have an overall picture of the teaching of speaking under CBA framework. However, the presence of the observer within the classroom did not let the teacher and his students behave naturally and spontaneously as they felt observed.
- 2- The big number of the questionnaire's items and the teachers' refusal in the beginning to fill in the questionnaires question the credibility of their answers.
- 3- Our research is a case study, only twenty-five participants contributed in the investigation and only five teachers were interviewed. So the findings may not be generalized to the whole population.
- 4- Our research investigated the teaching of speaking skill under CBA as perceived by secondary school teachers and neglected the students' perceptions as they are an active participant in the teaching and learning process.

## **Appendices**

## Appendix A

### Classroom observation

| N  | Aspects being observed  |
|----|---|
| 01 | What is the teacher's speaking lesson's framework?                            |
| 02 | Does the teacher initiate his speaking lesson by a problem solving situation? |
| 03 | Does the teacher provide his students with some relevant vocabulary?          |
| 04 | Does the teacher choose authentic speaking lesson's themes?                   |
| 05 | Does the teacher focus on grammatical and phonological accuracy?              |
| 06 | Do all students interact orally in the classroom?                             |
| 07 | Does the teacher intervene when the students find difficulties?               |
| 08 | Does the teacher set his students to work in pairs and in groups?             |
| 09 | What role does the teacher and students play?                                 |
| 10 | Does the teacher help his students get rid of anxiety and shyness?            |
| 11 | Does the teacher provide varied types of speaking activities?                 |
| 12 | Are the provided activities relevant to real life situations?                 |
| 13 | How does the teacher manage the talking time?                                 |
| 14 | Do all students have equal talk opportunities?                                |
| 15 | How does the teacher provide his students with feedback?                      |
| 16 | Does the teacher assess his students' oral performances?                      |

## Appendix B

### Teachers' questionnaire

You are kindly requested to fill in this questionnaire which is mainly designed to investigate the constraints third year secondary school teachers of English face when teaching the speaking skill under the Competency-Based Teaching Approach (CBA) that was implemented in the Algerian educational system under the reform movement of 2003.

Your contribution will be of great importance for the validity of this research. So, we would be so grateful if you could take a little of your time to read and answer the following statements by ticking (√) your choices in the corresponding boxes or by completing your own information whenever necessary.

Thank you very much.

1. What is your gender?                          a-Male                              b-Female
2. What is your age?  
a-22-27 years        b- 28-33 years        c- 34-39 years        d- 40- 45years      
e- More than 45 years
3. What is your highest level of instruction?  
a- Bachelor's degree     b- Master's degree     c- Others (Please, specify).....
4. Which level (s) do you teach?                          a- 1<sup>st</sup> year                              b- 2<sup>nd</sup> year                              c- 3<sup>rd</sup> year
5. How important do you think it is to teach the speaking skill?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

In what follows, a list of items indicating the difficulties that teachers may face when applying the Competency-Based Approach in teaching the speaking skill to third year students. To answer, please, tick(√) the appropriate box among the five (5) following possibilities:

Strongly agree; Agree; Undecided; Disagree; Strongly disagree

6-It is difficult to apply CBA when teaching speaking to 3<sup>rd</sup> year students because they are unable to use their EFL knowledge.

|                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly agree           | Agree                    | Undecided                | Disagree                 | Strongly disagree        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

7- It is difficult to apply CBA when teaching speaking to 3<sup>rd</sup> year students because they do not manage to relate meaning with structure.

|                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly agree           | Agree                    | Undecided                | Disagree                 | Strongly disagree        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

8- It is difficult to apply CBA when teaching speaking to 3<sup>rd</sup> year students because they have poor communicative skills.

|                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly agree           | Agree                    | Undecided                | Disagree                 | Strongly disagree        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

9- It is difficult to apply CBA when teaching speaking to 3<sup>rd</sup> year students because they use their mother tongues rather than English in their interactions.

|                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly agree           | Agree                    | Undecided                | Disagree                 | Strongly disagree        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

10- It is difficult to apply CBA when teaching speaking to 3<sup>rd</sup> year students because they seem not ready to accept learner-centered approach.

|                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly agree           | Agree                    | Undecided                | Disagree                 | Strongly disagree        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

11- It is difficult to apply CBA when teaching speaking to 3<sup>rd</sup> year students because fear of negative evaluation and shyness prevent them from participation.

|                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly agree           | Agree                    | Undecided                | Disagree                 | Strongly disagree        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

12- It is difficult to apply CBA when teaching speaking to 3<sup>rd</sup> year students because teachers need intensive training to get more familiar with its principles.

|                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly agree           | Agree                    | Undecided                | Disagree                 | Strongly disagree        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

13- When teaching speaking under CBA, teachers face the problem of classroom management.

|                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly agree           | Agree                    | Undecided                | Disagree                 | Strongly disagree        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

14- When teaching speaking under CBA, teachers face the problem of talking time management.

|                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly agree           | Agree                    | Undecided                | Disagree                 | Strongly disagree        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

15-Teachers' lack of vocabulary prevents them from being effective speaking teachers.

|                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly agree           | Agree                    | Undecided                | Disagree                 | Strongly disagree        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

16- It is difficult to apply CBA when teaching speaking to 3<sup>rd</sup> year students because the teaching/learning resources are inadequate to elaborate a good CBA speaking lesson plan.

|                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly agree           | Agree                    | Undecided                | Disagree                 | Strongly disagree        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

17-The syllabus is so loaded that it is unlikely to be finished using the CBA principles.

|                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly agree           | Agree                    | Undecided                | Disagree                 | Strongly disagree        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

18-3<sup>rd</sup> year textbook is complicated in terms of content organization and doesn't help teachers deliver an effective CBA speaking lesson.

|                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly agree           | Agree                    | Undecided                | Disagree                 | Strongly disagree        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

19-The speaking topics provided in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year curriculum and textbook do not fit the students' needs.

|                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly agree           | Agree                    | Undecided                | Disagree                 | Strongly disagree        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

20-Lack of ICT leads to low oral performances.

|                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly agree           | Agree                    | Undecided                | Disagree                 | Strongly disagree        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

21-It is hard to deliver a CBA speaking lesson in an over-crowded classroom.

|                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly agree           | Agree                    | Undecided                | Disagree                 | Strongly disagree        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

22-The large number of school subjects can constitute an obstacle to the success of teaching the speaking skill under the CBA.

|                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly agree           | Agree                    | Undecided                | Disagree                 | Strongly disagree        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

23- Students' individual differences constitute an obstacle to teaching the speaking skill under the CBA.

|                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly agree           | Agree                    | Undecided                | Disagree                 | Strongly disagree        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

24-Lack of exposure to English outside the classroom prevents the students from recalling the needed vocabulary when speaking.

|                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly agree           | Agree                    | Undecided                | Disagree                 | Strongly disagree        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

25- It is difficult to apply the CBA when teaching speaking to 3<sup>rd</sup> year students because one hour is not sufficient to make all the students interact.

|                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Strongly agree           | Agree                    | Undecided                | Disagree                 | Strongly disagree        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



26-Teachers spend much more time completing administrative documents (the log book, the diary book, the sequence or file plans, the yearly distribution...etc) than on preparing effective speaking lesson plans.

Strongly agree      Agree      Undecided      Disagree      Strongly disagree

27-The students prefer not to participate because they lack their teacher's positive feedback.

Strongly agree      Agree      Undecided      Disagree      Strongly disagree

28-Third year students focus much more on developing grammar, reading and writing skills rather than on the speaking skill as it is not part of their Baccalaureate exam.

Strongly agree      Agree      Undecided      Disagree      Strongly disagree

Thank you very much for your valuable contribution.

## **Appendix C**

### **Teachers' Interview**

Dear teacher,

You are kindly requested to answer the following questions that aim to investigate how the teaching of speaking to third year secondary school students in the Algerian context can be improved under the Competency-Based Approach. Your contributions are of a great importance to the fulfillment of our study.

Thank for your collaboration.

- 1-How can students get ready to accept the learner centered approach?
- 2- How can Algerian teachers of English be effective CBA users?
- 3- Can teaching resources help teachers deliver a successful CBA speaking lesson?
- 4- How can the teaching setting contribute to the success of teaching speaking under the CBA?
- 5- Are there other factors that can pave the way for CBA to improve the teaching of the speaking skill to third year secondary school students in Algeria?

Thank you for your cooperation

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## Résumé

La présente recherche a tendance à explorer la façon d'enseigner les compétences orales aux élèves de la troisième année secondaire dans le cadre de l'approche par compétence. Elle tente également de décrire les principales contraintes rencontrées par les enseignants du secondaire lors de la mise en œuvre de cette approche et comment améliorer cet enseignement des performances orales des élèves afin d'être des communicateurs efficaces à l'intérieur ainsi qu'à l'extérieure de la classe. A cet effet, on a adopté une méthodologie de recherche descriptive basée sur une méthodologie mixte à la fois quantitative et qualitative. Trois outils de collecte de données ont été utilisés : l'observation en classe, le questionnaire et l'interview. Les résultats ont révélé que l'approche par compétence joue un rôle énorme dans la promotion de l'autonomie des apprenants et dans la sensibilisation à leurs responsabilités d'apprentissage en plus de permettre aux élèves d'être des utilisateurs compétents de l'anglais dans des situations réelles. Cependant, comme l'indiquent les résultats de la recherche, le processus d'enseignement des compétences orales dans le cadre de l'approche par compétence dans les lycées Algériens constitue un grand défi. De nombreuses contraintes se posent aux enseignants. A cet égard, une grande attention devrait être accordée à l'enseignement de l'orale, et la mise en œuvre de l'approche par compétence dans l'enseignement de l'orale dans les lycées Algériens doit être reconsidérée.