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Faculty of Letters and Foreign Languages
Department of English Language and Literature



**Developing the Speaking Skill in English as a Foreign
Language through Project-Based Learning
The Case of Second Year Students of English Language at
Batna 2 University**

Thesis Submitted in Partial Requirement for the Degree of “Doctorate” Third Cycle
LMD in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL)

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Abstract

Developing EFL students' speaking skills is of vital importance in the teaching and learning process. Thus, teachers have to adapt and integrate the latest techniques and strategies. This research aims at investigating the effects of the Project-Based Learning (PBL) instruction on EFL students' speaking skill through conducting a case study on second year students at the Department of English at Batna 2 University. We hypothesized that PBL may be an effective teaching approach that develops students' speaking skills and that increases their engagement and interest in the oral lessons. Besides, students would show positive attitudes towards the integration of PBL in oral expression subject. To test the validity of these research hypotheses and to achieve the research objectives, the mixed method of both quasi-experimental and descriptive methods were conducted. The study was carried out during the academic year 2018-2019 on seventy-two (72) conveniently-selected second-year students and nine (9) purposively-selected teachers of the oral expression subject. The students were divided into experimental and control groups with thirty-six (36) students in each. The qualitative and quantitative data were collected using speaking tests, students' attitudinal questionnaire, and a post-experiment focus group interview to explore the experimental group's views and attitudes towards PBL. The research findings show that PBL significantly developed the students' speaking skill, and that the experimental group outperformed the control group at the level of their oral performance. Moreover, the results demonstrate that the experimental group has positive attitudes towards PBL, and that the latter is effective in developing not only the speaking skill, but it also increases students' engagement in the oral classes and enhances their autonomous learning. Following these findings, a series of recommendations and suggestions for further research were proposed.

Keywords: Attitudes, EFL teachers and students, Project-Based Learning, speaking skill

Dedication

With deep love, I dedicate this work to:

**The soul of my mother and grandmother who dreamed of
this moment, may they rest in peace**

**My father who was always by my side and supported me
throughout my academic journey**

**My other half, my sister Hadjer, and brothers Badi and
Mimou for their steadfast love**

**My husband Nassereddine who encouraged me to complete
this work**

My Aunt Naima who helped me with all her might

**My soul that inhabits another body, my son Ouais, my niece
Razane, and my nephew Yazan**

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In terms of my research, I thank all the participants in my study, being teachers or students, who have provided me with the necessary data along my investigation.

Thank You All

Declaration

I, Dhikra HARROUG, a PhD candidate, hereby declare that this doctoral thesis entitled **“Developing the Speaking Skill in English as a Foreign Language through Project-Based Learning. The Case of Second Year English Students at Batna 2 University”** is my original work, and the collected data and their analyses and interpretations are conducted by me.

This thesis was supervised by Dr. Souhila HELLALET and submitted to Batna-2 University only in partial requirement of the degree of Doctorate in TEFL. Thus, the thesis is not submitted to any other institutions or publications, except for some passages from the literature review which are published in an article entitled: **“Students’ and Teachers’ Attitudes towards the Effect of Project-Based Learning on the Speaking Skill in Higher Education”**

Candidate : Mrs. Dhikra HARROUG

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DEVELOPING THE SPEAKING SKILL THROUGH PBL

DEVELOPING THE SPEAKING SKILL IN ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN
LANGUAGE THROUGH PROJECT-BASED LEARNING
THE CASE OF SECOND YEAR ENGLISH STUDENTS AT BATNA 2
UNIVERSITY

By

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Introduction

In the current era, the impact of globalization and the development of technology propelled a strong demand for drastic changes in all life domains. The Algerian educational system, as no exception, is witnessing myriad changes and reforms in terms of teaching and learning methods and approaches to help learners become global citizens. These innovative reforms arose to stand as a response to globalization and to offset the shortcomings and impediments found in the previously adopted methods. In order to meet the requirements of the 21st century, the four language skills (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) are no longer sufficient. Students need to seize some other important skills like critical thinking, collaboration, communication, creativity, and autonomy.

Unfortunately, these imperative skills are not addressed in the traditional teaching methods since proficiency and accuracy are emphasized and the digital learners' needs and interests are neglected (Shivaramaiah, 2018). Furthermore, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students seek to become more fluent, accurate, and proficient users of the target language. In fact, there is a noticeable shift from the traditional teacher-centered approach to a modern student-centeredness that focuses on student-driven and self-efficacy learning (Lancaster, 2017). Such a potential raises the students' eagerness to actively develop their academic knowledge through real-life experiences inside and outside the classroom.

The common belief among researchers (Yang and Puakpong, 2016, Zare-Behtash and Sarlak, 2017, Simbolon et al., 2019, and Marlina, 2021) is that Project-Based Learning (PBL) has promoted its effectiveness in developing students' language skills in general, and the speaking skill in particular. PBL is defined, according to Collier (2017), as a student-centered learning approach in which students work in a collaborative team to investigate a problem or an issue, and they present their findings in the target language to an authentic audience.

Hence, PBL is one of the innovative and effective approaches that promote autonomous learning through collaboration and language production. Furthermore, it motivates students to actively participate in, and to get control over, their language learning process. On this basis, the integration of PBL in the oral courses develops the students' oral performance and life skills; collaboration, creativity, critical thinking, and autonomous learning.

Thus, this study aims at developing the EFL second-year students' speaking skill through a PBL approach by (1) determining the extent to which PBL affects the EFL students' speaking skills in higher education, and (2) investigating the students' opinions and attitudes towards this integrated instruction in the oral courses. Accordingly, this research mingles a combination of research approaches, methods, and instruments to shed more light on the effectiveness of PBL in improving the EFL students' oral performance.

Chapter one entitled "Introduction to the Research" is devoted to a broad overview upon which this study is based. It begins with discussing the background of the research, research rationale, a clear statement of the problem under investigation, and displaying the purpose, research questions, and hypotheses. Then, the research methodology design adopted for this research is briefly explained. Besides, the significance of the study, delimitations, and limitations are presented. Finally, some definitions to keywords that appear throughout the work and the structure of the thesis are provided.

1.1. Background of the Study

Language is an essential means for humans to communicate, to convey messages, to express thoughts, ideas, and viewpoints, as well as to transfer their cultures over nations and generations. Therefore, in the era of globalization and nation's independence, most of the countries emphasize foreign languages teaching and learning beside their native language, the fact which raises the need for a mutually intelligible language used by all

world citizens to be able to meet the requirements of the current era.

Over the last decades, the English language has become the widely used language over the world. It has attained the status of an international language, a global language, or a lingua franca. Owing to its outstanding position in the world, English affects all life aspects including medicine, business, technology, economics, tourism, and education. Hence, learning English as a foreign language has become a necessity to enroll in the international labor market and to compete and convoy in this globalized and rapidly changing world. Table 1 shows the global ranking of the world's languages, where the English language ranked first in terms of number of speakers and being first or second foreign language.

Table 1: Top 5 most spoken languages (2021)

Rank	Language	No. of First language (L1) speakers	No. of Second language (L2) speakers	Total No. of speakers
1	English	369.9 million	978.2 million	1.348 billion
2	Mandarin Chinese (incl. Standard Chinese, but excl. other varieties)	921.2 million	198.7 million	1.120 billion
3	Hindi (excl. Urdu)	342.2 million	258.3 million	600 million
4	Spanish	471.4 million	71.5 million	543 million
5	Standard Arabic (excl. dialects)	—	274 million	274 million

Source. ["What are the top 200 most spoken languages?"](#), Ethnologue (2021, 24th edition)

The ultimate aim of teaching and learning English as a foreign language is the mastery of its four skills: Speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Factually, speaking is one of the most powerful forms of communication because it requires the use of other sub-skills such as vocabulary, grammar, punctuation, and other aspects that help for the development of many subjects. However, speaking is considered the most essential skill to be developed by foreign language learners; they believe that it is one of the most difficult language skills to master compared to other skills (Rao, 2019). According to Zhang (2009,

as cited in Al Hosni, 2014), “Speaking remains the most difficult skill to master for the majority of English learners, and they are still incompetent in communicating orally in English” (p. 23).

Along this vein, Richards (2008) claims: “The mastery of speaking skills in English is a priority for many second-language or foreign-language learners” (p. 19). It is a commonly known fact today that people are learning English as a foreign language for the sake of international communication, triggered by traveling and immigration. Indeed, the development of the English speaking skill in a foreign language context is a challenging task and a complex process, especially in a context like Algeria. This can be attributed to the restriction of language practice in an educational setting since English speaking does not happen much outside the classroom environment. Moreover, EFL students have few opportunities in terms of having access to native speakers and to the target language's authentic context.

During my own experience as a student and part-time teacher at the Department of English at Batna-2 University, I have noticed that the opportunity to use the English language in the classroom is restricted because the target language is taught as a subject for the sake of grades, and is not commonly developed as a medium of communication outside the classroom. This view was assured by the second-year EFL students and teachers through their answers to the preliminary questionnaire. During the oral expression courses, the students' intervention is limited to answering some questions raised by the teacher. Students tend to listen to the teachers' talk and then comment or give their points of view in few sentences. In some cases, students are asked to present discourse in front of their classmates about topics (drugs, pollution, bullying, ..) that neither motivate them to speak nor meet their interests.

In fact, EFL students evaluate their mastery of language based on their oral

performance. According to Richards (2008), “Learners often evaluate their success in language learning as well as the effectiveness of their English course on the basis of how much they feel they have improved in their spoken language proficiency” (p. 19).

Consequently, enhancing students’ speaking skills is of vital importance in the EFL teaching and learning process. Hence, teachers have to adapt and integrate the latest techniques and strategies to develop the students’ speaking skills.

Talking about the paramount importance of speaking skills in the EFL context raises a lot of inquiries about the strategies used by the teachers to develop the students’ speaking performance. However, mainly in our educational context, second-year EFL students at the Department of English at Batna-2 University produce an unacceptable oral performance, which reflects their low level in the speaking skill. In other words, second-year EFL students face many difficulties that hinder the development of their speaking performance.

To deal with this issue, there is a need for the employment of innovative teaching and learning strategies that may develop students’ speaking skills and encourage the use of language in real-world settings. In other words, students should be encouraged to actively intervene in the oral expression courses more than being concerned about grammatical accuracy and vocabulary proficiency. Therefore, the present study investigates the effectiveness of PBL as an integrated teaching and learning approach to foster the students’ speaking skills.

PBL is an active, student-centered, and self-directed instruction that emphasizes active learning instead of passive construction of knowledge. It promotes collaboration and group work, the authenticity of the activities, and the final display of knowledge. Tschudi and Rodriguez (2017) define PBL as “an articulated series of activities, motivated by real-world needs and driven by the learners' interest, whose common goal is to improve

language learners' communicative competence in the target language through the construction of products" (p. 3). Figure 1 illustrates what PBL advocates.

Figure 1: Gold Standard PBL



Source. Buck Institute for Education (2019)

PBL seems to match the students' 21st century needs and interests because its main core is learning by practice. It has gained ground over the last years and become a central interest for many researchers to develop students' academic achievement, in general, and their speaking skills, in particular.

Broadly speaking, the effectiveness of PBL in developing students' academic achievement has become a central interest of many researchers around the world. Among the available literatures in Asia, Europe, and the USA, the results of the studies conducted by Doppelt (2003), Frank et al. (2003), Poonpon (2008), Fragoulis (2009), Kaldi (2010), Baş and Beyhan (2010), Simpson (2011), Chu et al (2011), Aiedah and Audrey (2012),

Vicheanpant and Ruenglerpanyakul (2012), Bagheri et al. (2013), Yaman (2014), and Zare-Behtash and Serlak (2017) agreed on the effectiveness of using the PBL strategy in improving EFL students' language skills and academic achievements as it was applied to all ages and with all levels. Also, they concluded that PBL reinforces students' motivation and self-autonomous learning. On the other hand, the findings of most of the above-cited studies revealed that students' and teachers' perceptions are in favor of PBL as they demonstrate positive attitudes towards the integration of PBL as an approach in the teaching and learning process.

Despite its significant contribution to the development of students' performances, it is still ignored or absent in the Arab and Algerian institutions where students rely on the teacher as the only source of knowledge and information. In fact, there are no sufficient empirical studies to be mentioned with certainty; we found that there is a lack of studies concerning the effects of PBL on academic achievement. Among the existing studies, Alsamani and Daif-Allah (2016), Mohammed (2017), Elhadi (2018), Baghoussi and El Ouchdi (2019), Rakai and Kaouli (2020), Ghobrini (2020), and Belmekki and Baghzou (2021) were concerned with investigating students' language skills through the PBL approach in an EFL context. The findings of these studies show that the project-based approach is a vital strategy that helps learners to develop their knowledge inside and outside the classroom setting.

After reviewing all the above-cited studies, the researcher enriched her background and gains a strong desire and motivation to, first, examine and investigate the effects of the PBL approach on developing second year EFL students' speaking skills in higher education and their attitudes towards this new and innovative instruction, and second, be among the fewest researchers who addressed this issue in the Arab world in general, and in Algeria in particular.

1.2. Research Rationale

The reasons which prompted us to undertake this research stem from our interest in the educational field, and from the observation that the majority of learners are frequently facing difficulties when they express their ideas and thoughts orally. First, learning to speak English is one of the EFL learners' goals; however, becoming a fluent and accurate speaker is not an easy process. EFL teachers find speaking the most difficult language skill to develop regarding the appropriate approach to be used, the objectives to be reached, and students' intervention and motivation. If we ask EFL students about their oral exams, they will prefer being in private; tested alone with the teacher because of some psychological factors such as shyness, the lack of self-confidence when speaking English, and they are scared of their peers' negative reactions. They seem much worried about speaking in public.

Additionally, it was observed that there is a sharp demotivation and dissatisfaction among students of English due to the old-fashioned methods and strategies applied by the teachers to develop the students' speaking skills. Students find themselves with little chance to say a few words and sentences in the oral course, and they have no control over their learning. Educational institutions globally are working toward the shift from teacher-centered approaches to a learner-centered pedagogy. In fact, Algerian universities are rapidly catching the wave, mainly because our young generations are becoming more independent learners using self-autonomy. With this growing awareness, the need for an innovative teaching method that develops inquiry learning, and that helps students to work cooperatively and productively with others, is becoming a necessity. Thus, the increased demand for active and self-directed learning, mainly through conducting projects that end with a presentation of an outcome, is the main reason for the researcher to come up with the idea of integrating projects to develop the students' speaking skill. In particular, the PBL approach offers opportunities for students to develop their oral performance in situations

that make learning real and purposeful inside and outside the classroom.

Another prominent reason for tackling this issue is that there are scant studies that investigate the effects of PBL on students' speaking skills in Algeria despite acknowledging its effectiveness in foreign language teaching and learning by many available studies around the world. Accordingly, this study's findings will serve as a relevant source for the upcoming Algerian researchers to investigate the effectiveness of PBL in foreign language teaching and learning in general, and in improving the speaking skills in particular.

1.3. Identification of the Problem

The speaking skill plays a crucial role in learners' academic, social, and professional life which makes of it vital and central skill at all educational levels. However, EFL students of all ages and educational levels find it a complex and challenging skill; they always strive to use the English language properly, accurately, and fluently. Despite its importance, EFL students find difficulties in expressing themselves orally, performing oral production in public, or holding communication. In general, EFL speaking is not given enough attention compared to the other language skills. In particular, although second-year EFL students at Batna-2 University have been exposed to the English language for a relatively long period, between nine to ten years from middle school to university, they still have remarkable deficiencies and produce an unacceptable oral performance. They do not use the language appropriately in a comprehensive way, and they lack the mastery of speaking aspects: pronunciation, fluency, accuracy, vocabulary, and grammar.

Hence, developing and enhancing foreign language speaking skills is still an area of interest for many researchers and investigators. The ever-growing interest in EFL gives a strong demand for finding appropriate teaching and learning methods and strategies.

In the researcher's belief, being student and part-time teacher of English, the

problem can be attributed to the prevailing inappropriate teaching and learning methods, which are based on teacher-centered instruction. Students in the oral expression subject are required to say few sentences in response to some questions raised by the teacher. Additionally, pursuing the traditional teaching strategies does not really come with satisfying outcomes in terms of learners' speaking skill, for they do not encourage them to use the English language for different daily life situations and in real-life settings.

Unfortunately, students find limited opportunities to practice or develop the English language speaking outside the classrooms. This issue led to students' little vocabulary mastery since they are classroom-bounded. The oral expression subject is taught focusing only on in-class activities, and no out-class activities are provided to enrich the students' vocabulary. In addition, the oral expression teachers at the Department of English at Batna-2 University emphasize the students' accuracy through the excessive correction of grammar and vocabulary mistakes, and they do not use the target language as a medium of communicative interaction.

Another problem was observed among EFL second-year students at Batna-2 University, and it is related to students' motivation to speak and practice in the oral expression subject. The lack of interaction, cooperation, and group work has led to the loss of students' motivation to develop their oral performance. Students find that the methods employed by the oral expression teachers are not suitable and do not fit their interests. Bearing in mind that our target population is different from the old-fashioned passive generation, they are considered as a digital generation or 21st century generation. Therefore, in order to meet the requirements of the 21st century, students need to be active and autonomous learners and to seize some important skills like critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication. These imperative skills are not addressed in the traditional teaching methods.

In fact, we cannot deny that Algerian universities are characterized by over-crowded classes where students find fewer opportunities to participate or intervene in the classroom. Moreover, teachers find difficulties and obstacles to encourage active learning in large classes. Further, the time allotted to the oral expression subject (three hours per week) is no longer sufficient to encourage the improvement of students' speaking skill. The situation seems problematic, and a roughly need for testing new teaching approaches and strategies becomes a necessity.

This issue is cemented by previous researches conducted by some EFL teachers at Batna-2 University, who assured that EFL students at Batna-2 University suffer from serious drawbacks concerning the speaking skill. Bentayeb (2008) stated that:

Teachers, do almost all the talk in the classroom leaving to learners very few chances to manifest their mastery of the target language. The classical way of teaching Oral Expression where the teacher suggests topics for discussion does not seem to be successful to improve students' speaking skill. (p. 11)

He goes on to argue that students of the Department of English are passive listeners, and they rarely intervene in the oral expression course due to the teaching methods, which he found not efficient since the teachers dominate the class. Along the same lines, Saidouni (2019) finds that students of the Department of English at Batna-2 University are unable to communicate effectively using the English language. She attributed this problem to some factors including the prevailing teaching methods employed by EFL oral expression teachers.

To come to a closer identification of the problem, a pilot study was conducted by the researcher in the form of a questionnaire (Appendix A) administered to second-year students and some teachers of English at Batna-2 University. The questionnaire aimed at proving the existence of the problem under investigation and at identifying the strategies

and methods adopted to develop and teach the speaking skills. Results of the pilot study revealed that:

- a. Students find difficulties when speaking English due to their inadequate mastery of vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency. Moreover, they find themselves in a teacher-centered classroom where the teachers' talk takes most of the class time. On the other hand, teachers mentioned that they focus on correcting grammatical mistakes, sentence structure, and pronunciation mistakes. They are neglecting managing conversational strategies and varying topics according to real-life situations.
- b. Students reported that they are not provided with adequate opportunities to develop and practice their oral performance in the classroom due to the short time devoted to the oral expression subject and to the overcrowded classes.
- c. Teachers reported that they use debates and discussions, in which students give their opinions on a given issue or topic as activities when teaching the speaking skill.
- d. Students confirmed that speaking practice is just restricted to short discussions and open-ended questions about a rigid topic raised by the teacher. They mentioned that working in pairs or groups will help them to improve their speaking abilities and practice the English language for different real-life situations.
- e. Students expressed their dissatisfaction with the methods employed by their teachers, and they express their requirements for better teaching strategies and approaches which meet their needs and enhance their engagement and motivation to participate in oral classes and to develop their speaking skills.

Based on the results of the preliminary study, and the above-cited realities, the situation seems now debatable and problematic. The previously mentioned factors, such as students' lack of motivation and intervention, no teamwork or collaboration, the absence of real-life situations practice and input, and the fear of teachers' negative feedback, are

attributed to the old-fashioned teaching methods used by teachers of oral expression which do not encourage students to develop their oral performance. Hence, we are in need to adopt an innovative and modern strategy of teaching speaking which reflects the students' interest and needs. Moreover, 21st digital learners are in need to be engaged in a more collaborative classroom where they are taking the reins over their own learning and discussing authentic and real world issues.

Thus, regarding the above-cited problems and the advantages of PBL in the educational context, it is worthwhile necessitated to conduct the current research that attempts to address the problem of the students' weaknesses in speaking through applying PBL as an instruction to improve EFL second-year students' speaking skills. Therefore, our major concern is to examine whether there exists any relationship between the integration of PBL and the improvement of the speaking skill.

1.4. Research Questions

The research questions that we attempt to answer through our investigation are:

1. To what extent is PBL instruction effective in improving the EFL students' speaking skills?
2. What are the students' attitudes and views towards the integration of PBL in the oral expression subject?
3. How does the implementation of PBL affect the students' engagement in the learning process?

1.5. Research Hypotheses

To answer the research questions, and to probe into the impact of PBL on students' speaking skills, we formulate the following hypotheses to be tested and verified along with our research:

- a. A well planned PBL instruction may be effective in developing the EFL students'

speaking skills

- b. Students would have positive attitudes towards PBL as an approach to develop their oral performance.
- c. Students may show more interest and engagement in the oral expression subject as PBL is different from the ordinary passive learning environment.

1.6.Purpose of the Study

The overall purpose of the current investigation is to remedy the students' poor oral performance through integrating the PBL instruction. Throughout our study, we seek to investigate the effectiveness of introducing PBL on developing second-year students' speaking skills in EFL. By doing so, we would like to reach the following objectives:

- a. To enhance EFL second year students' speaking skill
- b. To investigate the impact of PBL on the students' different speaking aspects.
- c. To monitor the changes in students' oral performance before, during, and after the integration of the PBL instruction.
- d. To explore the participants' perceptions and attitudes towards PBL.
- e. To examine the effectiveness of PBL on raising students' motivation and interest to develop their academic achievement.
- f. To suggest some pedagogical recommendations concerning the integration of the PBL instruction in developing students' speaking skills.

1.7.Significance of the Study

The findings of the current study may provide evidence of the development of the EFL speaking skill through using PBL. While conducting this investigation, the researcher's ultimate aim is to contribute to the improvement of the students' oral performance and to develop it by giving much more opportunity to practice the speaking skill inside and outside the classroom. Further, we sought to a) enhance students' positive

attitudes towards the oral expression subject and project assignments, b) increase the students' collaboration and interaction to meet their demands, c) enhance students' independence through active learning and self-autonomy, d) make the learning environment interesting, and e) raise students' motivation and interest.

Additionally, the results of this study could prove that the PBL approach is effective in an English foreign language environment for the following stakeholders:

- **Teachers.** PBL can be significant for teachers to reconsider the methods and approaches adopted for teaching second-year students' speaking skill. Moreover, it can be significant in terms of suggesting some possible solutions to be the guidance of improving student's oral performance. Thus, it can provide teachers with some useful insights and guidelines to integrate and to use the PBL approach to teach English speaking skill.

- **Curriculum designers.** PBL can be significant to curriculum designers as it provides hints about the effectiveness of providing EFL syllabi with activities based on the PBL approach, especially with the great intention towards changing and developing the teaching and learning process from teacher-centered to learner-centered pedagogy.

- **Researchers.** This study can be significant for other researchers as it paves the way to conduct further studies on developing students' academic skills in EFL contexts.

1.8.Delimitations of the Study

To achieve the research objectives and to answer the research questions, the researcher sets some boundaries known as delimitations in terms of study duration, population, size and type of participants, etc. In other words, these boundaries are controlled by the researcher to give validity and reliability to the work. As far as delimitations are concerned, this research focuses on the following:

- It investigates the effectiveness of PBL on EFL second-year students at Batna-2 University. Accordingly, the findings cannot be generalized to other levels, departments,

or universities.

- It involves only 72 second-year students as participants belonging to the English language and literature Department at Batna-2 University.
- It takes place during the 2018-2019 academic year.
- The Powerpoint presentations are used as the only way to present the final product.
- We intend to investigate the effectiveness of PBL on speaking skills through assessing five aspects, naming fluency, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and comprehension.

1.9.Limitations of the Study

During our research journey, we faced and encountered a set of obstacles and difficulties that were unexpected and beyond our control. The following are some limitations that have had an adverse influence on our work:

- The academic year 2018-2019 was characterized by an unlimited number of strikes and Algerian popular movements, which hindered at certain level our investigation.
- Some participants were not well acquainted with Powerpoint software.
- We found difficulties in integrating shy students to present and display in front of their classmates and teacher.
- Because of the large number of students, we had sometimes to exceed the scheduled time for the session despite our efforts to control the students' presentations time in the experimental group.
- The lack of technological equipments in the department urged us to bring our personal PC and loudspeaker.
- We found difficulties in providing the projector because it was not available all the time at the administration.

1.10. Research Methodology Design

1.10.1. Choice of the Methods

This research is an attempt to scrutinize the effects of implementing the PBL approach, as the independent variable, on developing second-year students' speaking skill, as the dependent variable, and also the learners' attitudes towards the new integrated approach. Thus, to deal with the nature of the problem under investigation, to answer the research questions, to test the hypotheses, and to fulfill the research objectives, we opted for a mixed-method research methodology or a methodological triangulation: The quasi-experimental method and the descriptive method were used.

The fact of using quasi-experimental method is to find out the cause-effect relationship between our variables. Additionally, the descriptive research design was adopted to gain the participant students' attitudes and opinions about the implemented teaching method by the end of the experiment.

1.10.2. Population and Sampling

The target population is all second-year students who are enrolled at the Department of English at Batna-2 University during the academic year 2018/2019. They form 790 students constituting fifteen (15) groups. As it is impossible to work with all of this population, we conveniently selected the participants consisting-two intact groups (experimental group and control group) with a total of 36 students per each one. The two groups are convenient and readily available to approach, after the administration allocated their oral expression classes to be taught by the researcher herself. Hence, our student sample is made of seventy-two (72) students among which 73.12% are females and males represent 26.88%. These students' age ranges between nineteen (19) and twenty-six (26) years old.

The assigned experimental group employs the PBL approach in speaking lessons while the control group follows the traditional way of teaching oral expression.

We have also included nine (9) purposively-selected oral expression teachers into

our population. A questionnaire designed for teachers to unveil their teaching methods and approaches, to evaluate their students' speaking level, and to extract their opinions concerning the suggested approach.

1.10.3. Data Gathering Tools

The appropriate data gathering tools for this research were selected in accordance to the research methods adopted and the information required in fulfilling the research objectives.

The data gathering instruments used in this study are questionnaires, students' speaking scores, and focus group interview. To help us identify and state the existence of the problem, a preliminary questionnaire had been administered to second-year students at the beginning of research. Additionally, an attitudinal questionnaire and focus group interview were conducted to examine the students' attitudes towards integrating PBL approach in the oral expression subject and develop their speaking skills. The attitudinal questionnaire and the focus group interview were administered after the treatment phase to 36 students belonging to the experimental group. The students' oral production is analyzed in the pre-test, progress-tests, and the posttest by using a speaking rubric containing the five aspects to be evaluated naming comprehension, vocabulary, grammar, fluency, and pronunciation.

These data gathering tools were employed for the purpose of objectively analyse the data obtained and avoid any kind of bias.

1.11. Operational Definitions of Keywords

• **Attitudes.** According to Cherry (2021), an attitude refers to “a set of emotions, beliefs, and behaviors toward a particular object, person, thing, or event. Attitudes are often the result of experience or upbringing, and they can have a powerful influence over behavior” (para. 1).

- **Authenticity.** According to Brown (2007), authenticity is “a principle that emphasizes real-world and meaningful language used for real communicative purposes” (p. 377).
- **Autonomous learning.** According to Chalupa and Haseborg (2014), autonomous learning is “a process by which students have a voice and choice in what and how they learn” (p. 56).
- **Collaborative Learning.** Laal and Laal (2012) defined collaborative learning as an educational approach in which groups of two or more learners work together to complete a task, solve a problem, or create a product.
- **Project-Based Learning (PBL).** According to Yam and Rossini (2010), PBL is “a student-centered instructional approach used to promote active and deep learning by involving students in investigating real-world issues in a collaborative environment” (p. 1).
- **Student-Centered Learning.** It is an educational approach that puts the learners in the core of the teaching and learning process. It changes the role of students from passive receivers of knowledge to active participants in their own discovery process.

1.12. Structure of the Thesis

The present work comprises two global parts: The theoretical part (literature review) and the empirical part (fieldwork), subdivided into five chapters organizing and structuring information.

The introductory chapter is an overview of the research. It answers the What, the Why, and the How questions of the whole research. It introduces the background of the study, the rationale of the research, the problem to be investigated, research questions to be answered, hypotheses to be tested, and objectives to be reached. Besides, the significance of the research explains why the current study is needed and its specific contribution and importance in the educational field and the methodology followed. After that, we unveil the limitations and delimitations encountered throughout our investigation. An overview

of the research methodology and design is introduced. Finally, the structure and chapters' division are outlined with some operational definitions of keywords.

The second chapter is entitled "Literature Review", and it covers the theoretical considerations of relevant literatures about integrating PBL to improve the students' speaking skill. It contains three sections. The first section is devoted to the independent variable PBL, its features, principles, phases, the pedagogical framework, advantages and challenges of its implementation in EFL classes. The second section deals with the theoretical issues related to the dependent variable (the speaking skill). It provides the definition of speaking, its importance, elements, aspects, and its relation to the other skills as well. After that, it puts a potential ground for the teaching of speaking skill in EFL classes, suggesting some strategies for developing students' oral performance, and the assessment and evaluation of the speaking skill. The last section is an attempt to review relevant studies related to the effects of PBL on students' performances in general, and on the speaking skill in particular.

The third chapter is wholly dedicated to the research methodological design. It delineates the research paradigm, methods, approaches, and data gathering tools. Then, the experiment process is presented, explained, and outlined.

As its title suggests (Analysis, Interpretation, and Discussion of Findings), the fourth chapter is the most empirical part of the work. It seeks to quantitatively and qualitatively analyze, interpret, and discuss the results obtained from the data collecting tools (questionnaires, the experiment, and the focus group interview)

The fifth chapter or the concluding chapter is entitled "Conclusions, Recommendations, and Suggestions". It culminates with the summary of all the research findings in the general conclusion and answers the research questions stated in the first chapter. Moreover, a set of pedagogical implementations and recommendations for future

research are suggested.

Finally, the thesis ends with a list of references and appendices.

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Introduction

This chapter aims at providing a comprehensive account about project-based learning approach, the speaking skill, and review of relevant studies that have dealt with the present problem. Accordingly, the whole chapter is divided into three major sections of theoretical considerations.

The first section is devoted to the literature review of project-based learning. It starts with a description of the main learning theories to explain the paradigm of project-based learning approach. Moreover, it summarizes the different definitions given to PBL, its importance, features, phases, principles, and types. It also points out the pedagogical framework of PBL, its benefits, and challenges. Besides, it tackles the teachers' role and the assessment in PBL classroom.

The second section introduces one of the most important skills; the speaking skill. In advance, we define the speaking skill, its importance, and identify the relationship between the speaking skill and the other language skills. Besides, the purpose of developing the speaking skill, its genres, sub-skills, elements, and aspects are covered. Then, the strategies for developing students' oral performance, the difficulties they encounter, and the main teaching approaches of the speaking skill are outlined. In addition, we highlight the speaking skill in EFL classes, how to use technology to develop the speaking skill, and the authentic materials in relation to speaking skill. Furthermore, the speaking activities to teach EFL speaking skill and the assessment process are introduced.

The last section outlines studies dealing with integrating project-based learning approach in EFL teaching and learning process and its impact on improving learners' language performances in general and the speaking skill in particular.

2.1. Project-Based Learning

2.1.1. Major Learning Theories

Linguistics and psychology are two main branches through which education in general and language teaching and learning in particular are perceived. Linguistics deals with the aspects of the language, while psychology covers the learning process.

Historically speaking, three teaching and learning theories come to the fore by many prominent philosophers: Behaviorism, Cognitivism, and Constructivism. The Table 2 explains the paradigm of these significant schools of thought which play an important role in formulating different teaching and learning methods and strategies. The following learning theories were described to explain the paradigm of project-based learning approach.

Table 2: Schools of thought in foreign language learning

Time frame	Schools of thought	Typical themes
Early 1900s and 1940s and 1950s	Structural linguistics and Behavioral psychology	Description, Observable performance, Scientific method, Empiricism, Surface structure, Conditioning
1960s, 1970s, and 1980s	Generative linguistics and cognitive psychology	Generation linguistics, Acquisition, innateness, Interlanguage, Systematicity, Universal grammar, Competence, Deep structure
1980s, 1990s and 2000s	Constructivism	Interactive discourse, Sociocultural variables, Cooperative learning, Discovery learning, Construction of meaning, Interlanguage variability

Source. Brown (2007, p.15)

2.1.1.1. Behaviorism

The behaviorist approach emphasizes the repetitive behavior and drills until they become habitual responses on the road to learning and can be changed by teachers' reinforcements. According to the behaviorists, learning is an automatic process and the cognitive-related activities, such as thinking, comprehending, remembering, and reasoning

are totally neglected.

Behaviorism is based on the passive acquisition of knowledge in the classroom; learners repeat, imitate, and follow the structures provided directly by the teacher and reinforced through reward or punishment. It has shown that it does not help learners to develop neither their cognitive and problem-solving skills nor to be creative thinkers. The two prominent figures of the behaviorist approach were Pavlov and Skinner.

2.1.1.2.Cognitivism

Cognitivism learning theory came as a reaction to behaviorism shortcomings. The cognitivist perspective focuses primarily on and stresses the mental/ cognitive activities rather than observable habit formation through stimulus and response. In other words, behaviorists consider learning as a behavior formation, whereas cognitivism takes it as a mental process. With the significant contribution of the prominent figure Chomsky, new concepts such as acquisition-innateness and competence-performance began to be related to the cognitivism view of learning (Brown, 2007). Throughout time, cognitivism learning approach has show a great influence on the mental activities and neglects the social context in which the learning process takes place. This gradually led to the foundation of an advanced version of learning theories.

2.1.1.3.Constructivism

Cohen et al. (2004) defined constructivism as “a theory which regards learning as an active process in which learners construct and internalize new concepts, ideas and knowledge based on their present and past knowledge and experiences” (p. 167). This signals a significant shift from teacher-centered to learner-centered; more attention was given to the learner rather than the teacher as the only source of knowledge. Moreover, constructivists consider classrooms as places in which students learn, construct knowledge, and actively interact with the guidance and facilitations provided by the teacher.

In addition, constructivism is characterized by its emphasis on the learners' active role during the language learning process. The main principals of the constructivist approach were summarized by Marlowe and Page (2005) as constructing knowledge, thinking, analyzing, understanding and applying rather than receiving knowledge, accumulation, repetition, drilling and passive engagement. Table 3 presents the differences between traditional and constructivist classrooms.

Table 3: Traditional and constructivist classrooms

Traditional classroom	Constructivist classroom
The curriculum begins with the parts of the whole. Emphasizes basic skills.	The curriculum emphasizes big concepts, beginning with the whole and expanding to include the parts.
- Strict adherence to a fixed curriculum is highly valued.	- Pursuit of student questions and interests is valued.
- Materials are primarily textbooks and workbooks.	- Materials include primary sources of material and manipulative materials
- Learning is based on repetition.	- Learning is interactive, building on what the student already knows.
- Teachers disseminate information to students; students are recipients of knowledge.	- Teachers have a dialogue with students, helping students construct their own knowledge.
- Teacher's role is directive, rooted in authority.	- Teacher's role is interactive, rooted in negotiation.
- Assessment is through testing, correct answers.	- Assessment includes student works, observations, and points of view, as well as tests. The process is as important as the product
- Knowledge is seen as inert.	- Knowledge is seen as dynamic, ever-changing with our experiences.
- Students work primarily alone.	- Students work primarily in groups.

Source. https://www.thirteen.org/edonline/concept2class/constructivism/index_sub1.html

Cognitive constructivism, as different from the traditional view of learning as a passive, believes that the learning process can be developed actively and cognitively based on the previous knowledge of the learner. Accordingly, Piaget introduced assimilation and accommodation terms. Assimilation means the integration of new information, while accommodation is the adjustment of the existing knowledge to further details.

Social constructivism, on the other hand, believes that knowledge is developed by the

learner through cooperation and social interaction. According to Brown (2007), Scaffolding is directly related to the Vygotsky's notion of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) in that the learner's assistance receiving is persisted until the need for external help comes to an end.

Therefore, cognitive constructivist theory focuses on the learner's cognitive construction of knowledge using the existing information. In addition, social constructivist theory emphasizes the importance of social dimension in developing knowledge.

Cohen et al. (2004) as cited in Yaman (2014) listed the characteristics of constructivism approach of learning:

- Knowledge is self constructed.
- Learning is a search for meaning, looking for wholes as well as parts.
- To teach well, we have to understand what students are thinking.
- Standardized curricula are antithetical to constructivism.
- Learning is self-directed and active.
- Learning derives from experiences.
- Knowledge is constructed internally by the learner rather than transmitted from an external resource.
- Learning takes time.
- Learning involves language.
- Learning involves higher-order thinking.
- Learners continuously organize, reorganize, structure, and restructure new experiences to fit them to existing schemata, knowledge, and conceptual structures. The balance between assimilation and accommodation.
- Knowledge is uncertain, evolutionary, pragmatic, and tentative.
- Knowledge and understanding are constructed by the learner rather than imparted by the

teacher.

- Knowledge is socially and culturally mediated and located.
- Learning is an individual and a social activity.
- Learning is self-regulated.
- Intelligent thought involves metacognition.
- Learning is, in part, an organizational process to make sense of the world.
- What someone knows is not passively received but actively assembled by the learner.
- Knowledge is accommodated to learners' existing understanding, changing their frames of reference through adaptation.
- Learning is marked by the learner's capacities to explore and experiment.
- Knowledge is revisionary and multisensory.
- People generate their mental models to make sense of their experience.
- Motivation is critical to effective learning.
- Knowledge is creative, individual, and personal.

The above collection of constructivism features emphasizes the learners' collaboration and social interaction to become creative and active in the learning process. We can conclude that learners are given more attention in the learning process as they are encouraged to be more autonomous by developing their knowledge and discovering new information by themselves with the assistance of the teacher.

It is clear that the characteristics of the constructivist theory of learning are compatible with the features of project-based learning approach in terms of changing the passive learning process into an active construction of knowledge with great emphasize on the learner rather than the teacher whose role is restricted to guide or facilitator.

Active learning, cooperative learning, and inductive learning are all features of the learner-centered approach. During teaching and learning process, learners actively solve

problems, answer questions, discuss, explain, debate, or innovate. In cooperative learning, learners work collectively on challenges and projects while maintaining positive interdependence and individual accountability. Inductive learning, hence, includes inquiry-based learning, problem-based learning, project-based learning, and discovery learning.

2.1.2. Defining Project-Based Learning

Reviewing PBL definitions, the term tends to be broad, having different meanings in different disciplinary areas (Hanney & Baden, 2013). Thomas (2000) defined PBL as “a model that organizes learning around projects” (p.1). As it is mentioned by Harmer (2014), “project-based learning falls under umbrella terminologies like problem-based learning, inquiry-based approach, and task-based approach, which are closely related and sometimes they are used interchangeably” (p. 2). Furthermore, it has been the topic of interest for many researchers who define it differently depending on the context of interest. Likewise, PBL is often referred to as the project-based learning method, project-based learning approach, project-based learning instruction, project-based learning model, or project-based learning strategy. Dewey, the father and pioneer of the PBL approach, supported the idea that learners should take part in their learning process. Besides, he believed that learners would succeed if they could collaborate and interact with others to learn through experiences (Talebi, 2015). These beliefs have evolved from the late nineteenth century to become the 21st-century PBL approach.

Researchers provided definitions to PBL through its noticeable advantages on learning. Blumenfeld et al., (1991) defined PBL as "a comprehensive approach to classroom learning and teaching that is designed to engage students in an investigation of authentic problems" (p. 369). Hence, PBL is a paradigm that posits that learners' needs and interests must be supported, and that emphasizes the shift in learners' roles from passive recipients of knowledge to meaning builders or information constructors. In other

words, PBL promotes learning by doing instead of learning by receiving.

The PBL approach is "an instructional approach that contextualizes learning by presenting learners with problems to solve or products to develop" (Moss & Van Duzer, 1998 as cited in Wanchid & Wattanasin, 2015, p. 582). PBL is an academic model that encourages learning through conducting projects, and whose fundamental purpose is to link the knowledge acquired in the classroom and the authentic language that students encounter in their real-life situations (Fried-Booth, 1997).

Another definition was provided by Tamim and Grant (2013) who claimed that PBL is "an instructional modal that is based on the constructivist of knowledge" (p. 73). In fact, PBL traces its theoretical roots in constructivism; "a theory which regards learning as an active process in which learners construct and internalize new concepts, ideas and knowledge based on their present and past knowledge and experiences" (Cohen et al. 2004, p. 167). Constructivism views learning as a natural process where meaning is made by student interactions and reflections upon ideas and experiences (Dewey, 1938 as cited in Choi et al., 2019). Additionally, Bell (2010) defined PBL as: "A student-driven, teacher-facilitated approach to learning. Learners pursue knowledge by asking questions that have piqued their natural curiosity. The genesis of a project is an inquiry. Students develop a question and are guided through research under the teacher's supervision" (p. 39).

Along with this line of thoughts, PBL is characterized by its core principle that students are motivated and supported to get the ownership of their learning, to solve and discuss real-world situations, to design their inquiries, to plan their learning process, and to organize their knowledge to achieve academic goals. Moreover, the Buck Institute for Education (BIE) defines PBL as a "teaching method in which students gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended period to investigate and respond to an authentic, engaging and complex question, problem, or challenge". PBL is deemed to be an

innovative method implemented in the teaching and learning process to develop the capacities known as 21st-century skills, including collaboration, critical thinking, communication, creativity, global connection, and self-management. Markham et al. (2003) summarized the fundamental meaning of PBL as a "systematic teaching method that engages students in learning knowledge and skills through an extended inquiry process structured around complex, authentic questions and carefully designed products and tasks" (p. 4). PBL has the potential to allow learners to engage in and to work on contextualized situations, and it helps them in filling the gap between what they acquire inside the classroom, and the experiences they pass by outside school (Jurow, 2005). In the same line, Bender (2012) defined PBL in few words: "working cooperatively to solve a problem" (p. 7). Hence, collaboration is an important standard in PBL instruction. In short, the purpose of PBL is to foster students' abilities for life-long learning through contextualizing learning by presenting them with problems to solve or authentic situations to perform.

In general, project-based learning is a creative teaching technique that incorporates meaningful initiatives from students by working in small, collaborative groups. PBL is a student-driven teacher-facilitated learning technique through which students investigate subjects that stimulate their particular interests while still meeting educational objectives (Jurow, 2005, p. 4).

2.1.3.Importance of PBL

Too often, traditional learning instruction never ventures beyond the realm of purely academic. Project-based learning approach, however, connects students to the real world. It prepares students to recognize and respond to issues in the real world and meet the challenges they face in their everyday life. Instead of short-term memorizing methods, project-based learning enables learners to become deeply engaged with the target content

which leads to a focus on long-term upkeep and retention.

Moreover, PBL advances students' attitudes towards the learning process, which is highly valued for its ability to keep them engaged and more interested. In addition, it emphasizes student learning around a primary central issue and a substantial result. PBL also improves students' natural inspiration and intrinsic motivation because it focuses on an essential central question or problem and a meaningful outcome. Pink (2009), in his book, listed three elements that people are intrinsically motivated by: autonomy, mastery, and purpose. These terms are embedded dispositions of project-based learning approach when learners are engaged into meaningful endeavors.

Therefore, in this respect, PBL is primarily built on experiential, independent, and autonomous learning. Its primary goal is to achieve long-term learning by allowing students to be directly engaged in the learning process and manage it independently with the guidance of the instructor.

2.1.4.Features of PBL

Project-based approach began to gain popularity in the 21st century among researchers and academic practitioners and become an alternative method for the foreign languages teaching and learning. According to Beckett (2002), PBL provides learners with not only comprehensible input, however, "Learners need to produce comprehensible output through meaningful interaction with real world issues" (p. 53).

Depending on the PBL definitions provided above and which claim that projects are built on the principle of learning by doing, Stoller (2002) listed the following features of project work:

- Project work is a content-based rather than specific language targets.
- Projects in the learning process are student-centered in which teacher offers guidance and support throughout the process.

- Projects in the learning process are cooperative rather than competitive. Learners are required to complete an end-product independently or in small groups to share knowledge, information, and resources.
- Project work mirrors real-life tasks which lead to the authentic integration of skills and information.
- The final product of project work; an oral presentation, a poster session, a bulletin-board display, a report, or a stage performance, gives the learning process a real purpose because it lies in the collaborative work which leads to the display and share of knowledge with others.
- Different project work stages are based on process and a product orientation. They provide students with opportunities to develop their fluency and accuracy.
- In addition to improving learners' language skills and cognitive abilities, project work potentially enhances learners' motivation, self-confidence, self-esteem, and autonomy (p. 110).

Furthermore, we admit that not all projects can be considered as project-based learning. Thomas (2000) mentioned some requirements that must be met for a project to be applied in PBL classroom:

- **Centrality:** project work must be an essential part of the curriculum rather than secondary supporting activities.
- **Driving questions:** answering questions and real-life inquiries are the core of the project work.
- **Constructive investigation:** learners are encouraged to construct their knowledge using different resources and skills throughout the project stages.
- **Autonomy:** the central interest of project work is to develop students' autonomous learning.

- **Realism:** Project based learning focuses on authenticity as an indispensable feature.

Project work must be based on real-life situations.

- **Collaboration:** Group work is an essential criterion for conducting project in the learning process.
- **Scaffolding:** The learner is the center of the project work with the guidance and support of the teachers. They facilitate the learning process without much intervention.
- **Opportunities for reflection and transfer:** Learners should be provided with opportunities to evaluate the process and reflect on the work during and after the implementation of project stages.

2.1.5. Essentials of PBL

In addition to the aforementioned PBL features, Larmer and Mergendoller (2012) points out eight essentials for projects to be considered as PBL in its full sense:

- **Significant content:** The authenticity principle of PBL enabled learners to deal and discuss real-life related topics that raise their interests and improve their engagement.
- **A need to know:** Teacher introduces the project in terms of well-structured and challenging smart start that students feel comfortable and everything clear for them.
- **A driving question:** Asking clear and appropriate questions and inquiries throughout conducting a project work give the learner a sense challenge.
- **Student voice and choice:** the core of PBL is learner-centered and autonomous education; project work should reflect student's needs and interests. In other words, the project is students' contribution.
- **21st century skills:** In addition to the benefits of projects on developing students' performances and academic achievement, PBL aims to integrate the 21st century skills into learning process. The 21st century skills are related to the demands of the globalized world. In fact, among the extensively used terms related to 21st century skills are:

creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, problem-solving, decision-making, and information and communication technology (ICT).

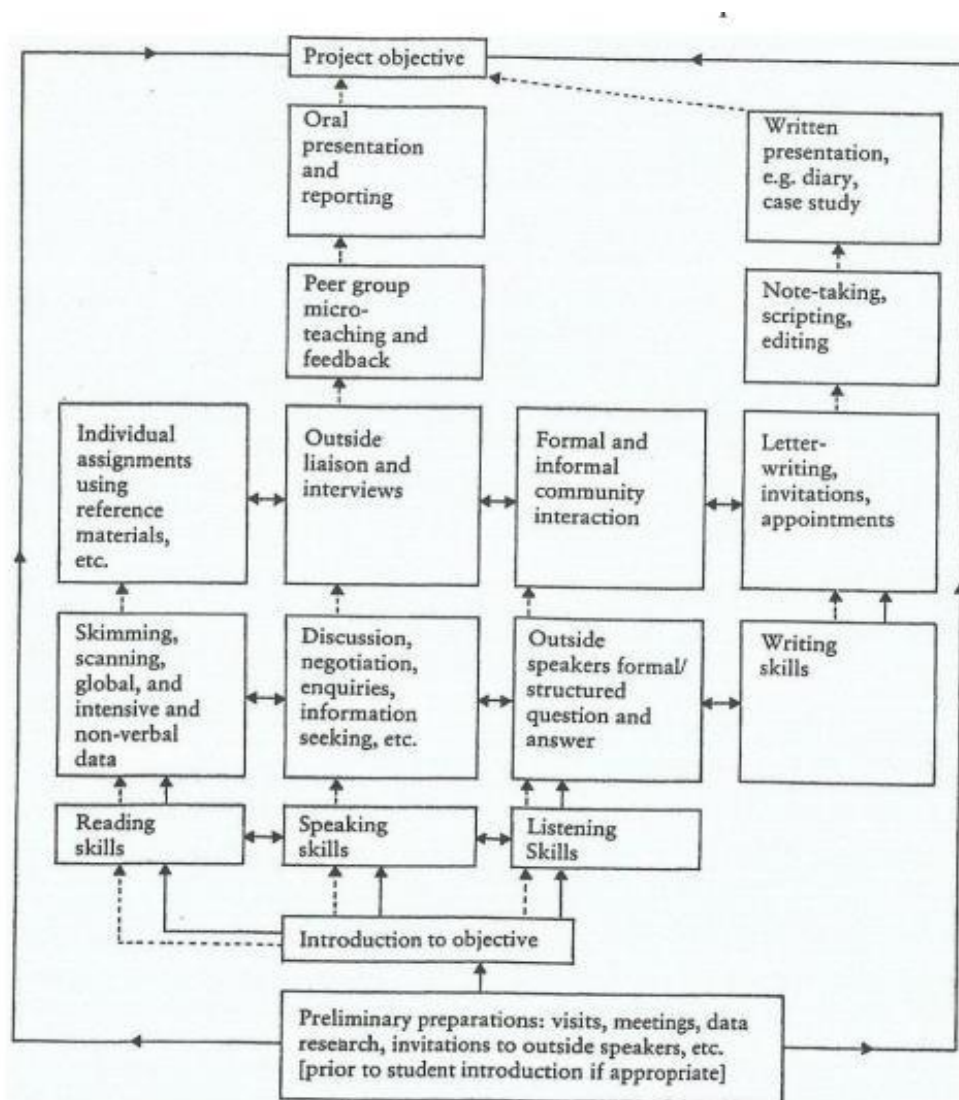
- **Inquiry and innovation:** The extensive research of knowledge and resources in conducting project about the specific issue help learners attain innovative ideas.
- **Feedback and revision:** Teachers' and peers' reflection and evaluation aim to give the learners a real sense of achievement and help to develop their critical thinking.
- **Publicly presented product:** The preparation and display of final product is the center of the project work. Actually, the presentation of findings helps students to become acquainted with new information and knowledge.

2.1.6. Phases of PBL

Fried-Booth (1986) claimed that a full-scale project work covers three phases:

- **Classroom planning:** Preliminary preparation that includes discussions and the set of clear plan for implementing the projects. In this phase, teacher as being the guide and facilitator takes into consideration the students' language needs, valuable resources, and final language output.
- **Carrying out the project:** learners are engaged in a dynamic practical process that leads to the realization of an end product.
- **Reviewing the work:** At the end of practical process, this last stage includes the display of the end product and the evaluation phase of the implemented project through classroom discussions and feedback.

In addition, during the implementation process of the project work, the above mentioned author suggested a layered approach with a wide range of language sub-skills related to the four skills: reading, speaking, listening, and writing. He claimed that skills-integration in the project work is an indispensable part of the process.

Figure 2: Layered approach to project work

Source. Fried-Booth (1986, p. 47)

Note. Teacher input \longrightarrow
 Student input \longleftarrow

Along the same line of thoughts, Legutke and Thomas (1991) introduced six phases of project's integration in the classroom context:

- Opening and topic orientation: these two stages include the introduction and planning of the project implementation.
- Research, data collection, data processing, and presentation of the knowledge and information learned throughout the process of project work.
- Evaluation: the final reflection on the end product.

Based upon the above models, Alan and Stoller (2005) introduced an easy and manageable project implementation steps:

Step 1: Agree on a theme for the project.

Step 2: Determine the final outcome.

Step 3: Structure the project.

Step 4: Instructor prepares students for the language demands of information gathering.

Step 5: Students gather information.

Step 6: Instructor prepares students for the language demands of compiling and analyzing data.

Step 7: Students compile and analyze information.

Step 8: Instructor prepares students for the language demands of the culminating activity.

Step 9: Students present the final product.

Step 10: Evaluate the project

Because of its simplicity and clarity, we followed this steps-list for the application of project work for this study.

2.1.7.Types of PBL

Depending on some qualities of project work; the design and goal of project-based learning instruction in the classroom led many researchers to categorize the project work into different types.

2.1.7.1.Existing Taxonomies

According to Haines (1989), the project work is divided into four categories based on the implementation of the PBL in the learning process.

- Information and research projects: The main aim is providing students with adequate

resources to get the academic and scientific information they need.

- Survey projects: Students gather the needed data using different techniques and tool such as surveys, interviews, and questionnaires.
- Production projects: aim to let students design a work based on information gathered from different sources; newspapers, magazines, radio programs, websites, and books.
- Performance and organizational projects: The focus is on the students' performance and their abilities to organize their project work.

In addition, North (1990) divides projects into four distinct groups.

- Community projects: students gather the information they need from the local community through data collection techniques, such as interviews and questionnaires.
- Case studies: Students should be encouraged to tackle different difficulties as part of their research.
- Practical projects: Students are required to complete practical project work to achieve a desired goal.
- Library projects: In this type of project, students are required to conduct a project work using the library resources as an essential component.

Moreover, Eyring (2001) introduces the most comprehensible project's classification:

- Collections Projects: Students gather physical items in order to make synthesis and research.
- Informational Projects: Students are required to conduct considerable project work using different resources to learn about a given topic or issue and to collect information.

- Orientation Projects: or placement project. Conduct research projects to orient and direct people to given location.
- Social Welfare Projects: these type of projects are conducted assist those in need. (p. 339).

2.1.7.2.A New Comprehensive Approach to Project Classifications

Yaman (2014) presents a more ordered and detailed taxonomy (Table 4) that consists of main and sub-categories in the specific context of foreign language acquisition based on the ambiguity of the dimensions and points touched in the previous classifications:

Table 4: Taxonomy of projects in the context of foreign language learning

Criterion	Project types
Duration	- short-term projects - long-term projects
Organization	- Library-research projects - Internet-research projects - Material projects - Survey projects - Multi-faceted projects
Aim	- Public Service Projects - Performance Projects - Informational Projects - Organizational Projects
Flexibility	- Inflexible Projects - Semi-flexible Projects
	- Flexible Projects

Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local-scale Projects - Native Speaker Projects
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Source. Yaman (2014, p. 61)

Foreign language projects are classified into sixteen different types based on five different criteria, as shown in the table above. For the design of a project and its implementation process, time is a critical aspect. Due to time constraints, short-term projects can only cover a limited number of language activities, but long-term projects can cover a greater range of language activities and skills. In light of these differences, project criteria and duration should be carefully determined in accordance with students' language background, level, and age.

2.1.8. Standards of PBL

PBL method uses real-world situations to enhance students' active learning, critical thinking, autonomous learning, problem-solving, teamwork, and self- management skills. Below are some of the common core standards suggested by Jolly (n.d) that help teachers for successfully implement the PBL approach in the classroom.

- PBL involves students in productive teamwork: Project-based learning revolves around the collaborative process in which learners are able to evaluate different points of view and collaborate with others to achieve a common goal or objective. Learners work in small groups to explore ideas and develop solutions to given problem or issue.
- Problem-based learning is centered on finding answers to real-world issues: Creativity is essential in today's workplace for solving difficult challenges, devising new tactics, supporting innovation, and pushing change.
- PBL helps students build intellectual and emotional abilities for a productive life by requiring them to develop critical thinking skills and use reasoning to sort out facts and information. Through a methodical design process, PBL teaches students how to reason,

organize, and analyze.

- PBL teaches self-management and project management: Students are encouraged to "become self-directed learners, effectively seeking out and using different resources to help them. PBL revolves around learning how to negotiate steps and the ability to self-manage.
- PBL provides opportunities to develop multiple communication skills: Written, oral, and visual communications are required for effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas. This includes developing strong arguments, understanding others' thinking, and clearly presenting ideas. PBL addresses all of these concerns and provides a solid platform on which students can develop creative, persuasive, and accurate communication abilities. Students must communicate internally to solve problems when they face project, and then share the findings of their investigations and solutions with audience.

2.1.9. Principles of PBL

Markham (2012; 2) cited the following principles of project-based learning instruction :

2.1.9.1. The Project is Learner-Driven

The main principle of project-based learning instruction in educational context is learner-centered. The shift from teacher-based to learner-centered raises the need to believe in the students' capacities and abilities, and provide them with positive feedback to increase their motivation and self-confidence. In order for the learners to benefit from their engagement and control over the project work, they must have voice and choice.

2.1.9.2. *The Project is Realistic*

The scope of the project and the methods used should be grounded in real-world situations. The issue could have a substantial impact on the learners' lives, as well as the lives of their communities. The data collection and communication method, which

included a question regarding extended driving and an open presentation, was focused on real-life events that the students may encounter. Building connections and emphasizing the current utility of the project's information and competencies are likely to increase learners' motivation and engagement.

2.1.9.3. The Project Embraces Teamwork and Collaboration

PBL is a collaborative approach to learning that allows students to form inquiry communities to answer their raised questions or solve challenges. Effective collaboration necessitates a diverse set of skills and attitudes, and it is inherent in the nature of cooperation that different people bring different traits to the group and the endeavor that drives it to success. The project's collaborative nature and outcome necessitate that individual assessments of learners continue, and some will undoubtedly contribute more to the venture than others.

2.1.9.4. The Project Requires High Quality Work

In PBL, learners are encouraged to expend more efforts in order to produce high-quality work. Teachers should reaffirm these values and recognize the beneficial outcomes, as well as faith in students' abilities to achieve them. Another driving reason that empowers high-quality work is the open, real-life nature of the findings. The expected quality of the work, participation, and, most importantly, the public aspect of the outcome should all be emphasized in the venture rubrics.

2.1.9.5. The Project Provides a Public Forum for the Project Outcome

Students are required to offer extra efforts over a period of time in order to provide a high-quality product. It is only natural and encouraging that their display of information be publicly recognized and honored. The teachers value the learner-centered standards incorporated into the project, as seen by the open display and acknowledgement of the work.

2.1.10. Benefits of PBL

In education, project-based learning holds significant promise for teachers and learners, especially foreign language learning. Because it is a multidisciplinary and multi-dimensional field, when it comes to learning, the benefits cannot be limited to a single topic or time frame.

Railsback (2002) listed general benefits of project-based learning instruction in educational context:

- Preparing students for the workplace.
- Increasing motivation.
- Connecting learning at school with reality.
- Providing collaborative opportunities to construct knowledge.
- Increasing social and communication skills
- Increasing problem-solving skills
- Enabling students to make and see connections between disciplines
- Providing opportunities to contribute to their school or community
- Increasing self-esteem.
- Allowing learners to use their individual learning strengths and diverse approaches to learning
- Providing a practical, real-world way to learn to use technology. (pp. 9-10)

Project labor can provide a variety of benefits, including educational and behavioral contributions. In a similar vein to the aforementioned ideas, Tretten and Zachariou (1995) bring out the benefits of PBL based on their observations:

Students feel empowered when they adopt effective work habits and apply critical thinking to address problems by finding or inventing solutions in relevant tasks, both individually and jointly. Students develop and/or develop

their work habits, critical thinking skills, and productivity through this productive activity. Students are gaining new information during this procedure. (p. 8)

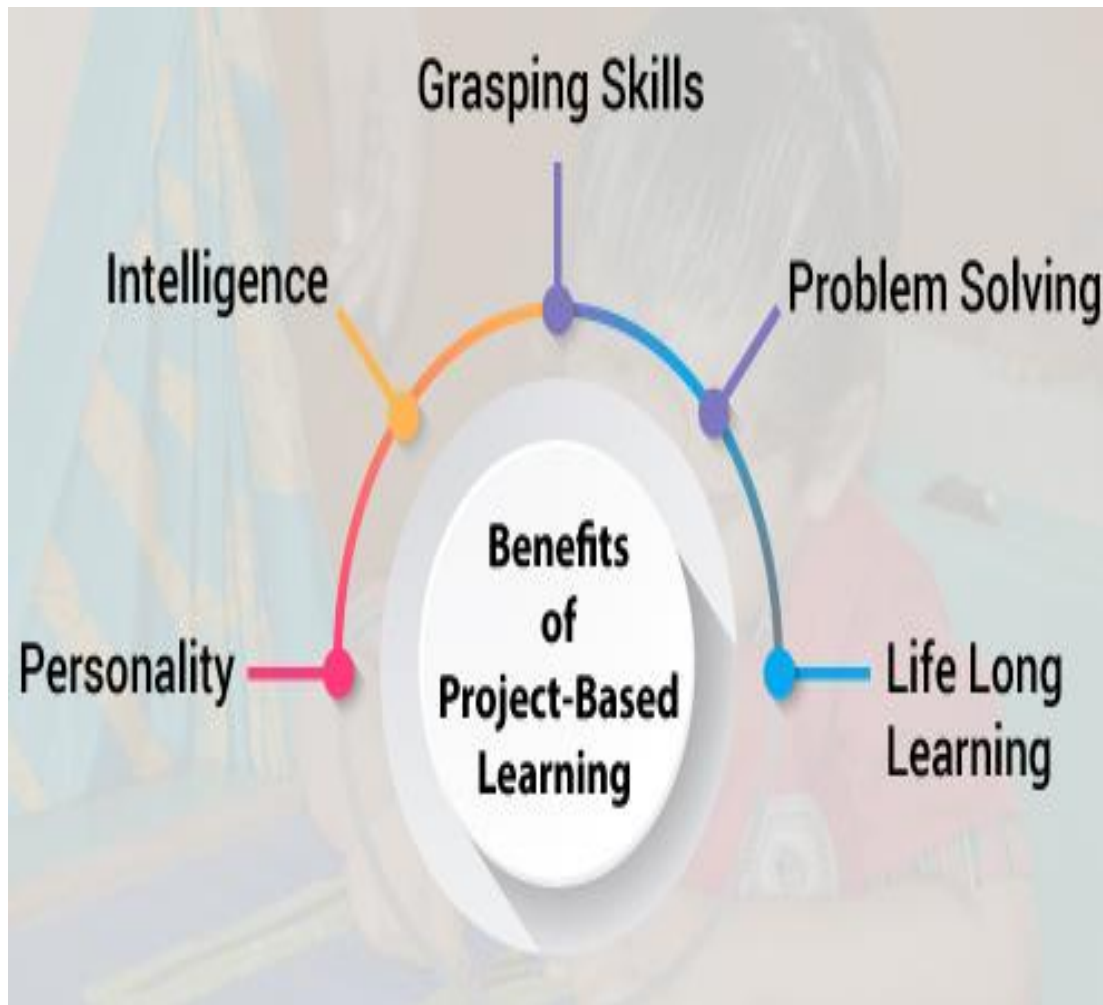
In addition, Stoller (2006) summarizes eight generally cited benefits of PBL for second and foreign language learning environments based on a review of 16 related studies:

- Provides opportunities for the authentic use of language inside and outside the educational context
- Increases learners' motivation, enthusiasm, and interest
- Learners become more involved, engaged, and creative in the learning process
- Creates an enjoyable learning environment
- Enhances language skills; repeated opportunities for output, modified input, and negotiated meaning; purposeful opportunities for an integrated focus on form and other aspects of language
- Improved social, cooperative, and collaborative skills
- Increased content knowledge
- Increases self-confidence, self-esteem, and satisfaction with achievement
- Provides positive attitudes toward learning and using language
- Enhances learning independence, autonomous learning, and willingness to have a voice and choice for own learning
- Develops cognitive abilities such as critical thinking, problem solving, and decision making. (p. 25)

Moreover, Alan and Stoller (2005) summarize the most important benefits of integrating Project-based learning in educational context:

"The result is often authenticity of experience, improved language, and

content knowledge, increased metacognitive awareness, enhanced critical thinking and decision- making abilities, the intensity of motivation and engagement, improved social skills, and familiarity with target language resources" (pp. 11-12).

Figure 3: The benefits of PBL

Source. Saraswati (n.d.)

The PBL can be described as a knowledge-based instruction but also a 21st-century skill-building pedagogy. It prepares students for acquiring higher employability skills. Moreover, it provides great opportunities to incorporate new technologies into the educational process.

The integration of PBL helps to transform the entire educational system by encouraging students to become more active, autonomous, and engaged in the learning process. Taking into consideration the benefits of project-based learning from a business perspective, Vasiliene-Vasiliauskiene et al. (2020) noted that “students are more actively able to gain knowledge about real-world business problems and regularly using project-

based learning tools, the systematic retention of project experiences allows students to highlight the most effective problem-solving mechanisms, which leads to project risks being reduced in the future and better practical managerial skills being developed” (pp. 141-142).

2.1.11. Challenges in Implementing PBL

In the foreign language context, PBL guarantees a wide range of benefits and facilities, at the same time it has significant problems and difficulties in terms of its implementation in the teaching and learning process. According to Fried-Booth (1986), the possible problems that both teachers and students may face in a project-based learning environment are divided into three categories.

- **Organization difficulties:** projects organization is a real challenge for both students and teachers in terms of managing time and energy to design and guide a project work at different stages. If PBL is integrated with large classes, instructors encounter serious difficulties in holding students' motivation in performing cooperative learning activities efficiently.

- **Monitoring problems:** cover the out-class activities in which teachers cannot control the use of the target language and the contribution of each member of the group into the realization of the final product.

- **Personal problems:** cover the problems encountered among group members in terms of their relationship, compromise, and agreement and disagreement while carrying out the project.

In addition, Blumenfeld et al. (1991) indicate common problems when integrating PBL in the classroom context in terms of providing support for student learning, managing time, classroom control, technology use, and project work assessment. The above-cited researchers listed a number of factors that teachers may encounter when adopting a

project-based learning approach in the classroom.

- The acceptance of changes in the teachers' and learners' roles and responsibilities
- The changes in the physical learning environment
- Ambiguity in managing the new learning environment with group work
- The integration of different resources and the use of technology
- Incorporation of innovative pedagogies into real-world situations outside of the classroom

Effective execution of PBL strategies requires instructors to expect a guiding role and at the same time go to numerous diverse angles of the learning environment. In the classroom context, the learner-centered teaching instruction is difficult to adopt because teachers do not provide enough support and guidance. As it is mentioned by Thomas et al. (2015), "Instructors in learner-centered classrooms tend to have a broader set of administration obligations than do instructors in more traditional classrooms" (p. 540).

In addition to the aforementioned major issues, project work in an educational context may encounter unexpected problems. Aside from the aforementioned probable issues, a project may run into other unique issues and unanticipated events. In PBL instruction, there is always an element of unpredictability as Moss (1998) claim "sometimes a project will move forward in a different direction than initially planned" (p. 11). Therefore, it is both teachers' and students' responsibility to cooperate and find effective solutions for specific project problems.

2.1.12. Teacher's Role in PBL

Starting from the premise that project-based learning is a learner-centered instruction, it is assumed that there is a significant shift in the role of the teacher and student in the teaching and learning process. Perhaps the best way to understand the role of the teacher in project-based learning classroom is to understand the ways wherein

student's role changes in the classroom. In project-based learning, the teacher's role shifted from content-deliverer to content-guide and from lecturer to facilitator. As indicated by Bender (2012), in project-based learning, traditional teacher's role is challenged because more interest was given to students to decide and make choices on how to approach a problem, present findings, or identify what the driving questions will be.

In the same line of thoughts, Harmer (2007 b) and Terry (2008) (as cited in Pratama and Awaliyah, 2016) classify the roles of a teacher in teaching speaking as follows:

- Prompter: The teachers provide the students with discrete suggestions, and give them chunks, not words, without disrupting the discussion.
- Participant: The main point is that teachers should not dominate the classroom conversation. However, teachers participate in the discussion to ensure the continuation of students' engagement.
- Feedback provider: the teachers should evaluate the students' performance and provide feedbacks. But, they should avoid over-correction, since it might lead to students' reluctance to continue the classroom participation.
- Assessor: teachers are the primarily assessors of students' production.
- Observer: Teacher should observe the learning environment and get the students engaged in the classroom discussions and activities.
- Resource: teachers have to be an information resource for their students
- Organizer: teachers should manage the classroom and providing equal opportunities for all students to get engaged in the classroom activities. (pp. 21-22)

2.1.13. Strategies for Implementing PBL

Mergendoller and Thomas (2015) interviewed twelve expert project-based learning instructors in the United States to learn about their methods for successfully implementing and managing projects in the classroom. Because they have trained other teachers and

given presentations regarding project-based learning at numerous professional conferences and seminars, these teachers were regarded as experts.

The examination of the experts' responses to the interview indicated various successful project-based learning strategies, which were grouped into seven broad themes. Each theme has a number of principles and recommendations aimed at providing teachers with useful information.

- Time management: it is related to the effective planning of project work by coordinating with other teachers to select the appropriate types of project for students in relation with their age, level, and needs.
- Getting started: This subject is about orienting students, which includes getting them to think about the project before they start, giving them a rubric system that clearly describes what they should look for and aim to accomplish, and collectively agreeing on grading criteria before the project begins.
- Establishing a culture that stresses student self-management: Students are involved in project design, make decisions for themselves, and are encouraged to understand how to learn in different settings where the responsibility is shifted from the teacher to the students.
- Managing student groups: The focus is on determining the best grouping pattern, encouraging full involvement of students in project work, and keeping track of each group's progress through discussion, monitoring, and documentation.
- Working with others outside the classroom: social connection between teachers and people from the community is essential to work out the feasibility and nature of external partnerships.
- Getting the most out of technological resources: determining whether or not technology is appropriate for the project work, making efficient use of the internet by being encouraged

to make educated decisions when researching relevant websites.

- **Assessing students and evaluating projects:** It refers to the importance of assessing and evaluating students' performance at the end of the project work using a variety of assessment techniques, such as individual and group assessment, and emphasizing individual performance, as well as providing appropriate feedback and collecting formative evaluation information from students about the project and how it might be improved.

2.1.14. Assessment in PBL

PBL is a multi-dimensional strategy that focuses on both products and processes. Because it is a learner- and learning-centered paradigm that differs from traditional approaches, its assessment must reflect certain distinctive aspects. The PBL assessment should be properly designed and structured. The distinction between formative and summative assessment is called into doubt at this stage. According to Hancock (1994), formative assessment is “an ongoing process involving the student and teacher in making judgments about the student’s progress in language using non-conventional strategies.” (p. 2). On the other hand, summative assessment is defined by Brown (2001) as the evaluation of students’ understanding when finishing a lesson or unit and focuses on the final display of knowledge gathered regardless of the procedures followed. To make a sound decision while selecting the appropriate way of project assessment, it is important to determine the balance between the process-product in the project-based learning approach. For that reason, Baş (2011) points out:

Project work is a student-centered and driven by the need to create an end-product. However, it is the route to achieving this end-product that makes project work so worthwhile. The route to the end product brings opportunity for students to develop their confidence and independence and to work together in a real-world environment by collaborating on a task. (p. 1)

Accordingly, there is no imbalance between the process and the product dimensions in PBL. Thus, they should be included in the assessment process. As indicated by Sawamura (2010), "...assessments in PBL should help students know what they have learned, and offer positive washback in learning" (p. 44). As a result, the project work can be summatively assessed when evaluating the students' final product, and formative assessment can be used to analyze the phases involved in the implementation process. Therefore, the entire process, as well as the final product, should be carefully evaluated and monitored to ensure that students receive the favorable feedback.

Actually, The PBL approach is a student-centered instruction. For that reason, the assessment process should include the student's voice. Under this framework, Slater et al. (2006) asserted that triangulation assessment including three important pillars; self-assessment, peer-assessment, and teacher-assessment that appear to play an important role in improving the consistency of project work assessment. In the assessment process, the student, peers, and teacher should all be given equal chance.

2.2. An Overview of the Speaking Skill

2.2.1. Defining the Speaking Skill

Speaking is one among the four language skills (listening, reading, writing, and speaking) and seems to be the most important and frequently used skill in any setting. It is considered as the mean through which human being can transfer information and maintains social relationships through communication, expression of opinions, feelings, hopes, and intentions. According to Leong and Ahmadi (2017), “Speaking is used twice as much as reading and writing combined” (p.35). Furthermore, people who know a language are referred to as speakers of that language. Burkart and Sheppard (2004) claim that the ability to carry on and hold a conversation in the target language is an indicator of language learning progress.

According to different author's point of view, the definition of the speaking skill has multiple meanings. According to Bygate (1987), speaking ability entails making the appropriate choices when utilizing language forms, following the right order, copying native speakers' communication abilities, and providing the right meanings that the audience can understand. As a result, speaking is recognized as one of the most critical abilities that students must possess in order to communicate effectively in the classroom.

Speaking, according to Cora and Knight (2000), is the act of producing and generating spoken language in order to deliver a message in a variety of situations and contexts. (p. 261). Speaking is considered as a productive skill since it is used to communicate, respond to a conversation, and know how to deal with different daily life situations. Thus, to produce or construct the intended message, the speaker combines all elements of language. Littlewoods (1981) argues that speaking skill is “an important part of the curriculum in language teaching and this makes it an important object of assessment as well” (p.1).

Ur (2000) declares to produce a comprehensible language output, the speaker must be aware of the correct use of grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary at the same time. Accordingly, spoken language necessitates the mastery of the other skills and includes some characteristics such as the stress, intonation, tone, speed of speech, in addition to the facial expressions and gestures of the speaker as well as repetitions and pauses. Moreover, Hedge (2000) considered speaking as “a skill by which they (people) are judged while first impressions are being formed” (p. 261). Furthermore, students should not only learn how to speak in order to improve their oral performance, but they need also to be aware of the appropriate use of this language in a given speech community. Therefore, being a competent speaker needs a high complex mental activity and a multi-facets cognitive process (Hedge, 2000).

Florez (1999) listed some important abilities and knowledge that the speaker must address:

- ✓ Producing the sounds, stress patterns, rhythmic structures, and intonations of the language
- ✓ Using grammar structures accurately
- ✓ Assessing characteristics of the target audience, including shared knowledge, status and power relations, or differences in perspectives
- ✓ Selecting vocabulary that is understandable and appropriate for the audience, the topic being discussed, and the setting in which the speech act occurs
- ✓ Applying strategies to enhance comprehensibility, such as emphasizing key words, rephrasing, or checking for listener's comprehension
- ✓ Using gestures or body language

- ✓ Paying attention to the success of the interaction and adjusting components of speech such as vocabulary, rate of speech, and complexity of grammar structures to maximize listener's comprehension and involvement.

(p. 3)

In fact, after the careful examination of the literature review community relating to the definition of the speaking skill, it was noticed that the definitions of the speaking skill are divided into two main approaches, the bottom-up and the top-down models. The bottom-up approach considers the speaking skill as the production and combination of sounds in a systematic way in order to form meaningful utterances. In other words, this approach adopts the idea that the speaking process starts from learning the smallest sounds until the mastery of words and sentences. However, this approach neglects the social and interactive side of speaking process.

Alternatively, top-down view of speaking emphasizes the two-way process in which there are two or more participants communicate together through producing and receiving the utterance. Thus, this view encourages the speakers to start using language in social and interactive spoken discourse and then they will acquire the sounds. According to Widdowson (1998), speaking is “an instance of use, therefore, is part of reciprocal exchange in which both reception and production play a part. The speaking skill involves both receptive and productive participation” (p.59).

Moreover, Nazara (2011) claims that “speaking is a specific spoken discourse that is primarily social and engaged in for social purposes and in social contexts” (p. 31). This means that speaking is a process that includes the speakers who produce the speech and the listeners who receive it. All in all, speaking is considered as an open-ended interaction that requires participants in a specific context producing and receiving information.

In the current study, the researcher defines the speaking skill as the appropriate use

of language aspects to produce a meaningful utterance shared between the speaker and the listener in a specific context. The examination of previous definitions indicated that speaking is a fundamental skill that requires more attention and practice to be developed in teaching and learning process, especially in the second and foreign language context.

Luoma (2004) argues “speaking in a foreign language is very difficult and competence in speaking takes a long time to develop” (p.1).

2.2.2. The Importance of the Speaking Skill

Being proficient and accurate speakers is the ultimate aim of teaching and learning a foreign language. Most EFL learners give the speaking skill priority in their learning process because it reflects their mastery of the other skills. Because people who know a language are referred to be "speakers of that language", the speaking skill appears to be the most significant of the four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing).

Hence, in this globalized world, learning English as a foreign language has become a necessity to communicate and to enroll in the international labor market. Indeed, developing learners' oral performance becomes a necessity and crucial need in EFL classrooms. Nunan (1991) declares that “To most people, mastering the art of speaking is the single most important factors of learning a second or foreign language, and success is measured in terms of the ability to carry out a conversation in the language” (p.39).

In addition, many people consider speaking and mastering the language as synonyms. Celce-Murcia (2001) points out that “the ability to speak a language is synonymous with knowing that language since speech is the most basic means of human communication” (p. 203). That is, integrating the teaching and learning speaking skill is a fundamental part of the EFL curriculum for all educational levels. In the same line, Luoma (2004) stated that “Speaking skills are an important part of the curriculum in language teaching, and this makes them an important object of assessment as well” (p.1).

2.2.3. Speaking and the Other Skills

The speaking skill has usually been related to writing in terms of "productive skills" through which learners produce a language output being oral or written. On the other hand, listening and reading skills are considered "receptive skills" because learners acquire the necessary language input through receiving it from different sources. Generally, every skill is taught separately from the other skills. However, speaking is closely related to the other skills as it is the only mean for the accomplishment of the teaching process.

2.2.3.1. Relationship between Speaking and Listening

As a matter of fact, listening and speaking are two interrelated ways of accomplishing oral communication process. According to Torkey (2006), "Every speaker is simultaneously a listener and every listener is at least potentially a speaker" (p. 14). In addition, Byrne (1986) states that: "Oral communication is a two-way process between speaker and listener (or listeners) and it involves the productive skill of speaking and the receptive skill of understanding (or listening with understanding)" (p.8)

Listening is a cognitive process that entails a number of factors. It is not to be confused with the sense of hearing. Listening is a cognitive activity in which we pay close attention to what we hear, whereas hearing is a psychological function. We do not listen to sounds that we hear.

Speaking ability is a difficult skill to develop because of its multidisciplinary nature, sensitivity to individual differences, and reliance on a variety of environmental influences. Speaking and listening abilities have been studied from various perspectives for many years, and whether there is a link between speaking and listening skills has been a source of debate among researchers.

Ergo, the incorporation of the speaking and listening skills in the teaching and learning process is fundamental and more attention must be given to develop them

especially in foreign language classrooms. Therefore, listening is considered as an initial form of communication and interaction. Accordingly, Renukadevi (2014) states:

Listening is the most significant part of communication as it is pivotal in providing a substantial and meaningful response. Especially in learning a language for communicative purpose, listening plays a vital role, as it helps the language learner to acquire pronunciation, word stress, vocabulary, and syntax and the comprehension of messages conveyed can be based solely on tone of voice, pitch and accent; and it is only possible when we listen. (p. 60)

2.2.3.2. Relationship between Speaking and Writing

Speaking, meanwhile, is an interactive process of meaning construction that involves the production, reception, and processing of language. It's also a multi-sensory activity because it involves non-verbal cues including body language, eye contact, facial emotions, voice variations, and pitch variation (Thornbury, 2005, p.9), all of which influence the conversational flow.

Although writing and speaking are both productive skills, they are not the same. As a result, O'Grady et al. (1996) claimed that:

“Speaking and writing are different in terms of both origin and practice spoken language is acquired without specific formal instruction, whereas writing must be taught and learned through deliberate effort . . . there are many people who are unable to write. While spoken language comes naturally to the human beings, writing does not”. (p. 591)

In contrast, speech and writing are considered by Robins (2000) as “two modes of linguistic communication” (p. 95). That is, speaking and writing modes are two distinct

ways of using language. However, Rings (1992) stated that “spoken discourse not only utilizes different phonology, morphology, syntax, lexicon, and speech among other elements, but also a different textual interactional structure from that found in formal written discourse” (p. 21). Hence, speech and writing are different ways of using language.

Brown (2001) states some of the differences between speech and writing in terms of:

- Permanence: the listener needs to perceive and store the information immediately. By contrast, written language is constant since the reader can return back to the information at anytime.
- Processing time: readers have more time than the listeners do. That is, the reader can read freely at their own rate, whereas the listener is forced to follow the delivered speech.
- Distance: The message in written language transferred through the dimensions of physical distance and temporal one. As a result, the reader cannot confront the writer in order to clarify and negotiate meaning in a given context, which is not the case of face-to-face conversation.
- Orthography: In spoken discourse, phonemes are used in combination with supra-segmental features such as stress, rhythm, juncture, intonation, pauses, volume, and nonverbal cues in order to convey the message. Yet, in written discourse, we use graphemes as punctuations, pictures, charts and the like.
- Complexity: Writing and speaking introduce two varied modes of complexity. The best example is the one of the nature of clauses. In writing, we use long clauses with more subordinators while in speaking; we usually tend to use short clauses with more coordinate conjunctions.

- Vocabulary: Due to the availability of time and formality of the writing process, writers prefer to include a huge variety of lexis with almost no redundancy. In contrary, in spoken conversation, speakers choose simple and limited vocabulary to be understood by all the members of the community for the sake of simplifying the message.
- Formality: As for the notion of formality, it is acknowledged that written language is more formal than the spoken one. In other words, speech is informal, but writing is formal. (pp. 301-306)

In the same line of thought, Halliday (1985, as cited in Numan, 1989) stated that “speech is also structured and complex, but its complexity lies in the way clauses are put together, while written language is complex at the sentence level” (p. 25). Though, speaking and writing for EFL students can be developed through practice.

Some of the commonly essential and perceived differences between speaking and writing skills are summarized in Table 5 and table 6.

Table 5: Differences between speaking and writing

Speakers	Writers
1. Can refer to people, objects, and so on in the shared environment by pointing with gestures or by using pointing words.	1. Do not share an immediate environment with their readers and have to make explicit references to people and objects.
2. Can check whether they are being understood by looking at the speaker's expression, by asking, or by being directly prompted.	2. Have no means of knowing once the text is finished whether the readers will understand the message they need to anticipate potential misunderstandings and appropriate levels of shared knowledge.
3. In conversations (including telephone conversations) speakers are encouraged by listener's markers, such as "mm" and in live conversations and gestures.	3. Have to find ways of motivating themselves to continue creating a text.
4. Can backtrack and fill in information that may have been omitted precise sequence is not a prerequisite effective communication.	4. Have to plan in order to achieve both a sequence and a selection that will lead to effective communication

Source. Harris (1993, p. 4)

Table 6: Differences between speech and writing

Speaking	Writing
1-More hesitations, interruptions, and self- corrections.	1-More subordination and passives.
2-No spelling and punctuation conventions.	2-Longer sentences.
3-Relies on gestures and paralanguage.	3-More explicit coding of logical relations.
4-Concrete, fragmented, informal, and context dependent.	4-Less modal modification.
5-Characterised by turn-talking.	5-Structurally elaborate, complex, abstract, and formal.
	6-Characterised by monologue.

Source. Hyland (2003, p.50)

2.2.3.3. Relationship between Speaking and Reading

Vocabulary is one of the most important and fundamental aspects of good communication. Learners' speaking skills will increase if they have a larger vocabulary, which they can acquire through reading. Reading has long been seen as a valuable resource for expanding one's vocabulary. According to Lewis (1993), building vocabulary is the most important aspect of learning a second language, and any language skill, including listening, speaking, reading, writing, and interpreting, is impossible to occur without vocabulary use.

Therefore, if you don't have a good vocabulary, you won't be able to communicate effectively. As a result, reading is arguably the most effective method for learning and acquiring new vocabulary. Eskey (2005) writes: "The relationship between reading and vocabulary is widely documented and reciprocal," (p.567). Furthermore, Hedge (1985) claimed that extensive reading improves learners' ability to guess the meanings of unknown words and phrases based on context clues, and that students who read a lot outside the classroom can improve both their comprehension and vocabulary, both of which are necessary components for improving speaking skills.

Learners who have a large and rich vocabulary are better equipped to utilize language precisely and articulately. Learners will gain exposure to terminology that does not normally appear in spoken language as a result of reading (Cunningham & Stanovich 1998). Learners will be able to improve their speaking skills by expanding their vocabulary. It is impossible to make speech without a vocabulary. If learners improve their capacity to guess the meanings of words from context, they will be able to readily comprehend the foreign language and improve their speaking skills.

The benefits of intensive reading were stressed by Dubin and Olshtain (1977):

- Students will be able to enjoy and gain pleasure from reading on their own in their

language.

- Learners are exposed to the language in a relaxed atmosphere. they get different unpressured feelings on the language structure since they read for pleasure, not for a grade or a test.
- Extensive reading enhances other language skills such as writing and speaking.
- Intensive reading help learners understand and use language in different situations out of the educational context

In addition, according to Oya et al. (2009), increased vocabulary knowledge leads to better oral performance. Learners will enhance their linguistic accuracy and fluency by reading. They also argue that having a strong vocabulary is one of the most important factors in achieving fluency in speaking.

Zhang (2012) stated that having a strong vocabulary will give students the confidence to apply what they have learned in class to real-life speaking situations, which will increase their fluency. Furthermore, according to Oya et al. (2009):

Better vocabulary knowledge and having more words at one's disposal are likely to facilitate the ability to tell a story better, to demonstrate a more extensive range of language resources, and to come across more intelligibly. Better vocabulary knowledge could also contribute to boosting the speaker's confidence, which would come across when speaking and influence the overall impression created. (p.19)

2.2.4. Purpose of Teaching Speaking

It was believed that speaking may be used for transactional or interactional purposes. Language is mostly employed to communicate information in transactional dialogue. According to Nunan (1989), news broadcasts, descriptions, narrations, and directions, are message orientated rather than listener oriented.

According to Basturkmen (2002), “Speaking turns serving this purpose tend to be long and involve some prior organization of content and linguistic devices to signal either the organization or the type of information that will be given” (p, 26).

On the other hand, interpersonal use of language such as greetings, chats, and compliments, is a type of interactional discourse used to create or maintain a relationship. It serves an important social function by facilitating the social interaction (Yule, 1989). Listener-oriented language is employed in the interactional model.

Kingen (2000) divides speaking into twelve categories that include both transactional and interpersonal purposes:

1. **Personal expressing:** talking about feelings, point of view, opinions, beliefs, and sharing ideas.
2. **Descriptive:** giving a description of something or someone.
3. **Narrative:** telling stories with chronological sequenced events.
4. **Instructive:** providing instructions or guidance to produce an outcome.
5. **Questioning:** obtaining the needed information through asking appropriate questions.
6. **Comparative:** make a comparison of two or more things or people.
7. **Imaginative:** describing mental images of something.
8. **Predictive:** predicting what will happen in the future.
9. **Interpretative:** considering conclusions, generating hypothetical deductions, and investigating meanings.
10. **Persuasive:** changing others' opinions, attitudes, or points of view, or influencing the behavior of others in some way.
11. **Explanatory:** explaining, clarifying, and supporting ideas and opinions.
12. **Informative:** sharing information with others. (p.218)

2.2.5. Speaking Genres

McCarthy (1998) classified speaking in terms of genres into:

- **Narrative:** A collection of daily events given with active participation from the audience.
- **Identifying:** People tell about themselves, their lives, their location, their jobs, and their hobbies.
- **Language-in-action:** Information is collected while people are in action such as cooking or walking.
- **Comment-elaboration:** People casually expressing their ideas and making comments on other things or people.
- **Debate and argument:** People take perspectives, develop arguments, and reflect on their viewpoints in data.
- **Decision-making and negotiating outcomes:** people reach final decisions or negotiate their way out of challenges to find solutions.

Furthermore, in the theory of genre, the above cited author made a distinction between language as a product of individual and language as a social construct:

- **Expectation:** This refers to how speakers may show expectations according to thenegotiated activity. This genre can be clearly noticed in spoken narratives.
- **Recollections:** This is linked to the participants' past experiences of social activitieswhich related the current activity with previous experiences.
- **Formulations:** The term formulation is elucidated as paraphrases of previous talk orsummaries of positions reached in the ongoing talk.
- **Instantiations:** This permits the use of transactional features

that include decision about topic change. (pp. 30-38)

2.2.6. Speaking Sub-Skills

In EFL classes, the speaking skill is taught with a vague aim of "promoting learner's fluency" (Sayer, 2005) and not breaking it down to develop its sub-skills. Brown (2003) defines speaking ability as a combination of micro and macro skills. The production of smaller pieces of language, such as phonemes, words, collocations, and phrasal units, is referred to as micro-skills. Fluency, discourse, function, style cohesion, and nonverbal communication are among the macro-skills. As a result, both micro and macro skills should be considered when teaching speaking skills.

Analyzing the nature of speaking in terms of competencies-underlying abilities-that constitute speaking competency is a basic challenge in understanding the nature of speaking. It is commonly considered that such fundamental abilities have a structure that is made up of various components that interact and interact with one another. It's also considered that diverse performances draw on these underlying qualities in a variety of ways that are understandable (Widdowson, 1998).

Identifying these skills will aid in their teaching and, as a result, determine how far they have progressed. Some of the taxonomies used to classify speaking sub-skills eventually acquire a communicative perspective, believing that speaking is primarily employed for communication. These are primarily broad models of language ability that are used to assess speaking and other abilities. Different taxonomies, on the other hand, are deemed speaking-specific, focusing on identifying the qualities of speaking. These classifications are based on the examination of competences and underlying conversational skills. Both sorts of models or taxonomies provide alternate frameworks for defining speaking abilities. One model can be used, or multiple models might be combined to create a more complete picture of speaking ability (Luoma, 2004).

2.2.6.1. Communicative Competence Taxonomies

According to McCarthy & Carter (2001), Speaking is perceived as a manifestation of a learner's communicative ability in these theories. Several researchers have focused on the following sub-skills that support communicative competence:

2.2.6.1.1. *The Communicative Competence Model.* Canale (1984) divided the communicative competency framework into four elements: Grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence.

- Grammatical competence entails knowledge of language rules such as vocabulary, word or sentence structure, and pronunciation.
- Sociolinguistic competence covers the appropriate use of language in terms of participants, the objective of the communication, and the context in which the communication takes place.
- Discourse competence which includes the cohesion and coherence arrangement of the spoken utterances.
- Strategic competence is related to the mastery and ability to communicate effectively using both verbal and nonverbal strategies.

2.2.6.1.2. *The Communicative Ability Model.* It is introduced by Van Ek (1987). It is made up of six parts: linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse, strategic, sociocultural, and social skills. These components, with the exception of sociocultural and social competency, are nearly identical to the ones provided by Canale's model. Sociocultural competence has been separated from sociolinguistic competence, and social competence has been included as a separate area by the above-mentioned author. As a result, social competence encompasses self-confidence, attitude, and motivation in dealing with social situations, as well as the ability to engage.

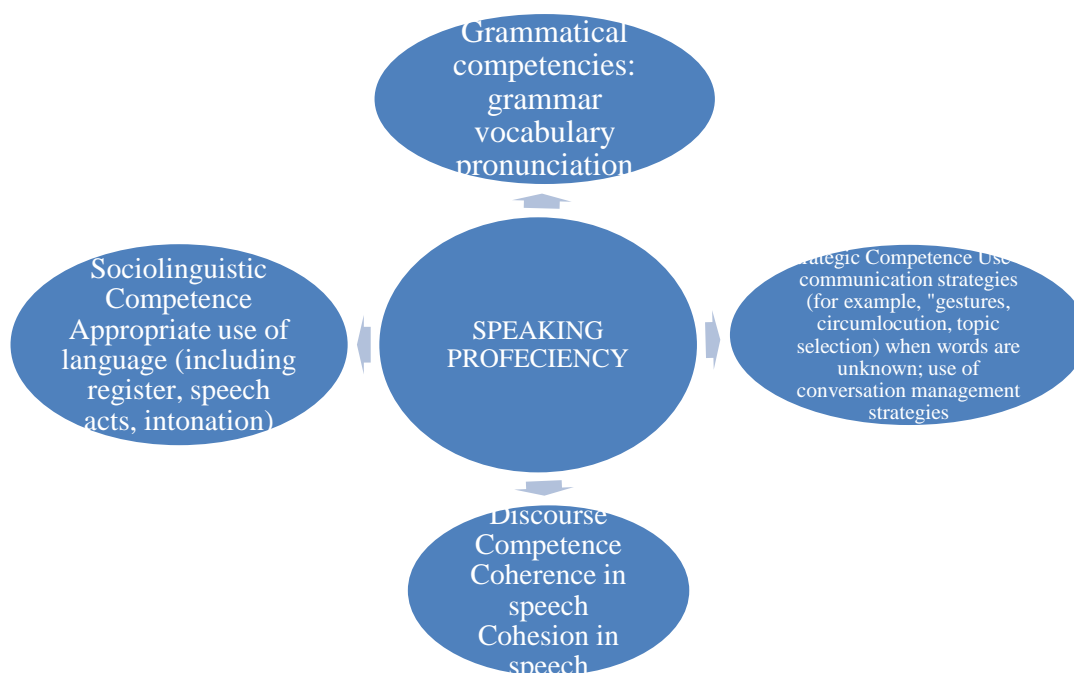
2.2.6.1.3. *Bachman model (1990).* He proposed an identical model to the previous

models by providing more details. Language competence, strategic competence, and psychophysiological mechanisms are the three components of communicative competence that this model focuses on.

2.2.6.1.4. *Conversational Skills Models.* They focus on the idea that communicative competence models give too much attention to the language use and ignore the interaction between language knowledge and the other knowledge components.

Scarcella and Oxford (1992) outline the skills that constitute speaking competencies in Figure 4 based on the communicative competence model:

Figure 4: Skills underlying speaking proficiency



Source. Scarcella and Oxford (1992, 154)

- **Grammatical competence.** It includes the correct use of grammar rules in speech, the good pronunciation, and the appropriate vocabulary.
 - **Using grammar:** It refers to the ability to develop and employ the language's specific grammatical structures effectively in communication, taking into account the features of spoken grammar.
 - **Using vocabulary:** the adequate understanding and utilizing of words in the same

way that native speakers do. It entails employing popular word and phrase collocations.

- **Pronunciation:** According to Florez (1999), pronunciation includes elements such as:

- ✓ Sounds: These include consonants, vowels and consonant clusters;
- ✓ Intonation: This refers to the pattern of pitch changes. There are two basic patterns: rising and falling;
- ✓ Rhythm: It is created according to the position of stress within a single word or a group of words. Within words stresses have fixed positions but stress within a group of words can move according to meaning;
- ✓ Linking and assimilation: When sounds are linked in spoken language, changes occur because of the influence of neighboring sounds.

Concisely, discourse competence includes the learner's ability to:

- ✓ Structure discourse coherently so hearers can easily follow the sequence of what is said.
- ✓ Use grammatical and lexical references appropriately to refer to people and objects so listeners can keep track of them.
- ✓ Use discourse markers that cue coherence relations. These are divided into informational relations markers and conversational connections markers. The latter consists of discourse particles (well, now, anyway) used by participants to maintain conversational coherence. Informational markers include particles that signal the introduction of a topic, shift to a new topic, and summarize the topic. They also have inter-sentential connectors such as markers indicating causative relations, concessive relations and so on.
- ✓ Keep a conversation going through (ensuring that people will listen, showing interest and interrupting politely to clarify or challenge what someone has said)

✓ Manage turn-taking which entails taking a turn of talk, holding a turn, and relinquishing a turn (p. 2).

• **Pragmatic Competence.** According to Pohl (2004), pragmatic competence is related to "appropriateness". It is influenced by the conversation's setting, aim, and participants.

Functional competence and sociolinguistic competence are two sub-competencies of pragmatic competence.

• **Functional competence.** It refers to a language's ability to achieve communication goals. It involves the usage of speech acts as well as the sentences that go with them. As a result, some forms are considered appropriate for achieving a specific function, while others are not. According to Dornyei & Thurrell (1994), the classification of language functions is based on a list of the primary functions for which the language is employed.

• **Sociolinguistic competence.** It includes the use of language effectively in a variety of contexts and with people of various degrees of formality. The more distant the speaker and hearer's social relationship, the more politeness signals we expect to be required (Yoshida, 2003).

• **Strategic Competence.** Effective speakers use different compensatory and accomplishment techniques, like gestures, to help them overcome their drawbacks. Strategic training, according to Scarcella and Oxford (1992), helps learners in managing language production in the following skills: (interrupting, asking for clarification, asking for an explanation and changing the topic). Many of the skills involved in other competencies are clearly covered by strategic competency.

Fluency is used in the current investigation, despite the fact that it is not a key component in either communicative competence or conversational competence models. It has to do with applying all of one's speaking skills in the setting of speaking being time-limited. According to Widdowson (1998), fluency relies on the speaker's ability to cope

with continual communication by using facilitation skills such as lexical phrases and ellipsis, and compensating skills like self-correction and rephrasing.

Harmer (2001) states some necessary elements that are involved in spoken performance to achieve fluency. In this regard, he claimed that participants are in need to know both linguistic elements and the way to them in a given situation.

• **Language features:** The essential elements of oral production that compromise this category are:

- Connected speech: Proficient speakers of English language must show ability in producing quick and fluent speech as native speakers. That is, besides to speakers' ability of producing individual phonemes, they are required to produce a fluent speech that includes all connected speech features. The frequent used aspects of connected speech are assimilation, intrusion, elision, linking and the like.
- Expressive devices: For the sake of delivering effective speech, communicators have to insert all the supra-segmental features properly. Phonological features, like stress, rhythm, pitch, intonation along with non-verbal means are of great importance in transmitting the message appropriately.
- Lexis and grammar: The main distinguishing feature of spoken language is the use of certain common lexical phrases to perform specific language functions. Therefore, to interact properly, students are in need to learn a variety of expressions for different functions in specific situations as expressing shock, surprise, agreeing, disagreeing.
- Negotiating language: Since the major purpose of speaking is to interact with others, communicators need to organize / structure their speech and negotiate meaning for more clarification

• **Mental/ social processing:** successful oral production is reliant on processing skills. The major processing skills as stated by Harmer are as follows:

- Language processing: Competent speakers have the aptitude of processing language in their heads by remembering words and phrases they already know, and sequencing them in a coherent order which leads to the transmission of the intended meanings.
- Interacting with others: Again, as interaction is fundamental in language speaking, participants need to be good listeners, understand the feeling and intention of the speaker to respond appropriately, and take turns.
- Information processing: Processing information refers to the participants' ability of analyzing information responding instantly. Hence, to effectively take part in the communication process, participants should respond immediately and appropriately. (p. 267)

2.2.7. Elements of the Speaking Skill

Vanderkevent (1990) divide the speaking process into three main elements:

- a. The speakers: speakers are people who produce the sound. They are useful in the sense that they express opinions or feelings to the hearer. So, if there are no speakers, thoughts and emotions won't be stated
- b. The listeners: listeners are people who receive or get the speaker's opinion or feeling. If there are no listeners, speakers will express their opinion by writing.
- c. The utterances: utterances are words or sentences, which the speakers produce to state the opinion. If there is no utterance, both of the speakers and the listeners will use a sign.

2.2.8. Speaking Skill Components

According to Harris (1974), pronunciation, vocabulary, comprehension, fluency, and grammar are the five components of speaking skills.

2.2.8.1. Comprehension

The oral communication necessitates a topic to be discussed by the participants who

can respond to the speech as well as initiate it.

2.2.8.2. Fluency

Harrell (2007) described fluency as the fluidity or flow with which sounds, syllables, words, and phrases are connected together. If a person's speech includes pauses, they are said to be fluent speakers.

Fluency, according to Zhang (2009), is speaking at a regular rate without hesitating over words and sounds while using excellent English to deliver the speaker's message in a simple, clear, and understood manner. The fluent speaker should employ a simple language that suits the listener's understanding and producing comprehensible sentences with no difficulties and revealing concepts calmly and spontaneously. Nakano et al. (2001) discussed certain elements that influence student fluency and identified criteria of fluency:

- a. The general amount of words used in the discussion.
- b. The time devoted for silent pauses and thinking.
- c. The repetition of words, phrases, or clauses.
- d. The repairs or reformulation required for correction.
- e. The average length of the speech.

2.2.8.3. Pronunciation

The ultimate aim of the oral lessons is to help learners to speak correctly and becoming accurate. As a result, accuracy entails the use of the proper linguistic forms. According to Bryne (1986), utterances do not contain errors affecting the phonological, syntactic, semantic or other discourse features of a language.

Thornbury (2005) defined pronunciation as “the student's ability to produce comprehensible utterances to fulfill the task requirements”. Pronunciation, on its broader sense, is the acte of producing meaningful and correct sounds.

Pronunciation is a critical component of any linguistic code that enables us to

understand and recognize differences between languages. Pronunciation is also necessary for achieving meanings in a certain situation. As a result, utterances and pronunciation are intrinsically tied. Therefore, incorrect pronunciation can lead to confusion or frustration (Celce-Muria, 1995). Mastering speech habits is critical for better language acquisition. According to Cook (1994), learning to pronounce a second language necessitates the formation of new pronunciation habits as well as the elimination of the first language's prejudice.

Harmer (2001) focused on pitch, intonation, minimal pairings, spelling, rhythm, and stress as they are related to pronunciation. Learners must comprehend the function and form of such aspects, which are believed to be various components of sounds. Learning the language requires not just an understanding of the aspects of pronunciation, but also the ability to transmit meanings. For both speakers and listeners, poor pronunciation will make the discourse stressful and unattractive.

2.2.8.4. Grammar

Grammar is a set of principles that regulate the structure and arrangement of language items. Although languages have norms to be followed when writing, people incorporate them into their spoken language. People began speaking languages by creating sounds, which grew into words, phrases, and sentences.

The goal of grammar is to facilitate the relationship between form and meaning - between the boundaries created over words or phrases and their denotations in the world model of the system. Grammar was divided into two types: descriptive grammar, which seeks to describe real language usage, and prescriptive grammar, which tells readers what grammatical rules they should use.

2.2.8.5. Vocabulary

Because vocabulary is the foundation of speech, it is one of the most essential goals

of teaching a second/foreign language. From early childhood until maturity, semantic development takes place. Children's vocabulary grows as they become older as a result of more practice. Learning a new vocabulary helps in communication and knowledge acquisition. The purpose of vocabulary development is to assist children in becoming self-sufficient learners who can infer or acquire the meanings of unfamiliar terms.

According to Harley (2013), recognition and meaning are two aspects of words. Recognizing an item as familiar entails determining the familiarity of a word as well as the availability of all information associated to that word. All of the skills students use to decode words are included in word recognition, including phonemic analysis, analogies, syllable analysis, sight word mastery, and morpheme analysis.

2.2.8.6. Appropriateness/ Appropriacy

Appropriateness refers to being appropriate for a specific person, situation, occasion, or location. It also refers to proper behavior, such as doing the right thing. It also has the property of being very suited in addition to these two definitions. When we evaluate the three meanings, we may conclude that appropriateness is doing the proper thing in a high-quality manner. Fluency and appropriacy, according to Arndt et al. (2000), are the most important requirements for successful language use. Appropriacy is the process of choosing communication material and message formulation based on the speaker's goal and cultural backgrounds.

If we employ a correct grammar system and correct sentences in an appropriate situation, we are deemed appropriate language users. A speaker must explain how and why they apply their systemic language knowledge to real-world situations. According to Kaplan (2010), "this involves judgments of appropriacy at all levels: discourse, lexicogrammatical, or articulatory level" (p. 64).

2.2.8.6.1. Types of appropriacy. According to Ek (1992), appropriacy can be demonstrated in three types: sociolinguistic, sociocultural, and social appropriacy.

▪ **Sociolinguistic appropriacy.** Instability and variation can be seen in any linguistic system. Concerns about identification and accommodation in sociolinguistics help to explain how bilinguals develop a variation space that differs from that of a native speaker. Differences in pronunciation, syntax, discourse, and communication techniques are all possible. This issue can affect individuals or the entire community. Sociolinguistics leads to the realization that language use must be correct and appropriate for the situation at hand. Appropriacy is more than just linguistics; it also entails a deliberate knowledge and interaction with situations.

• **Socio-cultural appropriacy.** Learners have a lot of access to language through media, and they share a sociocultural background with people from all over the world. Language is not merely a matter of recording events in any social group with any appropriate criteria; it is also a means of recording the sociocultural implications of the utterance in question. What it implies to the users is a reference to the context of linguistic occurrences. To put it another way, it is the meaning in terms of context.

▪ **Social appropriacy.** People must examine the social appropriateness of their planned behaviors or communications while planning to achieve goals involving social contact. Planners are guided by social appropriateness while creating plans that will not disturb others.

2.2.9.Aspects of the Speaking Skill

Aspects of the speaking skill must be identified and analyzed. These features provide some principles and strategies for comprehending this skill and designing instructional activities to enable learners communicate successfully in real-life situations.

2.2.9.1. Speaking is Face to Face

Body movements, facial expressions, and even gestures all play a vital role in spoken communication. Speaking takes place in contexts when participants or interlocutors are present. According to Widdowson (1998), communication is facilitated by such variables.

2.2.9.2. Speaking is Interactive

According to Bygate (1998), the use of language to speak with one or more participants, the conversation flow normally runs smoothly. The participants provide suitable contributions at appropriate times and no unnecessary gaps or everyone talking over each other. Turn-taking is an important aspect of interaction. It's an unspoken component of daily communication. Turn-taking is conducted and signaled differently among cultures, potentially generating communication problems between persons of different cultures and languages (Mc Donough & Mackey, 2000)

2.2.9.3. Speaking Happens in Real-Time

During conversations, responses are unplanned and spontaneous. The time limits affect the speaker's ability to plan, organize the message, and control the language. In addition, the speaker's sentences also cannot be as long and complex as in writing. Similarly, speakers occasionally forget things they intended to say; or they may even forget what they have already said, so they repeat themselves.

The speech production occurs in real-time and imposes the speakers to compensate the difficulties they may face when speaking. According to Bygate (1987), using formulaic expressions, hesitation devices, self-correction, rephrasing, and repetition can help speakers become more fluent and cope with real-time demands. Exposing students to these aspects of spoken discourse helps them improve their oral production and compensate for the difficulties they face. It also aids them in sounding natural in their second language.

2.2.10. Strategies for Developing the Oral Performance

2.2.10.1. Using Minimal Responses

In a foreign language context, students who lack the confidence to participate properly in an oral discussion tend to listen more than they speak. One strategy to motivate such students is to help them in building a repertoire of minimum responses that they may employ in various situations.

Minimal responses are typically idiomatic statements used by conversation participants to express understanding, agreement, uncertainty, and other reactions to what other speakers are saying. Using such strategy allows students to concentrate on what the other person is saying rather than thinking about what to say.

2.2.10.2. Recognizing Scripts

Several communication settings are associated with social and cultural norms that often follow patterns like greetings, apologies, praises, invitations, and other functions that often follow patterns or scripts. The relationship between a speaker's turn and the one after can often be predicted in these scripts.

Teachers can encourage their students in improving their speaking abilities by making them aware of the scripts for diverse circumstances, so that they can anticipate what they will hear and what they will need to respond. In addition, teachers can help their students in managing and modifying the vocabulary that different scripts contain through interactive activities.

2.2.10.3. Using Language to Talk About Language

Among the most common psychological factors that can hinder students from developing their speaking skill are the uncomfortable and shyness to speak when they do not understand the conversation or when the listener has not understood what the speaker is saying. Teachers can help students in overcoming this worry by explaining that this

misunderstanding is natural and the need for clarification can occur in any sort of interaction, regardless of the participants' language proficiency levels. Students might also be given tactics and techniques to utilize for clarification and comprehension testing.

Teachers can create an authentic practice environment within the classroom by encouraging students to utilize clarifying words and strategies in class when there is a misunderstanding and responding positively. Students will acquire confidence in their ability to manage the communication circumstances they may experience outside of the classroom as they gain control of various clarifying tactics.

2.2.11. Factors Affecting the Development of Oral Performance

Most of foreign language learners face different difficulties and problems when it comes to develop their oral performance.

Richards and Renandya (2002) divide the factors influencing speaking production into the following categories:

2.2.11.1. Inhibition

Speaking, unlike the other abilities, necessitates some real-time exposure to public. Learners are sometimes reluctant to speak in a foreign language in the classroom, scared of making mistakes or just afraid of their teachers' and peers' negative reaction.

2.2.11.2. Mother Tongue Use

Because it is natural, it is simpler for students to utilize their mother tongue in class. As a result, the majority of students are not controlled in their use of the target language during the learning process.

2.2.11.3. Low or Uneven Participation

In large classes, not all the students will have the same opportunity to speak and participate. Only few participants can speak at a moment. This issue is exacerbated by the fact that some students dominate while others, especially the shy ones, simply listen.

2.2.12. Approaches for Teaching the Speaking Skill

When we consider the history of language teaching and learning methods, we can find that strategies to teach the speaking skills have reflected previous theories and approaches to language learning (grammar-translation method, cognitive approaches and comprehension approach), which have not always prioritized speaking as a main aim. Thornbury (2005) identifies three theories of language learning that are relevant to the teaching of speaking, based on second language acquisition and learning theories. These theories are behaviorist cognitivist and sociocultural theory.

According to behaviorist theory, language is developed through "positive habits and reinforcement" (Thornbury, 2005). To improve speaking skills, the principles of learning, presenting, practice, and controlled production were applied. The principal goal was to establish automatic habits. Learners were exposed to language by listening to an instructor or seeing a video dialogue that was then rehearsed in the classroom through drilling, memorization, and performance. This is linked to the behaviorist mental model.

Cognitivists perceive Language learners' minds as a black box with information processing capacity. It is thought that a difficult skill like speaking develops in phases ranging from controlled to automatic (Thornbury, 2005). Learning begins with growing awareness of the first stage, then moves on to using practice to integrate newly acquired knowledge with old knowledge (proceduralization), and finally, autonomy.

Sociocultural theory emphasizes the sociocultural environment of learning and claims that learning is mediated through social contact with other individuals. Learners require additional self-regulation, as well as the mediation of someone with more knowledge who can give a supporting framework (Scaffold). This interaction allows learners to explore new knowledge until they can use it independently (self-regulation) (Thornbury, 2005).

In the current era, the importance of developing speaking abilities as a productive talent is widely emphasized, and communicative language competences are crucial in the development of engaged individuals who are actively involved in social life and the development of their community and society. According to Richards (2008), recent advances in discourse analysis, conversational analysis, and corpus analysis have revealed a lot about spoken speech and the complexities of spoken interaction. Thornbury (2005) pointed out that "the theory of communicative competence prompted proposals for the development of communicative syllabuses, and more recently for task-based and text-based syllabuses and methodologies".

2.2.12.1. Direct/Controlled Vs. Indirect/Transfer

According to Thornbury (2005), the direct method focuses on improving speaking micro-skills. It emphasizes the usage of linguistic forms and is concerned with structural accuracy. It also allows for language analysis, which helps learners become more aware of grammar and discourse structures.

Consequently, the indirect method concentrates on the development of speech fluency. It motivates students to communicate by including them in communicative activities. Learners are expected to gain speaking abilities by conversing with one another, and they will be able to apply those skills in real-life settings (Goh & Burns, 2012).

Part vs the entire contradiction corresponds to direct and indirect learning processes. The first focuses on the elements of language, whereas the second focuses on the context of use (Thornbury and Slade, 2006). Both techniques have their supporters and shortcomings. According to Goh and Burns (2012), "The direct approach does not consider that the proper use of language form is developed through face-to-face communication. In contrast, the indirect approach neglects the development of accuracy" (p.135).

Thornbury (2005) proposed a general approach for teaching speaking skills. He

suggested three stages for learning and developing the speaking skill:

- Awareness- raising: during which students familiarise themselves with new knowledge.
- Appropriation: during which students integrate the new knowledge into the existing one.
- Autonomy: allowing students to use this newly constructed knowledge in real-life situations without any assistance (pp. 40-111).

Thornbury and Slade (2006) argued that “the indirect approach is useful in teaching conversations and allows many opportunities for exposure to and participation in authentic conversation and explicit instruction” (p. 295).

Ultimately, good practice in teaching speaking emphasizes the importance of a method that mixes direct and indirect techniques. In practice, this is accomplished in classrooms using one of two approaches that are currently in use (Goh & Burns, 2012).

2.3. Teaching Speaking in EFL Classes

Most EFL learners do not have much opportunity to hone their English language outside the classroom especially in context where the English language is the second foreign language and it is not used by large group of people. Accordingly, the classroom is only place where learners communicate and practice the target language. This is why the teacher should provide as much time as conceivable to the students to talk and communicate orally using English to develop their speaking skills. Some of the strategies that the foreign language teachers may adopt in their classroom are:

Making Reasonable Situations

It will offer assistance to the learners in case they use English in practical circumstances.

Locks in All Students

The teacher should consider the classroom as a community and think of ways to help student communicate with each other using the target language.

Personalizing Speaking Topics

The teachers should think about the topics that attract their students' interests and motivation to talk about. It is helpful for students to talk about subjects they are curious about and they face in their everyday lives.

Creating an Unfearful class

Because of some psychological factors affecting the students' speaking skill naming shyness, fear of teachers' feedback, and fear of peers' negative reaction, it is necessary for the teacher to create an unfearful learning environment in which students feel at ease and relaxed participate in the classroom, and to encourage them to talk without fear or hesitation.

2.3.5. Planning Different and Various Types of Speaking Activities

The use of different and various speaking activities in the classroom help students to be more active and motivated to be engaged in the speaking activities. In addition, it helps students to develop different speaking aspects depending on the type of the activity. In fact, the focus on one sort of speaking activities may create a boring learning atmosphere in which students lose their interest to speak and participate.

2.3.6. The Speaking Skill and Technology

Learners can use technology to engage in self-directed activities, self-paced intelligence, and a safe environment where mistakes can be corrected and specific feedback offered. A machine's input adds value since it can detect mistakes and connect the learner to exercises right away by focusing on specific errors. Communication labs, speech recognition software, the Internet, and podcasting are some of the modern technologies that can be employed in education.

2.3.6.1. How to use these technologies

2.3.6.1.1. Communication labs. There are software programs that can help learners

improve their speaking abilities. By introducing the appropriate software in the computer, learners will be motivated to use it. The use of headphones in the lab engages students in the subject and encourages them to practice rather than becoming bored.

2.3.6.1.2. Speech Recognition Software. When it comes to teaching speaking, the discourse acknowledgment program is very useful. This might be used to turn spoken words into machine-readable data. The device identifies the accuracy of what was read and either delivers a positive affirmation or permits the user to try one more time to do better. Learners can evaluate their progress following this type of program. This software assesses and scores linguistic structure, pronunciation, and comprehension, as well as provides the correct language forms. For example, if the speaker mispronounces a word, the learning tool can quickly detect it and provide aid in correcting it.

2.3.6.1.3. The Internet. Internet is the widely used term by people all around the world. To learn English, the current digital generation uses the internet everywhere and anytime. Inside the classroom, online instruction appears to be enjoyable and encourages students to select the best materials for them. The grammar tasks, which are available online, are needed for the language learners to test their level and check their understanding.

In addition, internet is used to gather data from many sources for any instruction. Students can use social media websites, and other tools to develop their speaking skills by connecting and chatting with friends and even native speakers. These methods of learning are thought to improve learners' oral proficiency and compensate for the shortage access to native speakers. Furthermore, online conferences improve intercultural awareness, motivation, and interaction levels because students are exposed to a large number of materials using the target language which helps them improve their speaking abilities.

2.3.6.1.4.Podcasting. They can be listened to online or downloaded for offline use. The soundtrack helps in the learner's familiarization with the target language, and teachers can utilize it in class for activities such as discussions. Furthermore, there are specific tapes for language learning, offering the correct pronunciation for the students' specific needs. Podcasts help learners developing their ability to communicate effectively using the target language. Podcasting combines audio files with instructional materials, allowing to play them both inside and outside the classroom.

2.3.7. Speaking and Authentic Materials

Authentic materials are recommended to be used because students are expected to learn and gain an extensive collection and variety of vocabulary items in the target language, in addition to the development of different language sentence-building patterns. Guariento & Morley (2001) claim that: "The use of authentic materials is available for use in classroom. This might be attributed to the fact that most students master a wide range of vocabulary in the target language and all the structures" (p. 3).

The use of authentic materials when teaching the speaking skill has many points to be considered. In terms of language learning, authentic materials might enhance learners' understanding and encourages the ones who are expected to lack vocabulary and grammar structures through raising their interest by selecting the appropriate authentic material that suits their needs. In terms of teachers, they demand a lot of preparations to suit the level and ability of learners. Guariento & Morley (2001) state: "authentic materials should be used in accordance with students' ability and suitable tasks can be given to learners in which total understanding is not important" (p. 4).

We can state that authentic materials help learners to be involved in the teaching and learning process with the assistance provided by the teachers. Furthermore, popular literary authentic materials such as songs are advised to be used because they help at

creating a relaxing atmosphere and a non-threatening environment. Original materials and activities should be used in accordance with learners' level, abilities, and interests.

2.3.8. Speaking Activities

The use of diverse activities in teaching the speaking skill helps learners to hone the dialect routinely inside the classroom. Numerous activities can be employed inside the classroom that can help learners in improving their oral performance.

2.3.8.1. Discussion

Discussion and debate are the most common activities used in the oral classes to teach speaking skills because they allow students to provide and defend their point of view, share their interests, opinions, and experiences. When getting into discussion activity, the students will agree or disagree about a topic, provide evidence and arguments, etc. The topic should be interesting, known for the students, and relevant to their daily lives. Students should be reminded that everyone in the discussion should be engaged and have a specific idea to share.

2.3.8.2. Role-Play

This activity is the most enjoyable for most of students, especially those who enjoy imitating others. Because it enables students to perform and talk about real-life issues, role-playing is considered as an authentic teaching and learning strategy. Furthermore, it is frequently conducted in couples or groups which reduces students' fear of public speaking helps in overcoming their worries. As a result, each student is required to play a specific role.

The role play activity's success is determined by the appropriate selection of the topics to be discussed which should meet students' needs and interest as well as increase

students' motivation and engagement in the activity.

2.3.8.3. Communicative Tasks

Because they create a feeling of humour in the classroom, these exercises are particularly entertaining for both students and teachers. Furthermore, they are tasked with achieving a variety of language objectives. According to Thornbury (2005), communicative activities have certain characteristics:

- The tasks should be from real-life situations.
- Achieving some outcomes by using language in funny way.
- Make the students practice and interact.
- The students use their language without limitations. (p. 79)

2.3.8.4. Academic Presentations

In this activity, students prepare and make formal academic presentations on a chosen topic. Individually, in pairs, or in groups, the presentation can be shown. Following the students' presentations, there is a discussion and feedback session.

2.3.8.5. Telling stories

In this type of activity, students can talk about a movie, a book, or a story. According to Thornbury (2005), “narration has always been one of the main means of practicing speaking in the classroom, although this is used to take the form of having learners recount folk tales or amusing or dramatic incidents based on series of pictures” (p.96).

2.3.8.6. Picture description

Picture description is a speaking activity through which students describe people, events, and places in a given picture. Picture description is a simple and productive activity because it fosters learners' creative thinking along with their public speaking performance.

2.3.9. Assessing and Testing the Oral Performance

Testing students' oral performance is an essential component of the overall evaluation process in most educational institutions where English is taught as a second or foreign language. Testing students' oral performance is an essential component of the overall evaluation process in most educational institutions where English is taught as a second or foreign language. O'Malley and Pierce (1996) claim that the "Oral language assessment aims to capture student's ability to communicate for both basic communicative and academic purposes" (p. 60).

The above-mentioned authors identified three main purposes for assessing students' oral performance:

- For initial placement of students
- For movement from one level to another.
- For placement out of an ESL into a grade-level classroom. (p. 63)

According to Thornbury (2005), the most commonly used spoken tests are:

- ✓ **Interviews:** they can be conducted individually or in pairs. It's simple to set up an interview, but it is not conducive to evaluate informal, conversational speaking styles. It's impossible to avoid the impact of the interviewer, such as asking style.
- ✓ **Live monologues:** Students display a short talk or presentation about a pre-selected topic. In this kind of test, the evaluator effect is eliminated. The test provides evidence on the speakers' ability to handle a conversation which is not always possible in interviews.
- ✓ **Recorded monologues and dialogues:** It is less stressful than live performance. This test allows students to record their talk on certain topic. The assessment of recorded monologue or dialogue can be done after the event, which gives evaluators the opportunity to work out objective and consistent assessment.

- ✓ **Role-plays:** In a classroom setting, a learner must play a role in which the tester's effect is unpredictable. If the learner's needs and the language lesson's goals are met, this test type can be called reliable.
- ✓ **Collaborative tasks and discussions:** they are like role-plays activities, but the learners take on the role of themselves. Assessors can use this test to evaluate students' interaction abilities and ability to communicate own opinions. (pp. 123-125)

After deciding upon a particular speaking test format, there is a need for selecting the appropriate scoring type. Tornobury (2005) argued that examiners score an oral test in two ways:

- ❖ **Holistic scoring:** It is the general impression given to the examiner by the students. Holistic scoring is often used in informal testing, and it takes the form of single score.
- ❖ **Analytic scoring:** Giving distinct scores for different parts of the students' performance is required for a full description. Analytic scoring takes time, but it provides a thorough and trustworthy view of students' abilities. (p. 127)

2.4. A Review of Relevant Studies

This section is devoted to summarize the worldwide previous studies relating to the effectiveness of project-based learning instruction in foreign language teaching and learning in general and English as a foreign language in particular. Moreover, the aim is to revise the literature about the impact of PBL on developing EFL students' academic achievement. In fact, we found that there is a lack in the studies concerning the PBL strategy in Arab countries, and the current investigation is the first to investigate the effectiveness of project-based learning strategy on the students' speaking skill in Algerian higher education. After perusing the worldwide previous studies, we found that almost all of them recommend the integration of PBL in educational context as it is a successful strategy to develop learners' performances. Therefore, this fragment was fragmented into

two parts. The first part surveys the studies that examine the effectiveness of the project-based learning instruction on students' language performances in general. Then, the second part explores the researches on the impact of PBL on students' speaking skill. The below-mentioned studies have been randomly selected to provide evidence about PBL and its effect on students' language skills in general and on the speaking skill in EFL context in particular.

The Effects of PBL on Students' Language Performances

Even though there is an ever-growing importance given to incorporating project work into educational field, there are a limited number of studies on the effects of project-based learning on students' language proficiency.

Fragoulis (2009) conducted a study entitled "Project-Based Learning in the Teaching of English as A Foreign Language in Greek Primary Schools: From Theory to Practice". He investigated the implementation of project work on teaching and learning local history and English as a foreign language in Greece with 15 sixth grade primary school pupils and two primary school teachers. The project lasted for six months and its purports were based on linking theory to practice for an effective implementation of project-based learning instruction in the foreign language context. The study yielded positive findings of project work contributing to the student's knowledge acquisition, willingness to participate in group work, the authenticity of sources, development of students' communicative competence, and the improvement in all four language skills; most importantly the speaking and listening skills. In addition, the study findings revealed that students' social skills and collaborative skills improved dramatically. The researcher also reported that project work developed students' intrinsic motivation as they increased their participating in the learning activities and developed their autonomy and responsibility for their learning through taking initiatives and making choices and

decisions. At the end, the researcher concluded that PBL is a potentially effective strategy in language classes.

Likewise, Bař and Beyhan (2010) conducted an experimental research aimed to investigate the effects of multiple intelligences supported project-based learning on students' achievement and their attitude towards English lesson. The study was performed with the participation of 50 elementary school 5th-grade students. The participants were divided into an experimental group that was exposed to the principals of PBL, and the control group that processed the traditional teaching and learning approach. The analysis of the quantitative data gathered over a period of four weeks indicated that there was a significant difference between the achievement level of the experimental group students and control group participants. Moreover, the researchers claimed that the students who have been educated by multiple intelligences supported project-based learning method become more successful because project-based learning raised in a greater extent their academic achievement level, their motivation level, and their positive attitudes towards English lessons. As a suggestion, the above-cited researchers highly recommend the implementation of project-based learning approach in foreign language classes.

Moreover, Simpson (2011) in her doctorate thesis entitled "Integrating Project-Based Learning in an English Language Tourism Classroom in a Thai University" examined in an empirical study the impact of PBL on students' English language competency, learning skills, and self-confidence at the tertiary level. The subjects of the study were 26 third-year English majoring in English for Tourism course divided into three groups: high, medium, and low based on their raw cores collected from three pretests. To provide in-depth information about the topic under investigation, the researcher employed different and rich research instruments including TOEFL, a writing test, a speaking test, an observation schedule, student surveys, project diaries , open– ended questionnaires, field

notes and work –in discussions. The analysis of quantitative and qualitative findings revealed that low and medium achievers developed their language skills and proficiency, especially speaking and writing skills. In addition, the study results indicated that PBL approach effectively contributed in the enhancement of students' important learning skills such as teamwork, higher-order thinking, and presentation skills besides a dramatic increase in their self-confidence. The researcher concluded that the implementation of the PBL instruction in a foreign language context could be an alternative means of developing students' competence, enhancing learning skills and self-confidence in English usage.

Along the same vein, Aiedah and Audrey (2012) in their exploratory qualitative study aimed to determine the effect of project-based learning on students' engagement in Malaysian studies and English language at Taylor's College, School of Hospitality and Tourism. The study was based on the implementation of a project assigned to 85 students as part of their assessment. The participants were required to discuss, plan and look for the information and later organize the information collected to be submitted as a video or folio project. The findings from the researchers' observation, interviews and focus group indicated that the students were highly engaged and motivated in their learning. In addition, the results revealed that students were able to explore new knowledge and language skills. The aforementioned researchers concluded that project-based learning is a comprehensive approach to enhance student's engagement particularly in four aspects: responsible learning, strategic learning, and collaborative learning.

In Indonesia, Astawa et al. (2017) attempts to examine the effect and influence of Project-Based Learning on students' English Productive Skills, speaking and writing, in a public junior high school in Bali-Indonesia. The quantitative and qualitative data were collected from 28 students using speaking and writing tests, interview guide, observation checklist, open-ended questionnaire, and field note. According to the analysis of findings,

there was a significant difference on students' English productive skills before and after being taught using PBL.

Recently, the 5th International Conference on Arts Language and Culture (ICALC 2020) was conducted online via Zoom Meeting on October 17th, 2020 from Surakarta, Indonesia. Sutomo et al. (2020) made a contribution entitled "Project-Based Learning (PBL) for Teaching English in SMA" through which they presented a model for teaching English using PBL which is feasible to develop the students' four English skills. The research method was Educational Research and Development. The data were collected from three English teachers and their students using observation, questionnaire, and interview. The researchers concluded from the obtained findings that the developed model for teaching English using project-based learning was feasible for the both teachers and students in particular to develop their four English skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). Also, they recommended the use of PBL approach by the English teachers to develop students' language four skills.

Along the same line of thoughts, in Pakistan, Imtiaz and Asif (2012) concluded that PBL had a significant importance in developing not only students' language skills, but also promoting students' active and autonomous learning. Vicheanpant and Ruenglerpanyakul (2012) proved that PBL had an effective impact on students' positive attitudes towards the learning process which came along with developing Thai students' oral performance and communication skill.

In Iraq and Indonesia, Nassir (2014) and Rochmahwati (2016) respectively found significant difference on students' English achievement before and after being taught using PBL. All the above cited findings came along with the positive enhancement on students' attitudes, motivation, and autonomy towards language learning.

The Effects of PBL on Students' Speaking Skills

The great importance given to PBL approach in the recent years and its effectiveness on developing students' language skills has opened a huge array of possibilities in implementing it in the domain of EFL teaching and learning, especially the speaking skill. Of particular interest in this study, many researchers have conducted studies that focus on the impact of PBL on students' speaking skill.

Firstly, Maulany (2013) conducted a research on "The Use of Project-Based Learning in Improving the Students' Speaking Skill". This study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of project-based Learning on developing young learners' speaking skill and what speaking aspects were improved through PBL. The researcher followed a classroom action research at year 4 class at one primary school in Bandung. The data were collected using participatory observation for eight meetings and speaking assessment was conducted three times (Pre-test, Post-test 1, Post-test 2). The findings indicated that PBL could improve the students' speaking skill. In addition, the participants showed an improvement on the students' speaking aspects covering comprehension, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency. Of all the five aspects, comprehension and vocabulary were improved most significantly.

Another study entitled "Project-Based Learning in Chinese College English Listening and Speaking Course: From Theory to Practice" was conducted by Yiying (2015). The primary aim of this study was to explore the implementation of project-based learning (PBL) in Chinese college English listening and speaking class. The treatment included semi-structured projects through applying English language to do research and complete authentic tasks. At the end of the experiment, almost all students recorded a greatest improvement in their speaking and listening skills. Besides, the findings revealed that students' motivation, autonomy, and collaboration were improved. To conclude, the researcher provided an important pedagogical implication for PBL stating that "it is

reasonable to include such a disciplinary-based project in an English class especially in EFL contexts where opportunities to use English are limited” (p. 44).

In addition, Abubakar (2015) explored the use and integration of project-based learning instruction in the teaching and learning process to improve students' speaking ability. Classroom Action Research was used as the research method. The subjects of the study were thirty-seven (37) second year students of MTsN Model Makassar in academic year 2014-2015. The needed data were collected using three research instruments: 1) observation sheet to check the activeness and engagement of learners in speaking class, 2) speaking test to measure the student's speaking skill improvement, and 3) questionnaire to explore the students' attitude toward project based learning (PBL). Based on the analysis of the results, the researcher concluded that the students' speaking ability tends to be improved after applying project based learning (PBL) as a method. Moreover, students' participation in the projects helped them to be actively involved in their learning process through presenting their findings and giving feedback. The researcher claimed that: “The students' attitude towards Project-Based Learning (PBL) implementation is generally positive as the students seemed to enjoy the discussion and the performance based on what the students had made through the project assigned by the teacher”. (p. 226).

In China, Yang and Puakpong (2016) conducted a quasi-experimental research to investigate the effect of PBL on non-English major students' speaking ability, and students' opinions on PBL in Kaili University, Guizhou, China. The subjects of the study were eighty (80) first-year students divided into two English classes from which the researchers collected the needed data by using the speaking pre-posttest, the questionnaire and the semi-structured interview as research instruments. The investigation lasted for whole semester during which the researchers designed three mini projects to encourage students to produce speaking outputs. The results revealed that PBL had positive effects on

non-English major students' speaking ability and students' opinions. In addition, the above cited researchers claimed that "PBL provided students with the authentic learning environment; required the students to be autonomous to foster the meaningful learning and prepared the students with the basic knowledge and skills before they speak" (p. 423).

Moreover, Zare-Behtash and Sarlak (2017) investigated the effect of project based learning (PBL) on the components of speaking ability of Iranian EFL beginner learners. A total of forty-five (45) students took part in the experimental research that lasted about 13 weeks. The participants were divided in two groups (experimental and control). Students in the experimental group experienced PBL approach and the control group were taught through traditional teaching method. The comparison of the pretest and posttest results showed that there is a significant improvement in the experimental group in terms of oral proficiency. Furthermore, the researchers noted that PBL is an effective instruction for promoting EFL learners speaking skills in terms of its five components (vocabulary, grammar, fluency, pronunciation, and organization).

Along the same vein, Simbolon et al. (2019) used a classroom action research to examine the effectiveness of project-based learning approach on improving 10th grade students speaking skill. The researchers assessed thirty (30) students' oral performance using a speaking rubric containing five aspects of the speaking skill naming comprehension, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency. The research findings indicated that the students' improvement is very significant before and after the integration of PBL. The researchers concluded that "Project-based learning can improve the students' speaking skill and it is one of the effective teaching techniques that may be used by teachers who want to increase their students' speaking skill" (p. 144).

Recently, Mafruudloh and Fitriati (2020) published their study entitled "The Effect of Project-Based Learning to the Students' Speaking Ability". The aim was to check the

effect of PBL on students' speaking ability in non-English department class (Management department class). The data were collected from twenty-five (25) students using observation and speaking test. The methodology followed was pre-experimental design. The research findings showed a significant effect of PBL on the students' speaking ability. Moreover, the new integrated teaching and learning instruction helped students to be more active and engaged in the classroom, in addition to their innovative methods in doing the oral task. Researchers concluded that PBL is an effective approach in developing students' speaking ability.

The above-cited studies were applied in different 1) countries 2) subjects 3) students' ages, and 3) educational levels. All of them share the same agreement about the effectiveness of integrating project-based learning instruction to improve EFL students' academic achievement and language skills performances. In addition, they clearly indicated that project-based learning develops students' autonomous learning, motivation, interest, and classroom engagement.

Conclusion

This chapter aimed to highlight the literature related to project-based learning approach and its significance in language teaching especially in developing the speaking skill. In fact, the chapter consisted of three sections. The first section dealt with the project-based learning strategy with its different feature, benefits, and challenges. The second section introduced the speaking skill, its aspects, genres, elements, and the teaching of speaking skill in EFL classrooms.. Finally, the third section reviewed some of the relevant studies related to the topic under investigation.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

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Introduction

This study aims at scrutinizing the effectiveness of PBL on improving EFL students' speaking skills. It also examines the students' attitudes towards such a teaching strategy. The study was conducted at the English Language and Literature Department at Batna-2 University during the academic year 2018-2019. To achieve the above-cited objectives, a PBL-based syllabus is designed to enrich students' learning environment and to explore whether such an instruction significantly contributes to the development of students' oral performances. Therefore, this chapter outlines the overall empirical phase and the procedures followed throughout the study. It describes the educational context where the investigation is carried out; i.e., a description of the research design, research approaches, sampling techniques, the construction of the research instruments, the implementation of the research project, and data analysis procedures.

However, prior presenting these methodological aspects, the research variables are explained, first.

3.1. Research Variables

A variable is a frequently used term in research and investigations. As the name indicates, a variable is a flexible parameter or attribute that can be changed or can vary when stimulated. Putting this definition in Nunan's (1999, as cited in Ghodbane, 2019) words, "a variable is a value that does not stand constant when exposed to influence" (p. 239). In research, a variable is defined as "a characteristic or attribute of an individual or an organization that (a) researchers can measure or observe and (b) varies among individuals or organizations studied" (Creswell, 2012, p. 112). Actually, there are two prominent types of variables in every research: Independent variable and dependent variable.

The Independent Variable

Creswell (2012) defines the independent variable as: “an attribute or characteristic that influences or affects an outcome or dependent variable” (p. 116). In the narrow sense, an independent variable is an input or a stimulus that causes a particular outcome, or that influences a response (Cohen et al., 2007). In our investigation, the independent variable is the PBL method integrated within the syllabus as a stimulus to investigate the changes in the students’ speaking skills, being the dependent variable.

The Dependent Variable

In its broader sense, a dependent variable is defined as “an attribute or characteristic that is dependent on or influenced by the independent variable” (Creswell, 2012, p. 115). In other words, the dependent variable is the outcome that is affected by, and changes due to, the independent variable. In the present study, the dependent variable is students’ speaking skills that are manipulated by the PBL.

When conducting an experimental investigation, the researcher must manipulate the independent variable, and observe or evaluate the changes that happen to the dependent variable. In our case, we seek to investigate and evaluate the changes in the students’ speaking skills (the dependent variable) after integrating PBL (the independent variable) as a new teaching method.

The Extraneous Variables

To guarantee the validity and reliability of the results and to avoid any threat to the findings’ credibility, the researcher controlled the extraneous variables before the experiment and before the application of the treatment. Extraneous variables are all variables that could potentially affect the results of the research study (Mcleod, 2019). If the extraneous variables are uncontrolled, we cannot assert that the experiment outcomes

are due to the exact effects of the independent variable on the dependent variable. In fact, there are four types of extraneous variables that must be controlled:

- **Demand characteristics.** Before conducting the experiment, the researcher conducted a pre-test for both groups in order to assure that the participants are equivalent in terms of their speaking abilities. The results of the pre-test revealed that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of both group participants' scores.
- **Experimenter/Investigator Effects.** To avoid the experimenter's bias, the researcher being the teacher and applier of the treatment taught the experimental group and the control group.
- **Participant variables.** The subjects of the study were not randomly selected, but conveniently selected since the administration allocated two intact classes to the researcher. Thus, the researcher assured that the participants belong to the same age range in the preliminary questionnaire. Moreover, the participants have been exposed to the English language for eight to nine years from the middle school.
- **Situational variables.** The participants in both groups received the treatment under the same aspects of the learning environment, namely the classrooms and the time allotted for oral expression sessions. Therefore, in our case, the experimental and control groups studied oral expression in their ordinary classrooms and not in labs. In addition, both groups have the oral expression subject once a week, and they received three-hour lesson in each session.

3.2. Research Paradigm

As researchers, our ultimate aim is to search, look for, and explore the truth and reality in the world. Moreover, we have to be able to articulate and explain the appropriate research philosophy and logic within which the study is placed to answer the research questions and to test the suggested hypotheses. Researchers, during their research

journeys, are guided by a set of beliefs and worldviews known as paradigms. According to Kuhn (1970), as cited in Perera (2018), a research paradigm is a “set of common beliefs and agreements shared between scientists about how problems should be understood and addressed” (p.5). Indeed, a paradigm is a set of beliefs and realities that influence the researchers’ selection of the appropriate method to conduct and the design of their investigation. In other words, a paradigm is the way of thinking, perceiving, and studying the reality of the world. Killam (2013) compared a research paradigm to lenses on a pair of glasses: “When you think about a paradigm, think about looking through colored glasses... The lens or paradigm we choose as researchers change the way we see the world. It directs everything we see and do as a researcher” (p. 5). The research paradigm can be categorized into ontological, epistemological, and methodological assumptions (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Before expounding the specific paradigm adopted for the present study, it is necessary to understand the complex philosophical terms. Indeed, explaining the concepts greatly facilitates understanding the various research paradigms and their methodological applications. Accordingly, Cohen et al. (2007) claim that “ontological assumptions give rise to epistemological assumptions; these, in turn, give rise to methodological considerations; and these, in turn, give rise to issues of instrumentation and data collection” (p. 3).

• **Ontology.** The term refers to the nature of reality and existence; beliefs about reality and the study of being (Moon & Blackman, 2017). It is mainly interested in addressing the questions: What is reality? What is the nature of knowledge? And to what extent can researchers be certain about the existence of the reality they are researching? Our perception of the truth influences what we think we can know. There are two opposite ontological views: Realism and Relativism. On the one hand, realism supporters believe that only one truth exists and does not change. Such a constant reality can be found and

generalized using objective measurements. On the other hand, relativists believe that multiple versions of realities exist, and they evolve and change depending on the context. According to relativism, truth is created by meaning and experiences, and it cannot be generalized because it is context-bound; it is rather transformed to another similar context.

• **Epistemology.** It basically refers to how individuals understand their thinking process and how they perceive knowledge. It examines the nature and forms of knowledge and reality (Cohen et al., 2007). It addresses the question: How can we know reality and things? Several paradigms contain opposite epistemological approaches: The etic approach and the emic approach. Etic researchers believe that knowledge is discovered and measured in an objective way using reliable truth and design; no influence or interference. On the opposite, emic researchers believe in the subjective approach to reality; they assume that reality needs to be discussed and interpreted with people to understand the underlying meaning.

• **Methodology.** It refers to the systematic procedures of discovering and analyzing knowledge. It contains the philosophies lying behind how knowledge should be gathered and what method should be chosen (Crotty, 1989). The methodology addresses the «what», «why», and «how» questions about the collection of needed data.

• **Method.** It refers to the specific data gathering techniques and procedures adopted to collect and analyze the needed information. The data may be collected either qualitatively or quantitatively.

Therefore, the combination of ontological and epistemological contradictory views about reality and knowledge leads to various research paradigms that govern inquiries into practices in research. Some paradigms are described in Table 7 ontologically, epistemologically, and methodologically.

Table 7: Some research paradigms

Philosophical assumptions	Positivism	Constructivism	Pragmatism
Ontology (Nature of reality)	One single reality	Multiple realities	There is single reality that all individuals have their own unique interpretation
Epistemology (Nature of Knowledge)	Objectively measured, reality is not affected by the researched or the researcher	Subjectively interpreted to discuss the underlined meaning	determined by what the researcher deems as appropriate to that particular study
Methodology (Data collecting approach)	Quantitative data	Qualitative data	Match methods for the purposes of research; mixed approaches

Source: Adapted from Guba and Lincoln (1994, 2005) and Morgan (2007), as cited in Mertens (2020)

Positivism

Ontologically, positivist researchers have a realist belief that there is one single reality or truth, their epistemological view is objective and grounded on deductive reasoning, and they adopt experiments in search for the truth. In this regard, empirical studies are conducted in the form of experiments to quantitatively analyze and interpret an observed situation in social reality (Remenyi et al., 1998 as cited in Saunders et al., 2007).

Constructivism

In contrast to positivists, constructivists' central tenet is the subjective approach to knowledge including multiple views of an observed phenomenon. Besides, constructivist researchers tend to collect qualitative data, which are subjectively analyzed and discussed. According to Kaushik and Walsh (2019), "Constructivism is typically associated with qualitative methods and literary and informal rhetoric in which the researcher relies as much as possible on the participants' view and develops subjective meanings of the phenomena" (p. 2).

Pragmatism

Pragmatists' central endeavor is to bridge the gap between the shortcomings of the older scientific methods and approaches. Pragmatism emerged as a compromise embracing a plurality of methods and approaches to solve a problem. As a research paradigm, pragmatism adopts both the positivist and constructivist views of knowledge to find workable solutions to the problem being investigated and to answer the research questions (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). Pragmatism is often associated with mixed methods. Creswell (2003) claims that "pragmatism opens the door to multiple methods, different worldviews, and different assumptions, as well as to different forms of data collection and analysis in the mixed methods study" (p. 12).

Thus, as far as the present investigation is concerned, a pragmatist research paradigm is adopted as it is the appropriate philosophical approach that best suits the choice of mixed methods, answering the research questions, and explaining the relationship between PBL and EFL students' speaking performances. Adopting such a pragmatist viewpoint coupled with mixed methods adds more credibility to the obtained results, unlike following one single research method.

3.3. Research Approaches

When investigating a problem or a phenomenon, researchers design the procedures that answer the research questions and test the hypotheses. These procedures include research approaches- defined by Chetty (2016) as "plans and the procedures for research that span the steps from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation" (para. 1). Actually, there are two fundamental research approaches for data collection and analysis: The quantitative approach and the qualitative approach.

Quantitative Approach

It aims at objectively collecting and analyzing numerical and quantifiable data; i.e., researchers deal with numbers, and need mathematical calculations and statistical and

significance analyses to derive results. The quantitative approach is used for the measurement of quantity by quantifying a problem or a variable, and by making generalizations to a larger population. Dörnyei (2007) argues that “quantitative research involves data collection procedures that result primarily in numerical data which is then analyzed primarily by statistical methods” (p. 24). Typically, numerical data are collected based on structured data gathering methods, including surveys, questionnaires with close-ended questions and Likert scales, structured interviews, sampling polls, systematic observations, and so on. Summarily, the goal of using quantitative research is to establish a relationship between independent and dependent variables, and to manipulate the changes of the dependent variable expressed in terms of numbers and statistics.

The quasi-experiment part of the study urges us to adopt the quantitative approach in order to determine the cause and effect relationship between PBL and the students’ speaking skill. Pre-, progress and post-tests are administered to both groups before and after the treatment to check the participants’ speaking level, and to verify the progress they achieved in their oral performance. Moreover, a speaking evaluation rubric is employed as a quantitative data collection tool during the experiment.

3.3.2. Qualitative Approach

It is mainly used in exploratory research to collect and analyze non-numerical data without deploying statistical procedures. It aims at providing an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under investigation through the subjective assessment of participants’ attitudes, motivation, opinions, and behaviors. This approach uses different inquiry methods of data gathering tools, which rely mainly on interviews and open-ended data in the form of texts. According to Dörnyei (2007), “qualitative research involves data collection procedures that result primarily in open-ended, non-numerical data which is then analyzed primarily by non-statistical methods. A typical example, interview research with

transcribed recording analyzed by qualitative content analysis” (p. 24). Accordingly, it is commonly assumed that qualitative research investigates the qualitative aspects of human nature to explore, explain, analyze and control attitudes and behaviors.

Therefore, the descriptive part of the current study is based on the qualitative research approach. A questionnaire with open-ended questions is administered at the end of the treatment to explore the students’ attitudes towards the PBL instruction. Some data on the issue under investigation are also collected from non-structured interviews with teachers.

According to the requirements of the present study, which necessitates both quantitative and qualitative approaches, the mixed method approach is adopted.

3.3.3. Mixed-Method Approach

To guarantee the trustworthiness and evidence of the situation under investigation, we opted for mixed method (triangulation of methods) design, for a single approach might not be valid and insightful enough. Therefore, triangulation of methods requires the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods of data gathering tools and data analysis procedures. In effect, the aim behind such an amalgam is to get complementary data, so that analysis of the findings is not based only on impressions or statistics. In the same line of thoughts, Given (2008) claims that “the use of both qualitative and quantitative approaches will provide a more complete understanding of the research problem than either approach alone” (p. 527).

To answer every research question, data are collected using multiple data gathering tools. Accordingly, the present investigation uses a quasi-experiment (pre, progress, and post speaking tests) and questionnaires. These complimentary research instruments sound convenient to the present research hypotheses and questions, and hence provide accurate facts about the phenomenon.

3.4.Choice of the Method

The choice of the appropriate research method is one of the most confusing decisions researchers may encounter. The research method refers to the systematic modes, procedures, or tools used for the collection and analysis of data (Opoku et al, 2016). There are many important factors involved in choosing the suitable research method including the nature of the topic, the research questions and hypotheses, the data, the research objectives, and the sample.

The purpose of the current study is to investigate the effects of PBL on EFL students' speaking skill and their attitudes towards this instruction. Following the research hypotheses, both the experimental and descriptive research methods are deployed.

Experimental Method

On the one hand, we intend to manipulate two variables. The independent variable (PBL) is the treatment suggested to control the development or changes of the dependent variable (the students' speaking skill). This manipulation is usually referred to as a treatment or an experiment. The Office of the Research Integrity (ORI) defines an experiment as “a study in which a treatment, procedure, or program is intentionally introduced and a result or outcome is observed” (Para. 1).

In research, the experimental method enables establishing a cause and effect relationship between the two variables to evaluate educational innovations (Dörnyei, 2007). Along the same line of thoughts, Rogers and Révész (2020) assert that researchers within the field of applied linguistics draw upon either experimental or quasi-experimental research designs to determine whether there is a causal relationship between the treatment and the outcome.

The authenticated way to design an experiment in education requires working with

participants divided into two groups, the experimental group which is exposed to the treatment, and the control group which serves as a comparison group. Thus, the researcher measures the changes that occur before and after the intervention using pre-and post-treatment tests. The type of the experimental research design is determined by the way the researcher assigns subjects to different conditions and groups. In other words, the researcher may not have control over the distribution of participants into groups, so the experiment can be grouped into two broad categories based on the randomization of subjects' assignment:

- True experimental design in which subjects are randomly assigned to different treatment levels.
- Quasi-experimental design which lacks random assignment.

According to Broota (1989), "in Education and social research, it is not always possible to exercise full control over the experimental situation" (p. 8). In this respect, being ourselves investigators and appliers of the present treatment, we opted for a quasi-experimental approach, being the adequate method in providing the required information that best achieve the overall research objectives. Indeed, this research method seemed appropriate because the two sample groups are administratively defined in terms of students' names, teachers, and classrooms.

Descriptive Method

On the other hand, we endeavor to know the opinions and attitudes of the students who received the PBL training to develop their oral performances. The respondents' opinions and comments help the researcher to discover new insights and to add significant dimensions to understand the problem under investigation. Accordingly, the nature of this situation requires the descriptive method that is the commonly used form of research to measure the strength of a target group's behaviors, attitudes, and opinions.

All in all, a methodological triangulation of mixed methods is adopted, which is the combination of the quasi-experimental and the descriptive research methods. Bekhet and Zauszniewski (2012) argue that “methodological triangulation involves using more than one kind of method to study a phenomenon. It is beneficial in confirming findings, more comprehensive data, increased validity and enhanced understanding of studied phenomena” (para. 2).

3.5. Population and Sampling

Population

Every researcher conducting an empirical investigation aims to investigate the problem on the whole population of interest. Population refers to the total number of individuals in whom we are interested to generalize the study results. Rafeedalie (2019) defines population as “a comprehensive group of individuals, institutions, objects and so forth which have common characteristics that are the interest of a researcher” (para. 1). Following our research requirements, the target population consists of all the second-year students of the Department of English at Batna-2 University. The population is extended to include teachers of English as well at the same department.

Second-year students are deliberately selected as the target population for several reasons. First, second year students have experienced the same oral expression courses in their first year, and they have dealt with the different speaking aspects. Moreover, we can also get access to, and benefit from, their previous scores available at the level of the administration, which enables us to know and get an idea about their speaking level. Accordingly, first year students have been excluded since they are newcomers to the Department of English from different streams, which makes it difficult to determine their linguistic background. In addition, our long-term goal is to suggest some educational recommendations concerning the integration of PBL in oral expression courses to develop

students' speaking skill. Therefore, third year students have been also excluded since they are going to graduate and leave the university, and not all of them will pursue the master degree. Such reasons give us the complete conviction that this investigation would be better implemented with second year students.

The population represents a total number of 790 second-year students during the academic year 2018-2019. They are divided by the administration into 15 groups. However, due to some factors naming the huge population under investigation, and restrictions on time, money, and effort, it is not practical to apply the treatment to the entire population, which urged us to select a representative sample of participants.

On the other hand, the teacher population for this study consists of oral expression teachers from the Department of English at Batna-2 University. They are selected because our concern is the speaking skill, and their contribution would provide insights about the methods and approaches used to teach the oral expression subject to second-year classes.

3.5.2. Sample of the Study

The key pillar of any investigation is the appropriateness of the participants on which the hypotheses are tested. A sample refers to a group of individuals observed during the research. In other words, it is part of the population that participates in the investigation and to which the researcher has access. As noted by Opoku et al. (2016): "A sample is a subset of the population that is usually chosen to serve as a representation of the views of population" (p. 37). Selecting a sample enables us to identify and to obtain the optimum data from a reasonable and representative number of respondents within a targeted population.

Broadly, there are two main sampling techniques distinguished by researchers: probability and non-probability sampling. The former, probability sampling or random sampling, ensures the equal chance for every individual within the defined population to be

selected to participate in the study (Kothari, 2004). In contrast, the latter, non-probability sampling, involves the selection of subjects based on non-random criteria. Thus, members of the population do not have an equal chance to be selected to participate in the investigation, and selection of the sample is made on the basis of the researcher's subjective judgment (Alvi, 2016).

Before determining the appropriate applicable technique in the present study, the various techniques of every sampling method are identified in Table 8.

Table 8: Sampling methods and techniques

Types of sampling	Characterized by
Nonprobability sampling	Subjects selected by the researcher
1. Convenience	A group already formed and easy to use
2. Purposeful	Knowledgeable and available persons
3. Snowball	Selected respondents suggest other respondents
4. Quota	Stratified sampling, but not randomly chosen
Probability sampling	Subjects selected by a random mechanism
1. Simple random	Pull names out of a hat
2. Systematic random	Computer generated numbers to select
3. Stratified	The sample divided into groups called strata
4. Cluster	Groups of strata

Source. Griffiee (2012, p. 58)

After having examined all the sampling techniques, we recognized that random sampling, which is suggested in this field, would not be the most appropriate technique, for the participants' random assignment is not possible. Indeed, the researcher is not involved in the selection of the experimental and control groups, and students' characteristics do not affect the investigation as it is a newly applied treatment.

3.5.2.1. Sample Students

The student sample is composed of two intact groups of second-year students of English at Batna-2 University during the 2018-2019 academic year. The sample is conveniently selected, for the two groups are convenient and readily available to approach, after the administration allocated their oral expression classes to be taught by the

researcher herself. According to Etikan et al. (2016), “when subjects are chosen because of the close proximity to a researcher, that is, the ones that are easier for the researcher to access, the researcher is making a convenience sampling” (p. 1).

One group is assigned as the experimental group, with which the innovative treatment (PBL) is implemented, and the other group is considered the control group, which is taught through the traditional teaching methods. The latter group (control) mainly serves to provide evidence that the progress in the experimental group students’ oral performance would be attributed to the new integrated instruction.

Although the number of students in the official administrative lists is 46 per group, the number of students who regularly attend the class does not exceed 36. After inquiring about these absences, the administration and the teachers confirmed that they are absent in all the other subjects, probably due to transfers between groups and institutions. Hence, the sample is limited to 72 participants, 36 students in each group (Table 9). The researcher selected one group as the experimental group while the second one was determined as the control group of the study.

Table 9: Distribution of the sample students into groups

Group	Experimental	Control
N°	36	36

Following the formula: $\frac{N}{N^{\circ} \text{ of participants}} = n (\%)$

Where: N is Number of Population, and n (%) refers to the percentage of the sample.

Subsequently, $790 \div 72 = 11$. Thus, the sample represents 11% of the whole population.

These students’ age ranges between nineteen (19) and twenty-six (26) years old. 73.12% of the sample are female students compared to males who represent only 26.88%.

Participants in both the experimental and control groups showed somewhat similar

speaking proficiency level and educational background based on the analyses (thoroughly discussed in Chapter IV) of the pre-test results, their previous records available at the administration, and informal discussions with their teachers, who confirmed that last year groups are homogenous in terms of the speaking level.

3.5.2.2. Sample Teachers

As far as teachers are concerned, nine teachers of oral expression subject were purposively selected as eligible participants for the investigation. Dudovskiy (2018) posits that “purposive sampling also known as judgment, selective or subjective sampling, is a sampling technique in which researcher relies on his or her judgment when choosing members of the population to participate in their surveys” (para. 1). Accordingly, the study purpose urged us to use a purposive sampling technique because of the limited number of oral expression teachers, and their help is highly needed to provide us with significant information about the oral expression teaching methods. The sample teachers are seven females and two males, most of them hold a doctorate and their teaching experience at the Department of the English ranges from five to ten years.

3.6. Data Gathering Tools

The use of mixed methods (quasi-experimental and descriptive methods) necessitates deploying different and various research instruments to collect the needed data. Indeed, questionnaires are administered before and after the experiment, tests are carried out before, during, and after the treatment, interviews are conducted in the post-treatment phase, and a rubric is used to record students’ scores at the particular speaking aspects.

3.6.1. Questionnaires

To gather reliable and valid data in a short time, we opted for the questionnaire. According to Brown (2001), “questionnaires are any written instruments that present

respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react either by writing out their answers or selecting from among existing answer” (p. 6). The questionnaire is considered a useful research tool in collecting both quantitative and qualitative data.

Actually, there are two types of questions in a questionnaire: Open-ended questions, and close-ended questions. The former, also called the “unrestricted” questions, give respondents the opportunity to provide more feedback and to justify their choices and answers in a specific text box. Qualitative data are collected from this type of questions, and they are subjectively analyzed and discussed. Open-ended questions are used when in-depth responses are needed (Singh, 2006); however, they are difficult to explain and summarize.

The latter type of questions, close-ended questions also known as “restricted” questions, ask respondents to select, choose, or tick answers without explaining or justifying their choices. Such questions can be in the form of one-choice questions, “Yes” or “No” questions, multiple-choice questions, and Likert scale questions. Answers to this type of questions are tabulated and processed in Microsoft Office Excel and the Statistical Package of the Social Sciences SPSS software, then the data are analyzed quantitatively and statistically. Moreover, close-ended questions ensure both consistency and reliability.

In this study, both types of questions are used in the teachers’ and students’ questionnaires.

3.6.1.1. Teachers’ Questionnaire

This questionnaire aims to unveil teachers’ methods and approaches in teaching the oral expression subject to second-year students. In fact, there is no official oral expression syllabus at the Department of English Language and Literature; however, teachers suggest general guidelines of the objectives to be achieved. The lack of a unified official syllabus

requires teachers to decide upon the content, materials, and teaching methods followed to teach the oral expression subject.

Moreover, the questionnaire seeks to scrutinize teachers' opinions and attitudes towards the implementation of the new suggested teaching method (PBL). Accordingly, the teachers' experience and their adopted methods in teaching the oral expression subject are vitally important to our study since their contribution will add more reliability to the findings.

3.6.1.1.1. Description of the teachers' questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered to nine EFL oral expression teachers at the Department of English at Batna-2 University. This questionnaire was designed to elicit information about the methods and approaches adopted by teachers to teach the oral expression subject and to unravel their students' speaking level, abilities, and motivation. Besides, we aimed to find out the teachers' opinions concerning the integration of the PBL approach in oral expression classes to enhance students' speaking skill. The questionnaire is made up of five sections and it contains 23 questions (Appendix B). The questions consist of multiple choice questions, close-ended options (list of choices), and open-ended questions as well, seeking teachers' justifications to their choices and explanations of their viewpoints.

The first section consists of four items about teachers' background information: Age (Q1), Gender (Q2), Qualification (Q 3), and experience in teaching the oral expression subject (Q4). This section aims at acquainting the readers with the oral expression teachers' staff at the Department of English where the current study takes place.

The second section is entitled "Oral Expression Subject / Speaking Skill". It seeks to unveil the teachers' approaches and strategies in teaching speaking through answering eight questions. We started by asking questions about (Q5) students' speaking level, is it good, average, or low; (Q6) the problems that hinder students from developing their

speaking skill; and (Q7) whether the oral expression syllabus is officially distributed, planned with colleagues, or self-prepared. Then, question (Q8) is about the learning objectives the oral expression teacher tends to achieve, question (Q9) uncovers the speaking activities that oral expression teachers use to enhance their students' oral performance, and question (Q10) inquires into the teaching materials integrated in the oral expression classroom. After that, the teachers were asked about (Q11) the speaking aspects that they focus on when assessing students' oral performance, and (Q12) whether they provide out-class activities that help students to practice the target language outside the classroom.

The third section is devoted to check the teachers' perceptions about PBL as an instruction to develop students' performances in general. It contains five questions. In question (Q13), teachers were asked to state the main features that define PBL based on their knowledge about this approach. Then, teachers were asked (Q14) about the effectiveness of PBL in developing EFL students' academic performances, (Q15) to state some benefits/advantages of integrating PBL in the EFL classroom, (Q16) whether the student-centered environment is beneficial for students rather than a teacher-centered environment, and (Q17) about the effectiveness of PBL in encouraging students to make efforts to develop their performances.

The fourth section lists five questions concerning PBL and the speaking skill. It aims at checking the benefits of PBL features on the students' speaking skill. Question (Q19) addresses group work and if it is beneficial to enhance the students' speaking skill. In question (Q20), teachers were asked about the effectiveness of preparing and displaying the final product orally. Then, question (Q21) addresses authenticity and if it fosters students' motivation to speak. In question (Q22), teachers were asked whether they recommend the use of PowerPoint presentations in the oral class to raise students'

interests. The last question (Q23) was asked about whether integrating PBL raises students' interest to perform better orally. Then, teachers were provided with a space to justify their answers.

3.6.1.2. Students' Attitudinal Questionnaire

The nature of the research question: "What are EFL students' attitudes towards PBL as a method to develop the speaking skill?" urged us to design and administer an attitudinal questionnaire, whose main objective is to get a better understanding of the students' attitudes and opinions about the integration of PBL in oral expression classes. Besides, the questionnaire seeks to explore the benefits and the challenges faced by students during the treatment. Shahsavari and Tan (2012) claim that to assess students' attitudes in a learning environment, questionnaires are considered a reliable instrument (p. 200).

3.6.1.2.1. Description of students' attitudinal questionnaire. The attitudinal questionnaire is anonymously administered by the researcher to 36 students belonging to the experimental group at the end of the academic year 2018-2019. All the questionnaire papers are returned after 30 minutes.

Students' attitudes of PBL approach has been addressed with a set of thirty-two (32) statements describing the students opinions and viewpoint concerning the integration of PBL in oral classes (Appendix C). The statements were divided into three (03) sections. The first section entitled "PBL and Speaking Skills Development". It consists of thirteen (13) items that aim to unveil the impact of PBL on their oral performance. The second section is entitled "Students' attitudes towards PBL environment". It contains eight (08) statements that seek to check students' opinions towards the new learning environment through PBL. The last section lists eleven (11) statements and it was devoted to check the students' attitudes towards the effectiveness and benefits of PBL on their academic

achievement. Students were asked to rank the statements on a four (04) points Likert-scale containing: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree.

However, before such a step, validity as a fundamental notion of any research instrument should be checked. Validity refers to verifying the extent to which the given instrument measures what it purports to measure, and the required data and information (Taber, 2018). In this study, to ensure the validity of the attitudinal questionnaire, and before its official distribution, we piloted it. Indeed, Weir and Roberts (1994) state:

In all methods, the value of piloting instruments before actually employing them in final data collection is paramount... This will help identify ambiguities, other problems in wording, and inappropriate items, and provide sample data to clarify any problems in the proposed methods of analysis before the collection of data in the study proper. (p. 138).

Piloting the attitudinal questionnaire aims at detecting and eliminating ambiguous and redundant questions and items, and at identifying and adjusting any difficulties encountered while answering the questionnaire. Moreover, the pilot study helps to check the validity of the questionnaire by ascertaining that the questions asked yield the required data.

Effectively, the questionnaire is piloted with 10 second-year students of English. They are asked to complete the questionnaire and to mention the difficulties they faced whilst answering the questions. According to the participants' feedback, some questions are omitted, ambiguous ones are reworded, and new ones are added, so that the questionnaire provides valid information.

Focus Group Interview

To support and complement our findings collected from the speaking tests, our informal classroom observation, and students' answers to the attitudinal questionnaire, we

decided to select the interview as it is “the most often used method in qualitative inquiries” (Dornyei, 2007, p. 134) to provide us with the students’ in-depth and context-rich opinions and perceptions of PBL. According to Harrell and Bradley (2009), the interview provides the researcher with the opportunity “to delve deeply into a topic and to understand thoroughly the answers provided” (p. 27). Further, the interview allows the participants to describe in details their attitudes towards the PBL environment, its academic benefits, and the challenges they encountered during the treatment. Moreover, semi-structured focus group interview was introduced because it makes it possible to have better control over the types of information required. A focus group interview is, according to Thomas et al. (1995, as cited in Rabiee, 2004), “a technique involving the use of in-depth group interviews in which participants are selected because they are a purposive, although not necessarily representative, sampling of a specific population, this group being ‘focused’ on a given topic” (p. 655).

The post-treatment focus group interview took place at the end of the academic year 2018-2019. The teacher, being the researcher, asked the experimental group participants for permission to conduct a class interview to unveil their experience with the PBL approach. During the interview, the teacher asked mainly open-ended questions so that “the participants can best voice their experiences unconstrained by any perspectives of the researcher or past research findings” (Creswell, 2014, p. 240). The reason for choosing the semi-structured interview technique is “to encourage the interviewees to freely discuss their own standpoints on the depth of the issue” (Zidani, 2019, p. 97). The focus group interview, hence, is convenient because it provides the participants with more freedom to comfortably express their ideas, viewpoints, and opinions.

3.6.1.3. Description of the Interview

The students concerned with this post-treatment interview were 36 participants. To

guarantee the presence of all the participants, the researcher decided to conduct the interview during the second term oral expression subject exam. The oral expression exam is personally programmed and not administratively compulsory; the teacher has the total freedom to determine the time and place of the exam. After taking the exam, the teacher asked the participants to gather in the room for an interview, and all the participants accepted to take part. Before officially starting, the teacher explained the aim of the interview and emphasized the need to answer sincerely because students' responses will determine the success of the study. Moreover, the students were asked to provide as many details as possible to enrich the investigation.

The teacher prepared a semi-structured interview with open-ended questions to allow the students to freely unveil their opinions and experiences. The focus group questions are presented in Appendix D; however, the questions' order could be changed. The interview lasted one hour during which the teacher audio-recorded the responses on her mobile with the permission of the participants. All the students used English to answer the questions. During the interview, the teacher listened attentively to the participants and tried to ensure equal chance to all participants to provide their opinions. At the same time, the teacher was writing down some remarks and keywords that appeared frequently in the students' responses.

The Experiment

As aforementioned, a quasi-experimental study is conducted to manipulate the independent variable (PBL) and the dependent variable (the speaking skill). Such a cause and effect relationship between the two variables is identified by means of a pretest, progress tests, and a posttest carried out before, during, and after the treatment.

3.6.1.4. The Pre-test and Post-test

Before starting the treatment and implementing the new suggested teaching

method, the researcher administered a pretest to both the experimental and control groups in order to check the students' language competencies and their initial speaking level. Indeed, the pre-test aims at unraveling the extent to which the speaking aspects are present in the students' oral performances.

Correspondingly, at the end of the experimental phase, a post-test is conducted with both groups to examine the effectiveness of implementing the PBL approach to develop the students' speaking skills. The same procedures of the pretest are followed in the post-test; however, the topics asked throughout the interview questions are different. The reason behind following the same procedures in both tests is to conduct an effective comparison between the obtained results, and hence, to claim the role of the new integrated strategy in developing the experimental group students' scores.

The speaking tests are administered during two 3-hour regularly-scheduled sessions. Both tests are performed with each student within approximately eight to ten minutes, depending on the students' oral performance. Participants are given few seconds to think, and they are free and unrestricted to express themselves in the set of questions. Furthermore, they are individually and separately evaluated in terms of their oral performance to exclude the shyness and peers' negative reaction variables. Thus, they are expected to participate in a mutual dialogue with the teacher (the researcher) while providing answers to the questions asked. Interruption and overcorrection of the students' mistakes are avoided in order to help students' confidence and to create an encouraging atmosphere.

3.6.1.4.1. *Description of the speaking test.* The participants are involved an interview (Appendix D) with the teacher in order to motivate them to demonstrate their speaking abilities. The interview follows a pre-determined structure, and it includes five stages, wherein a list with a wide variety of questions is has been prepared. This list

contains questions and topics from which the teacher randomly selects in order to maintain the flow of the interview.

The interview proceeded in the following sequence:

- Warm-up: The researcher welcomed the students using expressions like “hello lady, hello gentleman, how was your day?” to appease the exam atmosphere, to break the ice, and to create a friendly relationship with the students. Then, the students were asked to introduce themselves, their likes, and dislikes, their hobbies and routines, and so on.
- Stage One: The students were asked to answer and discuss an opinion question. In this stage, students had to support their point of view by giving arguments to support their adopted opinion (Appendix E).
- Stage two: It focuses on discussing past events. Students were asked to talk about a happy (in pretest) or sad (in posttest) memorable event that took place in the past. This stage aims to verify the appropriate use of the past tense.
- Stage Three: This section is mainly based on talking about the future. Students were asked to talk about their aspirations, plans and ambitions that they seek to reach in the future (in pretest) and how do they perceive the world changes after ten years (in posttest).
- Stage Four: Students were asked to discuss an “If question” (Appendix F).

3.6.1.4.2. *Validity of the test.* The pretest and posttest are submitted to five oral expression expert teachers at the Department of English at Batna-2 University to validate their content. All teachers come to an agreement that the guidelines of the tests are adequate, clear, and appropriate to collect the needed data. Their feedback indicates that the tests are valid to measure and assess EFL students’ oral performance.

3.6.1.4.3. *Piloting the test.* The pilot study of the speaking test aims at testing the timing needed for the accomplishment of the test, and at determining the suitability of the selected stages and questions for the needed data. To achieve this purpose, ten second-year

students, belonging neither to the experimental group nor the control group, are randomly selected from the Department of English at Batna-2 University. The pilot study is carried by the researcher herself to make the needed changes and adjustments, whenever necessary.

The results revealed that the majority of students took eight to ten minutes to complete the test. This period is estimated to be sufficient for test completion. One noticed remark concerning the test timing is not to give too much time to the warm-up section. Furthermore, participants in the pilot study stated that the questions were clear with simple words, and the stages were coherently interrelated. Accordingly, the pilot study proves that the developed test is suitable to assess the intended speaking sub-skills or aspects.

3.6.1.5. Progress Tests

The treatment is organized into lessons ordered in four units. Each unit discusses different topics related to a specific theme. By the end of each unit, a progress test is administered to both groups (experimental and control) to assess the progress (if any) in the five aspects of the speaking skill. However, because of the time constraints and exam period, the posttest was conducted after the fourth unit and not a progress test.

Accordingly, three progress tests are designed in the form of an interview with the teacher or a description of a given picture (Appendix G). The results obtained from the progress tests are submitted for further analysis and interpretation to be compared with the results obtained from the pre-test and the post-test.

3.6.1.6. The Treatment

During the treatment process, both the experimental and the control groups study the oral expression subject three (03) hours weekly. They are exposed to similar content, and engaged in discussions of the same topics that are carefully selected based on the

students' answers to the preliminary questionnaire, and on an informal interview held by the teacher with the students about their topics of interest. Such steps are important in order to ensure a strong source of motivation to speak English and to develop the speaking skill, and thus; the variables of motivation and interest are controlled. Besides, both are evaluated on the five aspects of the speaking skill: fluency, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and Comprehension.

Another common point for both groups is the setting where the oral expression subject is taught, being classrooms. Indeed, the speaking lessons are offered by the researcher in ordinary classrooms and not technologically equipped laboratories. In every session, the teacher researcher brings her personal computer, one loudspeaker, and a projector from the administration.

However, the experimental group and the control group differ basically in the way of teaching. The experimental group is taught using the PBL method through which students are assigned to design speaking projects or presentations to enhance their speaking skills. At the beginning of the academic year, and after the pre-test, the researcher, being the teacher and applier of the treatment, suggested 10 different topics for discussions (Table 12) divided thematically into four fundamental units. Students in the experimental group work in two-member groups of their choice.

In every session, the teacher and the students develop a project overview for the next presentation. The general guidelines of the project, driving questions, turn-taking, every member's role-play, and the final product to be displayed, are discussed. Although the students are provided with the necessary information and guided by the teacher, they are given the total freedom to be flexible and to make the necessary changes in the project. During every regular session, students are alleged to display an oral performance in front of their teacher and classmates as a project end product in the form of PowerPoint

presentations, posters, or role-play -acting. Each project takes one week during which the students collect the necessary information to be presented.

Effectively, the project preparation can provide students with in-class and out-class speaking practices, which cannot be achieved within the limits of three-hour lessons per week. Actually, such a method gives them an extended opportunity to develop their EFL speaking competencies and oral production. The students are encouraged to attentively listen to all the presentations, to take notes, and to ask questions. In addition, while the group members display their projects, the teacher observes and assesses their oral performances using the speaking evaluation rubric, without any interference to correct the mistakes.

To make the methodology followed in the experimental group clearer, Table 10 summarizes the description of the lesson steps the teacher designed during the treatment.

Table 10: Steps of the treatment with the experiemntal group

Step 1	Teacher introduces the topic to be discussed
Step 2	Students select their group members
Step 3	Classroom discussion on the guidelines of the topic to be discussed and developed and the project to be presented
Step 4	Group members discuss and accumulate the information needed for the final presentation
Step 5	The teacher coaches every group and sets the stages and strategies for the projects
Step 6	Students cooperate with each other and prepare the end product to be presented
Step 7	Group members display their work and project in front of their teacher and classmates
Step 8	The classmates reflect on the information provided
Step 9	The teacher provides feedback ans assess the students' oral performance using the speaking evaluation grid

Correspondingly, in the traditional learning class, students in the control group are exposed to a traditional learning method, and they are taught in the traditional way driven by teacher talking time. In other words, the students are never guided to use planning before the speaking class, but the teacher introduces the topics to be discussed in every

session, and asks some questions about the students' background. The teacher and the students start discussing, interacting, debating, and sharing ideas to develop their English oral performance.

Table 11 presents the methodology followed by the researcher during the treatment with the control group.

Table 11: Steps of the treatment with the control group

Step 1	The teacher introduces the topic to be discussed
Step 2	Teacher asks questions to prepare the students
Step 3	Students share their background information about the topic
Step 4	The teacher and the students discuss and debate
Step 5	Teacher assess the students' oral performance and participation

3.6.1.6.1. *The program.* The researcher, as being the oral expression teacher of both groups (experimental and control groups), designed a syllabus in the light of the students' and teachers' responses to the preliminary study conducted before introducing the treatment. In fact, the developed oral expression syllabus involves four units. Every unit lasted between two to three weeks depending on the number of lessons in each unit (Table 12).

Table 12: Planning of the experiment

Weeks	Units	Lessons	Objectives
1 st Week			Pre-test
2 nd Week	Developing Intercultural Competence	Wedding	Talking about customs and traditions
3 rd Week		Food	Giving recipes for different countries' dishes
4 th Week		Festivals and holidays	Exploring the main festivals and holidays in the world
5 th Week			Progress Test One
6 th Week	Role Play	Medicine	Play the role of doctors, talk about illnesses and provide medical measures
7 th Week		What's New	Playing the role of news presenter
8 th Week			Progress Test Two
9 th Week	Where to Go?	One day in ...	Taking us to a journey somewhere
10 th Week		Visiting factory	Visiting one specific factory
11 th Week			Progress Test Three
12 th Week	Narrating and Telling Stories	Narrating story	Narrating the events of story, film, or series.
13 th Week		Documentary	Discussing a documentary
14 th Week		Human life over time	Talking about past, present, and future
15 th Week			Post-Test

The lessons prepared focus on specific topics to be discussed or items to be

developed. The proposed program aims at developing second year EFL students' speaking skills in different contexts with clear objectives, including broadening the linguistic competencies in terms of vocabulary and grammar structure, enhancing pronunciation and fluency, as well as improving understanding of the language. Every lesson focuses on almost all the speaking aspects, since they are closely integrated and hard to separate.

• **Unit One.** The first unit involves three lessons taught throughout three weeks. It is entitled "Developing Intercultural Competence", and it aims at raising students' awareness of other cultural differences and cultural backgrounds in the globalized world, and of course, at reflecting on their own culture. During this unit, students in the experimental group are engaged in choosing a country and in designing a project related to the target culture depending on the topic to be discussed. On the other hand, the students in the control group are exposed to the same content, but it is taught traditionally in order to compare the results obtained from both groups. The lessons of the first unit include, but not limited to, the following: Wedding, food, and holidays and festivals.

• **Unit Two.** The second unit lasted two weeks and it involves two lessons. It is entitled "Role Play", and it aims at using the English language in an authentic context through acting and embodying different characters. The second unit covers the following topics: Medicine and news, in which the students play the role of doctors and news presenters, respectively.

• **Unit Three.** The third unit of the experiment lasted two weeks. It is entitled "Where to go?" aiming at helping students to use the language related to historical and geographical features of a particular area and to turn-take as well. This unit contains two lessons: One day in ..., and describing a specific factory.

• **Unit Four.** The last unit of the treatment lasted three weeks. It is entitled "Narrating and Telling Stories". Its main aim is to develop students' pronunciation and

fluency through narrating a story, discussing a documentary, and talking about human life over time.

3.6.1.6.2. *Steps of the course (Lesson Plan)*. The lesson plan followed for both groups during the treatment includes three steps.

- **Pre-speaking.** Also known as the warm-up step. The teacher introduces the topic to be discussed by asking some related questions. The aim of this phase is to create an appealing atmosphere wherein students' motivation and enthusiasm to speak and intervene in the class are promoted.

- **While-Speaking.** During this phase, the experimental group students present and display their oral production or presentation, while the control group students are engaged in a free talk and interaction with the teacher.

- **Post-Speaking.** The last step of the lesson is the evaluation step, wherein the teacher assesses and gives feedback about the students' oral production. In the experimental group, the students are engaged in evaluating, and commenting on, their classmates' presentations.

3.6.1.7. *The Speaking Skill Assessment (Evaluation Rubric)*

Generally, there are two fundamental assessment methods: Holistic and analytical assessment methods. Particular to the speaking skill, according to Mertler (2001, as cited in Ulker, 2017), the holistic assessment method is used to evaluate the whole oral performance, without paying attention to the different components or speaking aspects. On the other hand, Ulker (2017) states that "the analytical method is used to judge students' performance first assessing individual parts separately, then the results of individual scores are summed to calculate a final total score" (p. 137).

Accordingly, for data gathering purposes, the teacher researcher employs an analytical assessment method using a speaking evaluation grid that contains the speaking

aspects meant for assessment, and that serves as a guide to the researcher. Knight (1992, as cited in Ulker, 2017), suggests a list of eight speaking assessment criteria, which stands as a reference for teachers to select the appropriate ones meeting their objectives. The list contains:

- **Grammar (accuracy):** it refers to the accurate and correct use of grammar rules for formulating and combining utterance sentences.
- **Vocabulary:** it refers to the appropriate selection of words for the particular subject and context.
- **Pronunciation:** it refers to the natural speech production and correct word pronunciation using stress, intonation, rhythm, linking, and assimilation.
- **Fluency:** it refers to the ability to speak naturally without hesitation and pauses.
- **Conversational Skill:** it refers to the ability to maintain a conversation through turn-taking, filling pauses, asking for further details, and the maintenance of utterances coherence.
- **Sociolinguistic Skill:** it refers to the ability to be contextually appropriate in terms of speaking situations, register, style, and cultural references.
- **Non-verbal communication:** it refers to the expression of the message through body language and eye contact to provide a clear understanding of the speech delivered verbally.
- **Content:** it refers to the ability of logical organization and arrangement of relevant ideas and arguments which lead to easier understanding.
- **Pragmatic competence:** it refers to the ability of the student to clearly communicate and receive the intended message. (pp. 137, 138)

Moreover, the students' spoken performances are assessed and scored out of 20 in

terms of five aspects including comprehension, vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and fluency. These criteria, to be investigated through students' oral performances, are constructed in the light of the speaking sub-skills identified in the pilot study and the theoretical part, as well as the pre-defined constituents in the worldwide known tests including Cambridge EFL Speaking Test, TOEFL, and IELTS.

Each criterion covered in the evaluation grid contains a 4-point rating scale ranging from 1 to 4, and it identifies different performance levels convenient for analysis. The highest-ranking scale represents level (4) with an excellent performance, level (3) is attributed to a good performance, level (2) denotes an average performance, and level (1) identifies a poor performance. Each level is described in terms of rubrics and speaking indicators. The assessment grid in its primary form is adapted from Harries (1984) and Brown (2004), as cited in Darini (2013, p. 34) (Appendix H).

3.6.1.7.1. *Validity of the assessment rubric.* After designing the speaking rating scale, it is submitted to five (05) experienced oral expression teachers to ensure its validity, and the appropriateness and degree of importance of every suggested speaking sub-skill. The expert teachers come to an agreement that the suggested speaking sub-skills are adequate, valid, clear, and easy to score in the current study. However, the experts suggested omitting the last line of the rubric since its main concern is speaking in L1 all the time, which is not permitted. The teachers' recommendations are taken into consideration, and the evaluation rubric is adjusted to a final form represented in Table 13.

3.6.1.7.2. *Content of the assessment rubric.* The evaluation rubric is composed of five aspects of the speaking skill. The first aspect, comprehension, refers to following and understanding normal speed speech without difficulties or necessary repetition. Second, the vocabulary aspect includes the use of appropriate English words without the interference of L1. The third aspect is the mastery of the organizational features of the

spoken language, such as coherence and cohesion. Fourth, the grammar aspect is related to the use of grammar rules accurately, using simple and perfect tenses, and to the appropriate use of prepositions. Fifth, the fluency sub-skill stands for effortless speech with little pauses and hesitancy, and the pronunciation aspect is broken down into the correct use of word stress, intonation, and linking sounds together.

Table 13 is the speaking rating scale employed by the researcher to gather the needed data during the speaking tests. It contains a detailed description of the components of speaking and the rates attributed to each component. During the experiment, the teacher researcher evaluated each criterion separately, and then a final average mark is given denoting the participants' speaking performance.

Table 13: Criteria for speaking performance assessment (adjusted form)

Criteria	Comprehension	Vocabulary	Grammar	Fluency	Pronunciation
4	Appears to understand everything without difficulty	Speaks in L2 with accurate English words	Produces complete and accurate sentences	Speaks in L2 very fluently and effortlessly.	Speaks in L2 Intelligibly and has few traces of foreign accent.
3	Understands nearly everything at normal speed, although occasional repetition may be necessary.	Speaks mostly in L2 with few L1 words	Produces some phrases instead of complete sentences with consistent and accurate word order or produces consistent omitted sentence	Speaks in L2 less fluently due to few problems of vocabulary/s election of word.	Speaks mostly in L2 Intelligibly with mother tongue accent.
2	Understands most of what is said at slower-than-normal speed with many repetitions.	Produces 4-6 English words.	Produces inconsistent and incorrect sentences/phrases	Speaks mostly in L2 with some long pauses and hesitancy.	Speaks mostly in L1, but produces 1-3 English words and pronounce them in intelligible mother tongue accent.
1	Has great difficulty understanding what is said, often misunderstands the Qs.	Produces 1-3 English words. due to very limited vocabulary	Answers mostly in L1, with 1-3 English words/phrases (Madsen, 1983).	Speaks mostly in L1, Tries to speak in L2 but so halting with so many pauses.	Speaks mostly in L1, but produces 1-3 English words. Needs some repetition in pronouncing the words to understand them.

Source. Adapted from Harries (1984), and Brown (2004), as cited in Darini (2013, p. 34)

3.7. Data Analysis Procedures

After collecting the necessary information from questionnaires, interview, and over

the experiment process, the obtained results are organized, tabulated and submitted for further analysis and interpretation. In this study, adopting the mixed-method approach or triangulation entails the collection and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data. Accordingly, we employed two procedures to analyze the results: Quantitative and qualitative data analysis.

Quantitative Analysis

It relies on analyzing numerical data using mathematical or statistical methods. The well-known and commonly used software for analyzing quantitative data is the Statistical Package of Social Sciences Software (SPSS). The investigator used SPSS statistics version 23.0 to calculate different statistical tests. The T-test is used to compare the quasi-experiment results from the experimental and control groups on the set of the dependent variable components, and to check the significance of implementing PBL. Moreover, percentages, frequencies, and means are used to describe the results of close-ended questions from the attitudinal questionnaire and the teachers' questionnaire.

Qualitative Analysis

It relies on content analysis, mainly thematic organization and analysis of the participants' answers being students or teachers to the open-ended questions and focus group interview.

In fact, the researcher made sure that the results obtained from quantitative and qualitative approaches are compatible in order to increase the validity and reliability of the inquiry and to draw suitable conclusions.

Conclusion

The present chapter provides the field work of the research process. Its ultimate aim is to thoroughly explain the methodological framework used by the researcher throughout the investigation. First, the reasons behind choosing the research paradigm, approach, and the quasi-experimental and descriptive methods are explained in details.

Second, the target population is introduced and the techniques followed in choosing the sample are described. Fourth, the tools used in gathering the necessary information and the procedures followed in analyzing and interpreting the results obtained from the collected data are fully discussed. Most importantly, the experimental phase is chronologically introduced.

CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

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Introduction

The preceding chapter introduced in details the research design and data gathering tools employed in the present investigation to answer the research questions and test the validity of the hypotheses. To guarantee the objectivity of our exploration study, we opted for a triangulation approach by using different measurement instruments, namely questionnaires, quasi-experiment, and focus group interview. Hence, a combination of both quantitative and qualitative data analysis procedures is employed.

This chapter is devoted to the practical phase of the current study. It presents and discusses the findings gathered before, within, and after the implementation of the treatment. Therefore, it covers the statistical data gathered from the quasi-experiment phase in addition to the teachers' and students' questionnaires, and the focus group interview. The results are fostered by qualitative data obtained through questionnaires and focus group interview with students. After designing and implementing the treatment, the data were gathered, analyzed, discussed, and interpreted.

Before the implementation of the treatment, a questionnaire was administered to nine oral expression teachers of English at Batna-2 University to equip the research with a discerning picture of the teaching methods and approaches used to teach and develop the students' speaking skill. It also seeks to reveal the teachers' knowledge about the newly introduced teaching approach (PBL).

To investigate the effects of PBL on second-year EFL students' speaking skills, a quasi-experiment was conducted. The participants were assessed through different speaking tests such as pretest, progress tests, and posttest to check the extent to which our innovative treatment entails positive results in developing the students' oral performance.

After the implementation of the treatment, an attitudinal questionnaire was distributed

to the participants of the experimental group to reveal their attitudes and opinions about the integration of PBL in the oral expression subject to develop their speaking skill. Moreover, a focus group interview was conducted with the experimental group students to detect their learning journey through PBL and the challenges they faced.

4.1. Reliability of the Data Gathering Instruments

Reliability is one of the fundamental qualities and notions of research instruments. It refers to the degree of consistency and stability of a measuring instrument. According to Taber (2018), reliability is “the extent to which an instrument can be expected to give the same measured outcome when measurements are repeated” (p. 1274). Table 14 summarizes the Chronbach Alpha coefficients, which were calculated using SPSS, in order to check the reliability of our instruments.

Table 14: Reliability of the research instruments

<i>Instrument</i>	<i>Cronbach Alpha</i>
Speaking Scale	0.94
Attitudinal Questionnaire	0.85

As reported in Table 14, the overall value of Cronbach’s alpha of the research instruments is higher than 0.70 ($\alpha > 0.7$). The standardized Cronbach Alpha of the speaking scale is 0.94, and that of the Attitudinal Questionnaire is 0.85. Hence, the results reveal that the instruments would inevitably provide reliable and consistent results.

4.2. Teachers’ Questionnaire

The overarching objectives of our investigation is to answer the research questions raised about the effectiveness of the PBL approach in developing EFL students’ speaking skill. Moreover, we seek to investigate our participants’ opinions and attitudes towards this new integrated teaching approach. To reach such objectives, a questionnaire was designed and administered to both teachers and students. We relied on the questionnaire as we believe that it is a suitable data gathering tool for the participants’ viewpoints. Therefore, the quantitative

and qualitative analysis of responses will strengthen our research credibility, and will help us to get more insight into the problem under investigation.

4.2.1. Analysis of the Teachers’ Questionnaire

Section One. Teachers’ Background Information

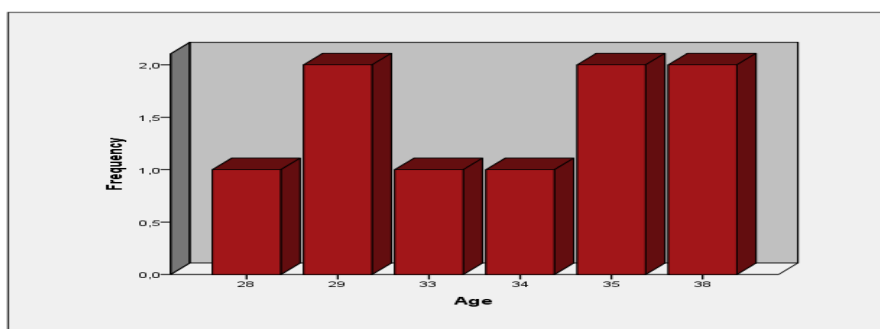
Item 1: Teachers’ Age

Table 15: Teachers’ age

Responses	28	29	33	34	35	38	Total
Participants	1	2	1	1	2	2	9
Percentage	11,1%	22,2%	11,1%	11,1%	22,2%	22,2%	100,0%

The above table reveals that teachers’ age varies between 28 and 38 years old. Three teachers (33, 3%) are in their twenties (28-29), the remaining six teachers (66, 6%) are in their thirties.

Figure 5: Teachers’ age



The above results indicate that the fresh youth generation of teachers is the most prevailing. This may reflect their readiness and ability to integrate technological devices and test new teaching approaches and strategies, in contrast to the conservative and change-rejecting old generation. However, teachers always need to collaborate and coordinate to find new teaching strategies in line with learners’ needs.

Item Two: Teachers’ Gender

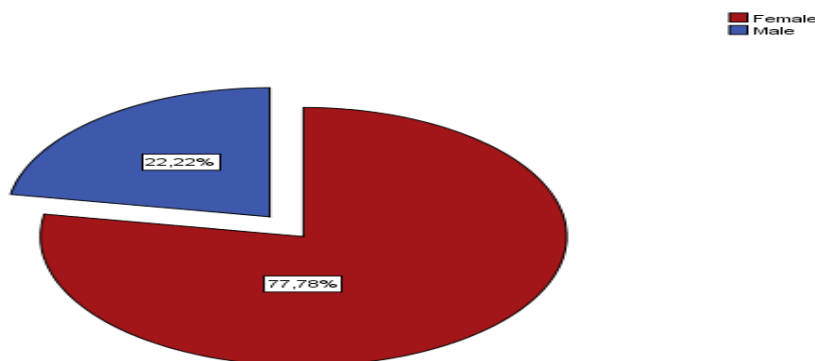
Table 16: Teachers’ gender

Responses	Female	Male	Total
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Participants	7	2	9
Percentage	77,8%	22,2%	100,0%

As far as gender is concerned, the above results show that females are the most prevailing. It seems clear that 77, 8% of teachers are females making the majority of the sample of the study, while 22, 2% are males representing two teachers.

Figure 6: Teachers’ gender



These findings are consistent with the aggregate male and female ratio at the Department of English. This situation is not specific to the sample department, but it includes all the educational institutions, which reflects the prevailing belief that education is the best profession for women because they proved their passion and patience in the field.

Item 3: Teachers’ Qualifications

This item aimed to clarify the oral expression teachers’ highest level of education.

Table 17: Teachers’ qualifications

Qualification	Magister	Doctorate	Master	Total
Participants	5	2	2	9
Percentage	55,6%	22,2%	22,2%	100,0%

The answers indicate that five teachers (55, 6%) hold a “Magister” degree and they are preparing their doctorate degree, two teachers (22, 2%) hold a doctorate degree, while two teachers (22, 2%) hold a master degree and they are doctoral students. The fact that the majority of teachers are doctoral candidates reveals that they are testing and investigating new teaching approaches and strategies to develop students’ performances or finding solutions to

problems encountered by EFL students. Their contribution and comments will add more insight to the topic under investigation.

Item 4: Teachers' Experience

Through this question, we sought to have an idea about the teachers' years of experience devoted to teaching the EFL oral expression subject.

Table 18: Teachers' teaching experience of the oral expression subject

Years	3	5	8	9	10	12	Total
Participants	2	2	1	2	1	1	9
Percentage	22,2%	22,2%	11,1%	22,2%	11,1%	11,1%	100,0%

From the above statistics, one can see that teachers have an experience in teaching the oral expression subject that extends from three to twelve years. We recorded four teachers that had an experience ranging from three to five years. We also have eight and nine years of experience indicated by two teachers, while two teachers had ten and twelve years of experience. Noteworthy, the majority are permanent teachers expect two doctorate students who are part-time teachers. Therefore, we notice that we have a representative sample including both novice and experienced teachers. However, it is generally assumed that teachers with more years of experience are better instructors. The difference stands for the most adequate teaching approaches and strategies to be adopted and the greatest capacity to manipulate the teaching environment. We do believe that novice teachers accept to adopt new teaching strategies to meet the requirements and needs of their digital generation students.

Section Two: Oral Expression Subject / Speaking Skill

Item 5: Evaluation of the students' speaking level

This question aimed to unveil teachers' opinions and evaluation concerning their students' speaking level.

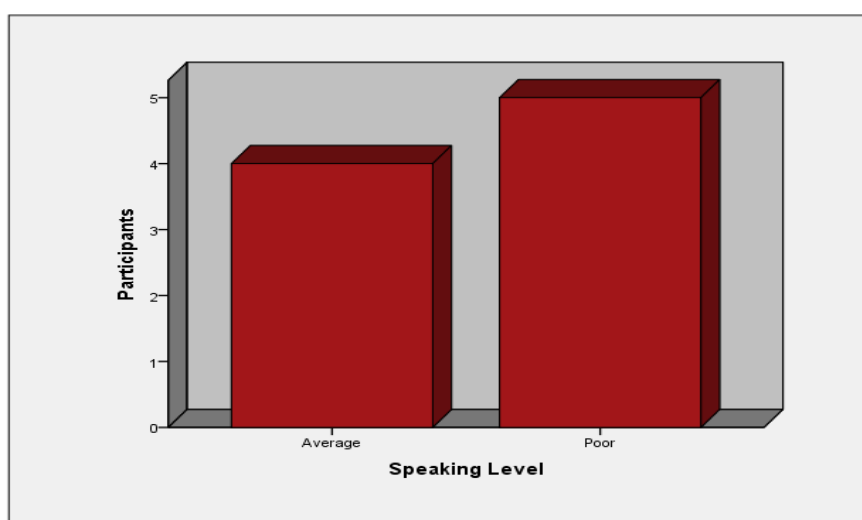
Table 19: Teachers' evaluation of their students' level

Responses	Good	Average	Poor	Total
Participants	<u>0</u>	4	<u>5</u>	9

Percentage	0	44,4%	55,6%	100,0%
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These results illustrate that the students' speaking level, according to the teachers' opinions, ranges from average to poor. The data displayed in Table 19 shows that five teachers (55.6%) confirmed that their students' speaking skill is of a poor level. Four teachers (44.4%) considered their students' speaking level as average, while no one considered their students as good speakers.

Figure 7: Teachers' evaluation of their students' level



When asked to justify their choices, the five teachers who rated their students' speaking skill as poor admitted that despite the long exposure to the English language from middle school to university, the majority of students still produce unacceptable oral performances. The same group of teacher claims that students find difficulties to convey messages and to share their ideas and thoughts in a fluent and accurate manner. However, four teachers attributed the average level of their students' oral performance to their ability to communicate their ideas and to express their needs in an understandable simple language despite their limited vocabulary and their lack of fluency and accuracy.

Item 6: Factors affecting the students' speaking skill

The aim of this question is to divulge the difficulties and factors that hinder students

from developing their speaking skill. Accordingly, we classified the teachers' answers into three categories: Psychological, linguistic, and external factors.

Table 20: Factors affecting the students' speaking skill

Psychological Factors	Linguistics Factors	External Factors
Anxiety and Shyness	Lack of fluency and language accuracy	Insufficient time
Fear of mistakes	Lack of practice outside the classroom	Overcrowded classes
Fear of the teacher's negative feedback	Interference of the mother tongue	Lack of equipment
Fear of peers' negative reactions	Lack of fluency and language accuracy	
Lack of self-confidence	Lack of practice outside the classroom	
Lack of motivation	Interference of the mother tongue	

The teachers' answers reveal that most students have psychological factors with regard to developing the speaking skill in the oral expression class. Among the psychological factors stated, anxiety and shyness range first, while fear of 1) mistakes 2) the teacher's negative feedback and 3) peers' negative reactions are in the second position, followed by the lack of self-confidence, and the last factor is the lack of motivation.

On the other hand, teachers complained about the time allotted to the oral expression subject and the surrounding conditions in which it takes place. They claimed that the lack of technological equipments, and labs, and the overcrowded classes make the teaching and development of the speaking skill a challenging task, for they cannot ensure equal opportunities for all students to participate and to communicate in the classroom. Moreover, teachers declare that students have serious fluency and accuracy problems as they fail to convey messages using well-structured sentences in a reasonable rate of speech. They attributed these difficulties to the lack of language practice outside the classroom and the mother tongue interference.

Teachers asserted that students must be active, must take the full responsibility of

developing their oral performance outside the classroom, and must not rely on the teachers as the only source of information and knowledge.

Item 7: The syllabus of the oral expression subject

Table 21: Oral expression syllabus

Responses	Officially distributed	Planned with colleagues	Self-prepared	Total
Participants	0	2	7	9
Percentage	0%	22,2%	77,8%	100,0%

As indicated in Table 21, seven teachers (77, 8%) prepare their oral expression syllabus individually based on their experience and taking into account their students' level and learning styles. However, two less experienced teachers (22, 2%) state that they collaborate and coordinate to design the guidelines of a common oral expression syllabus. The results reveal that there is no official syllabus distributed to be followed by all teachers. To design an effective oral expression syllabus, teachers are required to integrate effective teaching methods, approaches, materials, and strategies through collaboration and coordination.

Item 8: The learning objectives

Through this question, we intended to check the learning objectives that teachers seek to achieve when designing an oral expression syllabus concerning the students' speaking skill. Due to the diversity of the teaching experience, respondents state different objectives in terms of their students' level.

- Using adequate and appropriate range of vocabulary
- Developing comprehension and listening skills
- Developing intelligible pronunciation
- Speaking confidently and fluently
- Creating and managing conversations
- Developing communicative competence

- Overcoming psychological problems
- Structuring coherent discourse

Therefore, based on these objectives, and by the end of the oral expression program, the students should be able to improve their listening, fluency, accuracy, and communicative abilities.

Item 9: The speaking activities used in oral expression classes

Table 22: Speaking activities used in oral expression classes

Activities	Debates and discussions	Games	Role-play	Songs	presentations	Narrating stories
Participants	6	2	2	1	3	3
Percentage	66,7%	22,2%	22,2%	11,1%	33,3%	33,3%

Through this item, we aimed to verify the different activities that teachers use in oral expression classes. It is worth mentioning that it was a multiple choice question in which respondents could select more than one activity. As we can notice from the results in Table 22, teachers depend on diversified teaching activities to enhance their students' speaking skill and to create a motivational and attractive learning environment. Almost all teachers (66, 7%) rely on debates and classroom discussions as the main teaching activities when designing their lesson plans. Narrating stories and presentation activities rank in the second position (33, 3%). In the third rank, we recorded the use of role-play activities (22, 2%) and game activities (22,2%). Introducing songs as an activity in the oral class came in the last rank (11, 1%). In addition, the informants were required to add any other activities they may use in the oral class. One teacher (11, 1%) mentioned the use of proverbs as a teaching activity, while another teacher (11, 1%) claimed that s/he uses audio-visual activities in the oral expression subject.

Accordingly, the focus on various teaching activities in oral expression classes eliminates boredom and creates an active and enjoyable learning atmosphere. However, teachers should select the appropriate learning activities that fit their students' needs and

learning styles. Moreover, the activities must be selected in accordance with the students' level and learning objectives.

All in all, we can conclude that when designing an oral expression lesson plan, teachers must adopt both materials and activities that increase students' motivation to participate and practice oral performance in the target language.

Item 10: The teaching materials that teachers use in oral expression classes

In this item, we endeavored to check which materials the teachers of the oral expression subject use in teaching the speaking skill. Table 23 represents the materials as they are stated by respondents.

Table 23: Teaching materials used in the oral expression subject

Materials	Participants	Percentage
Newspapers and magazines	2	22,2%
crosswords games	2	22,2%
Songs	1	11,1%
Audiovisual aids	1	11.11%
Mobile phone	1	11.11%
No materials	2	22.22%

The respondents claim that they are using a variety of teaching materials. Two of them (22,2%) use newspaper and magazine articles, two other teachers (22.2%) use crossword games, one teacher (11.11%) uses songs, another teacher (11.11%) uses authentic audiovisual materials, and another one (11.11%) uses mobile phones as teaching materials. However, two teachers assert that they do not use any teaching materials as they rely on free discussions and debates.

We can notice from the materials stated that there are two categories of teachers. First, novice, active and digital teachers who rely on technological materials to develop their students' oral performance and to create an enjoyable learning atmosphere, for students' prefer being in touch with technology, even in the classroom, as it attracts their attention and raises their interest. The second category consists of the teachers who prefer discussions,

conversations and debates which do not motivate students to speak, and which create boredom in the class.

The diversity in teaching materials signifies that teachers are not teaching the oral expression subject using the same techniques, and they do not follow a specific unified syllabus. They feel free to integrate different motivational teaching materials that respond to their students' needs and interests, and that may seem appropriate for the whole class. This raises the importance of taking into consideration the students' learning styles before designing oral expression lesson plans.

Item 11: Out-class activities

Table 24: Out-class activities

Responses	Yes	No	Total
Participants	0	9	9
Percentage	0%	100%	100%

This question aimed to verify whether teachers provide out-class activities for their students to develop their speaking skill outside the classroom. As denoted in Table 24, all teachers (100%) claimed that they do not give any practice outside the classroom; they rely only on in-class activities only.

Actually, oral expression is a classroom-bounded subject in which students develop their speaking skill only inside the class. In fact, three hours per week are not sufficient to enhance the students' oral performance. Hence, students must be active and motivated to develop their speaking outside the classroom.

Item 12: Speaking aspects for oral performance assessment

Teachers were asked to mention the main speaking aspects that they focus on when assessing the students' oral performance. Four of the respondents (44.4%) mentioned that well-structured sentences are the most important criteria to be assessed. Three teachers (33.3%) reported that their main concern is vocabulary and pronunciation. Six teachers

(66.6%) mentioned fluency. Furthermore, one teacher added that s/he focuses on the extent to which the students understand the question or the topic and discuss it with the teacher.

Therefore, the oral performance assessment covers five main components, which are fluency, vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and comprehension.

Section Three: Teachers' Perceptions of Project-Based Learning

Item 13: The main features that define the PBL approach

The aim of this question is to check teachers' perceptions of PBL, how they understand its meaning, and what they think about it as a teaching instruction. The results demonstrate that all teachers are familiar with the PBL approach and they conceive its true meaning. The participants had many similarities in their responses, so we analyzed and categorized the results into the following features: 1) student-centeredness, 2) collaboration, and 3) authenticity.

- **Student-centeredness.** When teachers were asked to state the main features that define the PBL, all of them (100%) mentioned that it is a student-centered strategy. Teachers expressed the idea that PBL helps students to be active learners, and it provides them with the opportunity to learn by doing. One of the teachers stated that s/he understands PBL as a learning approach during which students are engaged in the learning process and have the choice to decide. In the same line of thought, another teacher mentioned that in the PBL classroom, the teacher's role is to direct and not to provide information, for the students are responsible for their learning process. This is similar to another teacher's view that through PBL, students develop their autonomous learning. Another teacher highlighted the fact that PBL is a pure self-learning strategy.

- **Collaboration.** Six teachers (66,6%) expressed that since PBL focuses on learning by conducting projects, it emphasizes team work or collaborative learning. One teacher claims that projects are conducted to enhance team work, which reflects the idea of collaborative

learning in which students² work together to realize the final product. Among the participants, one teacher says that PBL is the appropriate strategy to develop students' life skills, such as collaboration and critical thinking. In the same line, one teacher states that collaboration is a very important skill that students' must develop to learn from each other and share ideas and knowledge.

- **Authenticity.** Mostly, all teachers stated that PBL promotes authentic learning through discussing real-life topics. One of the respondents claimed that projects must be related to authentic situations to get students² involved in the learning process. Another teacher stated that we must take into consideration students' needs and interests when selecting the topics to be discussed or projects to be conducted. S/he added that students prefer working on, and discussing, topics that face their everyday life. According to another participant, PBL provides students with an opportunity to decide on the topics to be investigated, and its main focus is on the authenticity of learning rather than abstract boring traditional learning.

Item 14: PBL and students' academic performance

Through this item, we aimed to know whether teachers perceive PBL as an effective teaching approach that develops students' academic performance in general.

Table 25: PBL and students' academic performance

Responses	Yes	No	Total
Participants	9	0	9
Percentage	0%	100%	100%

As shown in Table 25, all respondents confirmed that integrating the PBL approach in EFL contexts helps students develop their academic performances. Teachers stated that PBL is an effective teaching approach because it fits students' needs and interests. They claimed that PBL promotes active learning, so it helps learners to develop their language skills and academic achievement.

Item 15: PBL benefits

When teachers are asked about the PBL benefits, they mentioned the following:

- More practice inside and outside the classroom
- Increases students' motivation
- Skill improvement
- Suitable learning environment
- Promotes autonomous learning
- Real-life practice
- Enhances teamwork and collaboration
- The use of educational technology
- Development of final product

Item 16: Do you think a student-centered learning environment is beneficial to EFL students?

Table 26: Student-centered learning environment

Responses	Yes	No	Total
Participants	9	0	9
Percentage	0%	100%	100%

As shown in Table 26, the data denoted that all oral expression teachers agreed on the fact that a student-centered environment is beneficial to EFL students. A student-centered teaching and learning environment helps students to be more responsible in their learning process, and not to be passive relying on the teacher as the only source of information.

Item 17: Do you think the PBL approach may encourage students to make more efforts to develop their performances than in traditional classes?

Table 27: The PBL approach and students' efforts

Responses	Yes	No	Total
Participants	6	3	9
Percentage	67.66%	33.33%	100%

As illustrated in Table 27, six teachers (67.66%) confirmed that PBL is an effective

teaching approach and is different from the traditional teaching environment. Through PBL, students are more active and are responsible for their learning process because they are in a student-centered environment. Moreover, they claimed that PBL promotes authentic learning through learning by doing. PBL encourages students to be engaged in the teaching and learning process to develop their performances instead of just acquiring knowledge.

On the other hand, three teachers (33.33%) did not agree with this idea. They claimed that it is the teacher's responsibility to create the learning environment that helps students² develop their performances. They declared that even in the traditional teaching environment, teachers must include varied activities to increase students' interests and to get them involved in the course. They added that, when delivering the course, different types of materials and strategies can be used to increase students' motivation and engagement.

Section Four: Project-Based Learning and the Speaking Skill

Item 18: Does group work enhance the learners' speaking skill?

Table 28: Group work and the speaking skill

Response	Yes	No	Total
Participants	8	1	9
Percentage	88.9%	11.1%	100%

As revealed in Table 28, eight teachers (88.9%) supported group work to enhance students' oral skills. However, one teacher (11.1%) was against the idea of group work in oral expression classes.

The results show a strong positive attitude towards teamwork in the oral expression subject. Indeed, teachers are aware of the effectiveness of collaboration especially in oral expression classes where interaction is necessary. However, we cannot ignore the fact that there are different learning styles in the same classroom; we may find some students who prefer learning in isolation instead of being in groups.

Item 19: Do you think preparing a final product to display in oral expression classes

develops students' oral performance?**Table 29: Final product and students' oral performance**

Response	Yes	No	Total
Participants	7	2	9
Percentage	77.8%	22.2%	100%

As we can clearly notice from Table 29, seven participants (77.8%) agreed on the idea that preparing a final product to display in front of the class develops students' oral performance. Yet, two participants (22.2%) disagree with the idea.

The majority of oral expression teachers believes that preparing a final presentation and displaying it orally in front of the teacher and classmates develop students' oral performance, and provide them with an opportunity to use the language inside and outside the classroom. In contrast, we must take into consideration some factors that may hinder students² from presenting orally naming shyness, lack of self-confidence, and fear of negative reactions.

Item 20: Do you think discussing authentic and real-life topics in the oral expression subject fosters students' motivation to speak English?**Table 30: Authenticity and students' motivation**

Responses	Yes	No	Total
Participants	9	0	9
Percentage	0%	100%	100%

Table 30 demonstrates that all the participants (100%) supported authenticity in oral expression classes for the sake of fostering students' motivation to speak English

The participants show a strong positive attitude towards the discussion of authentic and real-life topics in the oral expression subject, for they increase students' engagement and create an enjoyable learning atmosphere. This may reflect the teachers' awareness of the students' preferences, needs, and interests.

Item 21: Do you recommend the use of PowerPoint presentations in the oral expression class to motivate students to speak and improve their speaking skills?

Table 31: Powerpoint presentations

Responses	Yes	No	Total
Participants	6	3	9
Percentage	66.7%	33.3%	100%

As we can depict from Table 31, six participants (66.7%) recommend the use of PowerPoint presentations in oral expression class. Actually, the integration of technology in the classroom enhances students' motivation to learn and, hence, to speak and practice English. However, three participants (33.3%) provided a negative recommendation to the integration of PowerPoint presentations in oral classes. They prefer the traditional classroom with no technology.

Item 22: Do you think integrating the PBL approach increases students' interest to perform better orally?

Table 32: The integration of PBL in oral expression classes

Responses	Yes	No	Total
Participants	9	0	9
Percentage	0%	100%	100%

Results from Table 32-denote that all the teachers emphasized the integration of the PBL strategy in oral expression classes to increase students' interest to develop their oral performance. This reflects the teachers' attitudes towards the effectiveness of the PBL approach in improving students' oral skills.

Discussion of the Results

The findings obtained from the teachers' answers and experiences helped us to pinpoint some important points that may be useful in the discussion of the topic under investigation. Along the sections of the questionnaire, we noticed that oral expression teachers at the level of the Department of English have different teaching experiences in teaching the oral expression subject, which leads to a variety of teaching methods, objectives, approaches,

materials, and activities. According to the respondents, they revealed that each teacher has a specific and personal designed program in teaching the subject due to the absence of a unified official syllabus and coordination among teachers.

As a matter of fact, teachers confirmed their students' average to poor level of speaking. They attributed this deficiency to some psychological, linguistic, and external factors that hinder them from developing their oral performance inside the classroom. In addition, the results revealed that teachers rely on classroom discussions and debates as the widely used in-class activities, while the integration of technology and out-class activities are neglected.

Among the most significant findings, all teachers conceive the true meaning and features of the PBL approach. In addition, almost all teachers favored the integration of PBL as a teaching approach in EFL classes. In fact, the findings also show the teachers' positive attitudes towards the effectiveness of PBL in the oral expression subject. They further emphasize the importance of collaborative learning, and they agree that if students collaborate in doing projects, they will be willingly interested in the learning process.

Overall, teachers agree that PBL is a teaching and learning approach that enhances students' autonomous learning, and that involves them in an active learning environment to do the work on their own. This will increase the students' motivation as they have a voice and choice in the teaching and learning processes. In sum, teachers admit that PBL provides students with an opportunity to discuss and present authentic real-life topics that increase students' interest and motivation.

All in all, the teachers' responses to the questionnaire divulged the basics for teaching the oral expression subject at the Department of English, and they provided us with insightful necessary information that help us to investigate the problem under enquiry.

4.3. The Experimental Phase

The ultimate aim of the current research is to investigate the effectiveness of the PBL approach on EFL second year students' speaking skill. To achieve such an aim, the researcher conducted an experiment that lasted 15 weeks (three hours per week for every group) stretched from November 2018 to April 2019. The study consisted of a pre-test, a ten-lesson treatment, three progress tests, and a post-test. The researcher administered the speaking tests to measure the students' oral performance before, during and after the integration of PBL. The participants' oral performance was evaluated using the same rating scale containing five aspects of oral performance to which a given rate ranging between one to four is attributed.

Analysis of the Experiment

4.3.1.1. Results of the Pretest

A pretest was administered to the experimental and control groups to make sure that the two groups are equivalent in terms of their initial speaking level. Indeed, 72 students took the pretest.

4.3.1.1.1. Pretest scores. As it is clearly indicated in Tables (33) and (34), the students' scores are below the average. The findings reveal that second year students encounter serious weaknesses to perform an adequate and appropriate oral production. Furthermore, after the evaluation of students' oral performance during the pretest, the researcher noticed that the students encountered difficulties in all the speaking aspects, namely grammar, vocabulary, fluency, pronunciation, and even comprehension. The students' oral production was characterized by inadequate word choice and limited vocabulary that did not fit the context. In addition, it was obvious that students misuse grammar rules especially tenses and prepositions. Concerning pronunciation, it was clear that students find difficulties in pronouncing words correctly using stress and other aspects of speech. As far as fluency is concerned, students' oral performance was marked by pauses that affected the clarity and flow of the speech. Moreover, some students fail to understand the question asked or the

message and ask for repetition.

Table 33: Experimental group's pretest

scores	
Experimental Group	
N	Scores
Student 1	05
Student 2	06
Student 3	10
Student 4	05
Student 5	09
Student 6	10
Student 7	08
Student 8	06
Student 9	07
Student 10	08
Student 11	03
Student 12	10
Student 13	11
Student 14	10
Student 15	06
Student 16	09
Student 17	07
Student 18	08
Student 19	05
Student 20	08
Student 21	11
Student 22	07
Student 23	06
Student 24	10
Student 25	08
Student 26	05
Student 27	10
Student 28	07
Student 29	05
Student 30	06
Student 31	03
Student 32	10
Student 33	02
Student 34	09
Student 35	12
Student 36	08
$\sum X_E$	269
X_E	7.47

Table 34: Control group's pretest scores

Control Group	
N	Scores
Student 1	07
Student 2	05
Student 3	09
Student 4	03
Student 5	10
Student 6	08
Student 7	06
Student 8	06
Student 9	07
Student 10	08
Student 11	02
Student 12	10
Student 13	12
Student 14	09
Student 15	05
Student 16	09
Student 17	06
Student 18	07
Student 19	09
Student 20	10
Student 21	06
Student 22	07
Student 23	06
Student 24	10
Student 25	05
Student 26	08
Student 27	10
Student 28	07
Student 29	12
Student 30	06
Student 31	03
Student 32	10
Student 33	06
Student 34	03
Student 35	09
Student 36	07
$\sum X_C$	263
X_C	7.31

Note. N: Number of participants

ΣX : The sum of scores

X : the average of score

Therefore, this fact provided us with evidence to confirm the existence of the observed problem under investigation among second year students. In addition, the results indicate that there is a need for an innovative teaching instruction and strategy to help students enhance their poor oral performance.

To better illustrate the comparison between both group scores in the pretest, Table 35 demonstrates the relative similarity of students' speaking level.

Table 35: Means of pretest scores

Groups	Mean	Std. Deviation
Experimental	7,4722	2,48982
Control	7,3056	2,48216
Differences in the means		0,16

The absence of any statistically significant difference between both groups' oral performances is confirmed by conducting an independent sample T-test using SPSS.

Table 36: Paired Samples Test

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Control - Experimental	-,16667	2,36039	,39340	-,96531	,63197	-,424	35	,674

The results of Independent Sample T-test confirmed the absence of significant difference between both group students' proficiency level in terms of the speaking skill in the pretest, for the P value (Sig. (2-tailed)) was higher than 0.05 ($P = 0.674 > 0.05$). Moreover, in the experimental group, the mean and SD are, respectively, ($M = 7,47$, $SD = 2,48$), they are ($M = 7,31$, $SD = 2,48$) for the control group.

Hence, the hypothesis that both groups are equal in terms of the initial speaking skill level is confirmed. Getting this finding before starting the treatment was crucial because it enabled the researcher to attribute any progress in the experimental group

students' oral performance to the integrated teaching approach (PBL).

4.3.1.2. Results of the Progress Tests

As mentioned formerly, the treatment phase was divided into four designed units. Students in the control group were taught in the traditional method of teaching the oral expression subject in which students interact freely and discuss the given topic without any further preparation or collaboration. However, the experimental group experienced a new teaching approach (PBL) in which students collaborate and prepare a final presentation about the given topic to display it orally.

Accordingly, by the end of each unit, a formative progress test was administered to both groups to level up and assess the improvement (if any) in students' speaking performance. The researcher assessed the students' oral production in a form of individual interview that lasted for few minutes with each student using the aforementioned speaking rating- scale that contains fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and comprehension.

4.3.1.2.1. *Description and analysis of Progress Test 1.* After administering the pretest, the researcher introduced the first unit of the treatment entitled "Developing Intercultural Competence". The first unit lasted three weeks as it consists of three lessons. At the end of the first unit, a progress test was administered to both groups. Using the computer, the students were asked to select one of the pictures displayed to them. The selected pictures represent various themes (Appendix G). The teacher asked the students to justify their choice, and then to comment, describe, and talk about the topic presented and its impact on their daily life.

Tables (37) and (38) show the scores of students in the first progress test.

Table 37: Experimental group's scores in Progress Test 1

N	Comprehension	Vocabulary	Grammar	Fluency	Pronunciation	Final Score
Student 1	3	1	2	2	1	09
Student 2	2	2	2	1	1	08
Student 3	3	2	3	1	1	10
Student 4	2	2	1	1	1	07
Student 5	2	2	2	2	2	10
Student 6	3	3	2	2	2	12
Student 7	3	2	2	2	2	11
Student 8	2	2	1	1	2	08
Student 9	3	2	2	2	2	11
Student 10	2	2	2	1	2	09
Student 11	1	2	1	1	1	06
Student 12	3	3	2	2	2	12
Student 13	3	2	2	2	2	11
Student 14	2	3	2	3	2	12
Student 15	2	1	2	2	1	08
Student 16	3	2	2	2	2	11
Student 17	2	2	2	2	1	09
Student 18	2	2	3	1	2	10
Student 19	1	2	1	1	2	07
Student 20	2	2	2	2	1	09
Student 21	2	3	3	2	2	12
Student 22	1	2	2	2	2	09
Student 23	1	2	1	1	2	07
Student 24	3	2	2	2	2	11
Student 25	2	1	2	2	1	08
Student 26	2	2	1	2	1	08
Student 27	3	2	2	2	2	11
Student 28	2	2	1	1	2	08
Student 29	2	1	2	1	1	07
Student 30	3	2	1	2	1	09
Student 31	1	1	1	1	1	05
Student 32	3	3	2	2	2	12
Student 33	1	1	1	1	1	05
Student 34	2	2	3	1	2	10
Student 35	3	3	2	2	3	13
Student 36	1	3	2	2	1	10
$\sum X_e$	78	73	66	59	58	335
X_e	2,16	2,02	1,83	1,63	1,61	9,30

Note. N: Number of participants

ΣX : The sum of scores

X: the average of scores

Table 38: Control group's scores in Progress Test 1

N	Comprehension	Vocabulary	Grammar	Fluency	Pronunciation	Final Score
Student 1	2	1	2	2	1	08
Student 2	2	1	1	1	1	06
Student 3	3	2	1	1	2	09
Student 4	1	1	1	1	1	05
Student 5	2	2	2	2	2	10
Student 6	2	2	2	1	2	09
Student 7	2	1	1	1	2	07
Student 8	2	2	1	1	2	08
Student 9	3	1	2	1	1	08
Student 10	3	2	2	1	2	10
Student 11	1	2	1	1	1	06
Student 12	2	2	2	2	2	10
Student 13	3	3	2	2	3	13
Student 14	2	2	1	2	2	09
Student 15	2	1	2	1	1	07
Student 16	3	2	2	2	2	11
Student 17	2	2	2	2	1	09
Student 18	2	2	1	1	2	08
Student 19	3	3	1	1	2	10
Student 20	3	2	2	2	2	11
Student 21	2	2	2	1	1	08
Student 22	2	2	2	1	1	09
Student 23	1	2	1	1	2	07
Student 24	3	2	2	2	2	11
Student 25	1	1	1	1	1	05
Student 26	2	2	1	2	1	08
Student 27	2	3	3	2	2	12
Student 28	2	2	1	1	2	08
Student 29	3	3	3	2	2	13
Student 30	2	2	1	1	1	07
Student 31	1	1	1	1	1	05
Student 32	3	3	2	1	2	11
Student 33	2	1	1	1	1	06
Student 34	1	1	1	1	1	05
Student 35	3	2	2	1	1	09
Student 36	1	2	2	1	2	08
$\sum X_c$	76	67	57	48	57	306
X_c	2,11	1,86	1,58	1,33	1,58	8,50

Note. N: Number of participants

ΣX : The sum of scores

X : the average of scores

There are some differences in scores of both groups in the five speaking aspects.

The experimental group's scores are slightly higher in comparison with the control

group's. The results reveal that students still have serious difficulties in fluency,

pronunciation, and grammar compared to comprehension and vocabulary. Concerning

fluency, we noticed that students in both groups still hesitate and make a lot of pauses when speaking. In terms of pronunciation, students still misuse the speech aspects like stress and intonation, but there is a slight progress in pronunciation mistakes in favor of the experimental group. As far as grammar is concerned, we noticed that students still produce incorrect grammatical sentences and make mistakes in the use of tenses.

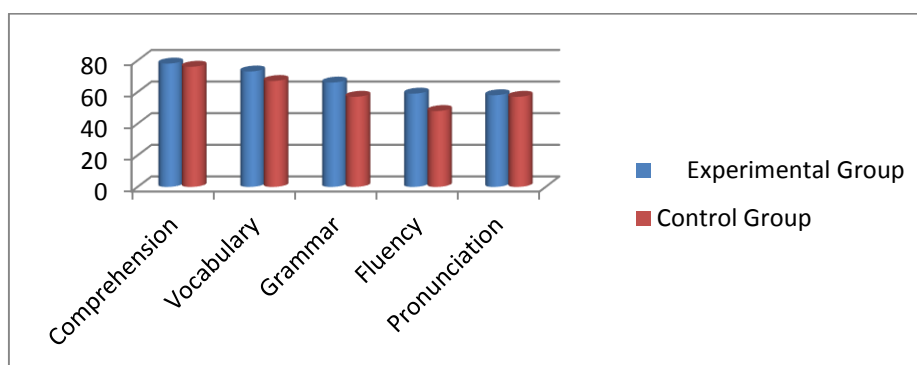
Table 39: Mean scores in Progress Test 1

Aspects	Experimental Group		Control Group	
	Total	Average	Total	Average
Comprehension	78	2.16	76	2.11
Vocabulary	73	2.02	67	1.86
Grammar	66	1.83	57	1.58
Fluency	59	1.63	48	1.33
Pronunciation	58	1.61	57	1.58

It is clear from Table 39 that there is a slight difference in terms of achievement in the speaking aspects in favor of the experimental group. We can notice that the average of comprehension is 2.16 for the experimental group and 2.11 for the control group.

Concerning vocabulary, we record 2.02 for the experimental group and 1.86 for the control group. In terms of grammar, the average of the experimental group and the control group is 1.83 and 1.58, respectively. As far as the fluency level is concerned, the experimental group's average is 1.63 and the control group's is 1.33. The pronunciation level for the experimental group is 1.61 and 1.58 for the control group.

Figure 8: Students' achievement in Progress Test 1



As shown in Figure 8, we recorded the highest level in comprehension and vocabulary for both groups, followed by grammar in the second rank, then pronunciation and fluency. Hence, the results reveal that there is no difference between the experimental and control groups' scores. However, the level of the experimental group is a little bit higher than the control group's.

Besides, it is clear that both groups' average scores in both comprehension and vocabulary are the highest ones compared to the other criteria in favor of the experimental group, while the other components seem to be the major problems and difficulties that hinder the development of the students' speaking skill.

All in all, we noticed from the obtained scores in both groups and during the first stage that students still require further practice, efforts, and help to develop their oral performance.

4.3.1.2.2. *Description and analysis of Progress Test 2.* After the first progress test, the teacher introduced the second unit entitled "Role Play" that lasted two weeks as it contains two lessons. At the end of the second unit, the second progress test was administered to both groups.

During the second progress test, the students in both groups listened to a short story entitled "Poor Man Rich Man" (Appendix I).

The teacher played the first chapter of the audio on her mobile using a loudspeaker, and asked the students to write down all the new vocabulary they hear and to take notes. The first chapter of the story lasted 4min10. Then, the students were required to predict the coming events in the story. The students' displayed their production individually through which the teacher assessed their understanding, pronunciation, fluency, grammar, and vocabulary. Tables (40) and (41) show the participants' scores in the second progress test.

Table 40: Experimental group's scores in Progress Test 2

N	Comprehension	Vocabulary	Grammar	Fluency	Pronunciation	Final Score
Student 1	3	2	2	2	2	11
Student 2	3	2	2	2	1	10
Student 3	3	3	3	2	2	13
Student 4	2	2	1	2	2	09
Student 5	3	3	2	2	2	12
Student 6	3	3	2	2	3	13
Student 7	3	2	2	2	3	12
Student 8	2	2	1	2	2	09
Student 9	3	3	2	2	3	13
Student 10	3	2	2	1	2	10
Student 11	2	2	1	1	1	07
Student 12	3	3	2	2	2	12
Student 13	3	2	2	2	2	11
Student 14	3	3	2	3	2	13
Student 15	2	2	2	2	1	09
Student 16	3	2	2	2	2	11
Student 17	2	2	2	2	2	10
Student 18	2	3	3	1	2	11
Student 19	2	2	1	1	2	08
Student 20	2	2	2	2	2	10
Student 21	2	3	3	2	2	12
Student 22	2	2	2	2	2	10
Student 23	1	2	1	1	2	07
Student 24	3	3	2	2	2	12
Student 25	2	2	2	2	2	10
Student 26	2	2	2	2	1	09
Student 27	3	2	2	2	2	11
Student 28	3	2	2	2	3	12
Student 29	2	2	2	1	1	08
Student 30	3	2	2	2	2	11
Student 31	2	1	1	1	2	07
Student 32	3	3	2	2	2	12
Student 33	2	1	1	1	1	06
Student 34	2	2	3	1	2	10
Student 35	3	3	2	2	3	13
Student 36	2	3	2	2	1	11
$\sum X_e$	89	83	69	64	71	377
X_e	2,47	2,30	1,91	1,77	1,97	10,47

Note. N: Number of participants

ΣX : The sum of scores

X: the average of scores

Table 41: Control group's scores in Progress Test 2

N	Comprehension	Vocabulary	Grammar	Fluency	Pronunciation	Final Score
Student 1	2	1	2	2	1	08
Student 2	2	1	1	1	1	06
Student 3	3	2	2	1	2	10
Student 4	2	1	1	1	1	06
Student 5	2	2	2	2	2	10
Student 6	2	3	2	1	2	10
Student 7	2	2	1	1	2	08
Student 8	3	2	2	1	2	10
Student 9	3	2	2	1	1	09
Student 10	3	3	2	1	3	12
Student 11	2	2	1	1	2	08
Student 12	3	3	2	2	2	12
Student 13	3	3	2	2	3	13
Student 14	3	2	1	2	2	10
Student 15	2	1	2	1	1	07
Student 16	3	2	2	2	2	11
Student 17	3	2	2	3	1	11
Student 18	3	2	2	1	2	10
Student 19	3	3	1	1	2	10
Student 20	3	2	2	2	2	11
Student 21	2	2	2	1	1	08
Student 22	3	2	2	1	2	10
Student 23	1	2	1	1	2	07
Student 24	3	3	2	2	2	12
Student 25	2	1	1	1	1	06
Student 26	3	2	2	2	2	10
Student 27	2	3	3	2	2	12
Student 28	2	2	1	2	2	09
Student 29	3	3	3	2	2	13
Student 30	2	2	1	1	2	08
Student 31	1	2	1	1	2	07
Student 32	3	3	2	2	2	12
Student 33	2	2	1	1	1	06
Student 34	2	1	1	2	1	07
Student 35	3	2	2	1	1	09
Student 36	2	2	2	1	2	09
$\sum X_c$	88	75	61	52	63	337
\bar{X}_c	2,44	2,08	1,69	1,44	1,75	9,36

Note. N: Number of participants

ΣX : The sum of scores

\bar{X} : the average of scores

Tables (40) and (41) show that both groups are significantly different in the students' scores with a remarkable progress in favor of the experimental group. The results indicated that students' oral performance has improved in terms of all the speaking aspects, mainly comprehension, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Students show more understanding

of the target language, and they developed their pronunciation due to intensive listening and practice. In addition, we noticed a slight progress in grammar and fluency because students still produce unstructured sentences with difficulties in controlling the flow of the speech. Hence, there is scant improvement in these components, and they still require more enhancement.

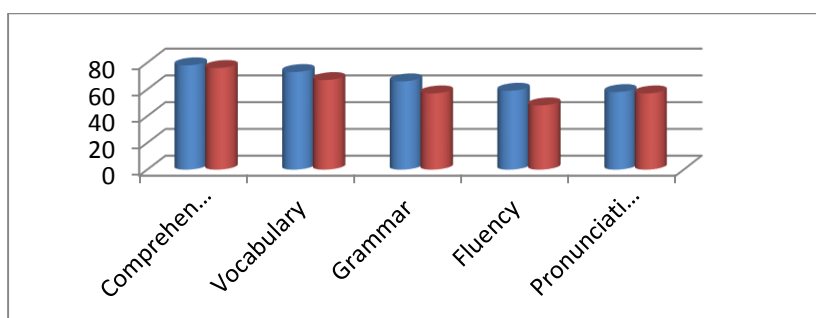
Table 42 and Figure 9 summarize both groups' scores in the second progress test.

Table 42: Students' scores in Progress Test 2

Aspects	Experimental Group		Control Group	
	Total	Average	Total	Average
Comprehension	89	2.47	88	2.44
Vocabulary	83	2.30	75	2.08
Grammar	69	1.91	61	1.69
Fluency	64	1.77	52	1.44
Pronunciation	71	1.97	63	1.75

As depicted in Table 42, there is a remarkable difference in terms of the speaking components in favor of the experimental group. We can notice that the average of comprehension is very close between the experimental group (2.47) and the control group (2.44). As far as vocabulary is concerned, the averages of the experimental group and the control group are 2.30 and 2.08, respectively. Concerning grammar, we recorded 1.91 for the experimental group and 1.69 for the control group. In terms of fluency, the experimental group's average is 1.77 and the control group's is 1.44. Pronunciation level for the experimental group is 1.97 and 1.75 for the control group.

Figure 9: Students' achievement in Progress Test 2



The comparison of these results reveal that the experimental group students scored better in all the speaking aspects and exceeded the scores recorded by the control group, which indicates that the experimental group students increased their oral achievement.

Both groups progressed in comprehension and pronunciation as they started to clearly understand the target language, and the majority developed their pronunciation. Further, it was remarkable that the experimental group students enriched their vocabulary that enabled them to express their ideas appropriately. However, the control group students still find obstacles in producing meaningful and adequate speech fluently.

After seven weeks of the investigation, the experimental group students showed great interest, engagement, and motivation towards the oral lessons as they reduced their absences and attended all the sessions with great enthusiasm. Moreover, they created an enjoyable learning atmosphere when collaborating and presenting their findings. Hence, it can be concluded initially from this observation that the integrated treatment had positive impact. By contrast, the control group students showed less interest and motivation towards the speaking lessons, which was obvious from their irregularity in attending the oral expression sessions and the boring learning atmosphere.

4.3.1.2.3. *Description and analysis of Progress Test 3.* After the second progress test, the teacher being the researcher introduced the third unit entitled “Where to Go?” that lasted two weeks since it contains two lessons. At the end of this unit, the third progress test was administered to both groups to assess their level of achievement in terms of the five speaking aspects.

During the third speaking progress test, both group students watched an animated short film about social media addiction entitled “Are you Lost in the World Like Me?” (Appendix J). Students attentively watched the video, and then they were asked to individually comment on it and discuss the impact of social media on their lives.

Tables (43) and (44) introduce the participants' scores in the third progress test.

Table 43: Experimental group's scores in Progress Test 3

N	Comprehension	Vocabulary	Grammar	Fluency	Pronunciation	Final Score
Student 1	3	3	3	2	3	14
Student 2	3	3	2	2	2	12
Student 3	3	3	3	2	3	14
Student 4	2	3	1	2	2	10
Student 5	3	3	2	3	2	13
Student 6	3	3	2	3	3	14
Student 7	3	2	2	2	3	12
Student 8	2	2	1	2	2	09
Student 9	3	3	2	2	3	13
Student 10	3	3	2	1	2	11
Student 11	2	2	2	1	2	09
Student 12	3	3	3	2	3	14
Student 13	3	2	2	2	2	11
Student 14	3	3	3	3	3	15
Student 15	2	2	3	2	2	11
Student 16	3	2	3	2	2	12
Student 17	3	3	2	2	2	12
Student 18	2	3	3	2	3	13
Student 19	2	2	2	1	2	09
Student 20	3	2	3	2	2	12
Student 21	2	3	3	3	3	14
Student 22	3	3	2	2	2	12
Student 23	2	2	2	2	2	10
Student 24	3	3	2	2	2	12
Student 25	2	3	2	3	2	12
Student 26	2	2	2	2	1	09
Student 27	3	2	2	2	3	12
Student 28	3	3	3	2	3	14
Student 29	2	2	2	1	1	08
Student 30	3	3	2	2	2	12
Student 31	2	1	2	1	2	08
Student 32	3	3	3	3	3	15
Student 33	2	2	1	1	2	08
Student 34	3	3	3	1	2	12
Student 35	3	3	2	3	3	14
Student 36	3	3	3	3	2	14
$\sum X_e$	95	93	82	73	83	426
\bar{X}_e	2,63	2,58	2,27	2,02	2,30	11,83

Note. N: Number of participants

$\sum X$: The sum of scores

\bar{X} : the average of scores

Table 44: Control group's scores in Progress Test 3

N	Comprehension	Vocabulary	Grammar	Fluency	Pronunciation	Final Score
Student 1	2	1	2	2	1	08
Student 2	2	2	1	1	1	07
Student 3	3	2	2	1	2	10
Student 4	2	2	1	2	1	08
Student 5	3	2	2	2	2	11
Student 6	2	3	2	1	2	10
Student 7	2	2	2	1	2	09
Student 8	3	2	2	1	2	10
Student 9	3	2	2	2	2	11
Student 10	3	3	2	1	3	12
Student 11	2	2	2	1	2	09
Student 12	3	3	2	2	2	12
Student 13	3	3	2	2	3	13
Student 14	3	2	1	2	2	10
Student 15	2	2	2	1	2	09
Student 16	3	2	2	3	2	12
Student 17	3	2	2	3	1	11
Student 18	3	3	2	1	2	11
Student 19	3	3	1	1	2	10
Student 20	3	2	2	2	3	12
Student 21	2	2	2	2	1	09
Student 22	3	2	3	1	2	11
Student 23	2	2	1	1	2	08
Student 24	3	3	3	2	2	13
Student 25	2	2	1	1	1	07
Student 26	3	2	2	2	2	10
Student 27	2	3	3	2	2	12
Student 28	2	2	1	2	2	09
Student 29	3	3	3	2	2	13
Student 30	2	2	1	1	2	08
Student 31	2	2	2	1	2	09
Student 32	3	3	2	2	3	13
Student 33	2	2	1	1	2	08
Student 34	3	2	1	2	1	09
Student 35	3	2	2	1	1	09
Student 36	2	2	2	2	2	10
$\sum X_c$	92	81	66	57	68	363
\bar{X}_c	2,55	2,25	1,83	1,58	1,88	10,08

Note. N: Number of participants

$\sum X$: The sum of scores

\bar{X} : the average of scores

After watching the film, students showed high motivation to discuss the topic of social media as it is one of the topics that strongly interest them and encourages them to speak. Both group students have well performed during the third progress test with a considerable difference in favor of the experimental group.

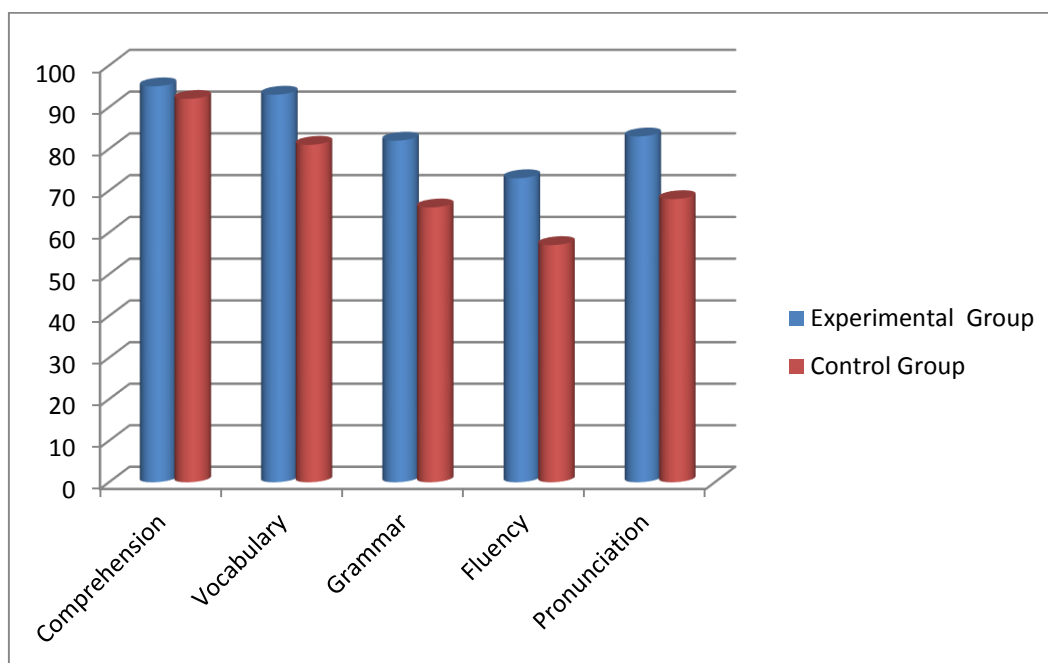
These statistical results revealed that there is a significant progress in students' scores in terms of all the assessed speaking aspects. The Students' oral performance developed as they seem to easily understand the target language and started to produce meaningful and adequate sentences using a wide variety of appropriate vocabularies. Worth noting that the experimental group students outperformed the control group students in all the speaking aspects due to the intensive practice inside and outside the classroom. Nevertheless, the control group students still face some difficulties in terms of grammar, fluency, and pronunciation that hinder them from producing an adequate oral performance.

Table 45 supported by Figure 10 clearly demonstrate the two groups' scores average in the third progress test.

Table 45: Means of students' scores in Progress Test 3

Aspects	Experimental Group		Control Group	
	Total	Average	Total	Average
Comprehension	95	2.63	92	2.55
Vocabulary	93	2.58	81	2.25
Grammar	82	2.27	66	1.83
Fluency	73	2.02	57	1.58
Pronunciation	83	2.30	68	1.88

Figure 10: Students' achievement in Progress Test 3



As shown in Figure 10, both groups show a significant degree of progress in speaking scores. The comprehension scores are approximately the same; nevertheless, the experimental group advanced the control group in all the speaking aspect. We can conclude in this phase that students of the experimental group attained a higher development in their oral performance than students of the control group. The latter still needs more practice to enhance their speaking skills. Accordingly, it is obvious from the outperformance of the experimental group that the PBL approach has a significant effect on students' speaking skill.

Overall, the researcher noticed in this phase that the experimental group students became more active and creative in presenting their work, and they still show more motivation and interest towards the speaking lessons. However, students of the control group showed little progress in terms of fluency, grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, which reflects their lack of interest and motivation.

4.3.1.3. Results of the Posttest

At the end of the last unit entitled "Narrating and Telling Stories" that lasted three weeks and was composed of three speaking lessons, a posttest was designed for both groups to examine the efficiency of the new integrated teaching approach on the students' speaking skill. The posttest was administered in the last week of the second semester. As it is already mentioned, the posttest followed the same procedures of the pretest; however, the topics asked throughout the posttest interview were different.

Tables (46) and (47) represent both groups' scores in the posttest.

Table 46: Experimental group's scores in the posttest

N	Comprehension	Vocabulary	Grammar	Fluency	Pronunciation	Final Score
Student 1	3	3	3	3	3	15
Student 2	3	3	3	2	3	14
Student 3	3	3	3	2	3	14
Student 4	3	3	2	2	2	12
Student 5	3	3	3	3	3	14
Student 6	4	3	3	3	3	16
Student 7	3	3	2	2	3	13
Student 8	3	2	2	2	2	11
Student 9	3	3	2	2	3	13
Student 10	3	3	2	2	2	12
Student 11	3	2	2	1	2	10
Student 12	4	3	3	3	3	16
Student 13	3	2	2	3	3	13
Student 14	3	3	3	3	3	15
Student 15	3	2	3	3	2	13
Student 16	3	3	3	3	2	14
Student 17	3	3	2	3	2	13
Student 18	3	3	3	3	3	15
Student 19	2	2	2	2	2	10
Student 20	3	3	3	2	2	13
Student 21	3	3	3	3	3	15
Student 22	3	3	2	3	3	14
Student 23	2	2	2	2	2	10
Student 24	3	3	2	3	2	13
Student 25	3	3	2	3	3	14
Student 26	2	2	2	2	1	09
Student 27	3	3	2	2	3	13
Student 28	4	3	3	3	3	16
Student 29	3	2	2	1	2	10
Student 30	3	3	3	3	2	14
Student 31	2	2	2	1	2	09
Student 32	4	3	3	3	3	16
Student 33	2	2	1	2	2	09
Student 34	3	3	3	2	2	13
Student 35	4	4	3	3	3	17
Student 36	4	3	3	3	3	16
$\sum X_e$	109	99	89	88	90	474
X_e	3,02	2,75	2,47	2,44	2,50	13,16

Note. N: Number of participants

ΣX : The sum of scores

X: the average of scores

Table 47: Control group's scores in the posttest

N	Comprehension	Vocabulary	Grammar	Fluency	Pronunciation	Final Score
Student 1	3	2	2	2	1	10
Student 2	2	2	2	1	2	09
Student 3	3	2	2	2	2	11
Student 4	2	2	1	2	1	08
Student 5	3	3	2	2	2	12
Student 6	3	3	2	2	2	12
Student 7	2	2	2	1	2	09
Student 8	3	2	2	1	2	10
Student 9	3	3	2	2	2	12
Student 10	3	3	2	2	3	13
Student 11	3	2	2	1	2	10
Student 12	3	3	2	2	2	12
Student 13	4	3	3	2	3	15
Student 14	3	2	1	2	2	10
Student 15	3	2	2	1	2	10
Student 16	3	2	2	3	2	12
Student 17	3	2	2	3	1	11
Student 18	4	3	2	1	3	13
Student 19	3	3	2	1	2	11
Student 20	3	2	2	2	3	12
Student 21	3	2	2	2	2	11
Student 22	3	2	3	1	2	11
Student 23	3	2	1	1	2	09
Student 24	3	3	3	3	2	14
Student 25	2	2	1	1	2	08
Student 26	3	3	2	2	2	11
Student 27	2	3	3	2	2	12
Student 28	3	2	2	2	2	11
Student 29	3	3	3	3	2	14
Student 30	3	2	1	1	2	09
Student 31	3	2	2	1	2	10
Student 32	3	3	2	2	3	13
Student 33	3	2	2	1	2	10
Student 34	3	2	1	2	1	09
Student 35	3	2	2	1	2	10
Student 36	4	2	2	2	2	12
$\sum Xc$	106	85	71	62	73	396
Xc	2,94	2,36	1,97	1,72	2,02	11

Note. N: Number of participants

$\sum X$: The sum of scores

X : the average of scores

The statistics obtained confirm that there is a significant improvement in the scores of both groups with varying levels. The posttest results indicate that the experimental group scored too high in comparison with the control group. Indeed, the five assessed speaking aspects have evolved.

Table 48 better illustrate the difference in the means of both groups in the posttest.

Table 48: Means of both groups' scores in the posttest

Groups	Mean	Std. Deviation
Experimental	13,1667	2,22325
Control	11,0000	1,69031
Differences in the means		2,16

The results clearly indicate that the experimental group outperformed the control group. These significant differences in favor of the experimental group are attributed to the new intrusive teaching approach.

Summary of Test Results

Table 49: Comparing means of both groups' scores

Groups	Pretest	Posttest	Difference
Experimental	7.47	13.16	5.69
Control	7.31	11	3.69

To ascertain the validity of the alternative hypothesis, H_1 : “there is a significance difference between the means of the control group and experimental group in favour of the experimental group”, we need to reject the null hypothesis, H_0 : “there is no significant difference between the means of the experimental group and control group”.

Where: H_0 : $\mu_1 = \mu_2$ (the two groups' means are equal)

H_1 : $\mu_1 \neq \mu_2$ (the two groups' means are not equal)

μ_1 : mean of group 1

μ_2 : mean of group 2

Based on Table 49, we assume that the students of both groups showed a significant development in their oral performance, mainly the experimental group. The statistical comparison of the mean of both groups' scores in the pretest and posttest reveal that the experimental group recorded $M= 7.47$ in the pretest and $M= 13.16$ in the posttest, whereas the control group registered $M= 7.31$ in the pretest and $M= 11$ in the post test.

Hence, the mean of the experimental group in the posttest (13, 16) is not equal to that of the control group in the posttest (11), which allows us to reject the null hypothesis.

Statistical Analysis and Interpretation of Results

After testing the students' oral performance in both groups during all the different stages of the experiment and collecting the needed data, the statistical Independent-Samples T-Test was used to identify whether the PBL approach had caused any statistically significant differences between the experimental and control groups.

Actually, there are two forms of the t-test depending on whether or not equal variances are assumed. In our study, we assumed that the experimental and control groups (independent samples) are unequal variances. Therefore, the researcher calculated the independent samples t-Test using the following formula:

$$t = \frac{\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2}{\sqrt{\frac{S_1^2}{N_1} + \frac{S_2^2}{N_2}}}$$

$$t = \frac{13,16-11}{\sqrt{\frac{2,22^2}{36} + \frac{1,69^2}{36}}} = \frac{13,16-11}{\sqrt{\frac{2,22^2}{36} + \frac{1,69^2}{36}}} = \frac{13,16-11}{\sqrt{0,13+0,10}} = \frac{2,16}{0,47}$$

$t=4,60$

\bar{x}_1 = Mean of the experimental group
 \bar{x}_2 = Mean of the control group
 N_1 = Sample size of the experimental group
 N_2 = Sample size of the control group
 S_1 = Standard deviation of the experimental group
 S_2 = Standard deviation of the control group

Then, the calculated t value = 4, 60 is compared to the critical t value from the t distribution table with degrees of freedom. If the calculated t value is greater than the critical t value, then we reject the null hypothesis. To find the critical t value, we need to

calculate the degree of freedom (df) particular to the t-test of independent means, which is, according to Brown (1995), “the first sample size minus one plus the second sample size minus one” (p.167), using the following formula

$$df = (N_1 - 1) + (N_2 - 1)$$

$$df = (36 - 1) + (36 - 1)$$

$$df = 70$$

Figure 11: Table of t- test critical values

cum. prob	$t_{.50}$	$t_{.75}$	$t_{.80}$	$t_{.85}$	$t_{.90}$	$t_{.95}$	$t_{.975}$	$t_{.99}$	$t_{.995}$	$t_{.999}$	$t_{.9995}$
one-tail	0.50	0.25	0.20	0.15	0.10	0.05	0.025	0.01	0.005	0.001	0.0005
two-tails	1.00	0.50	0.40	0.30	0.20	0.10	0.05	0.02	0.01	0.002	0.001
df											
1	0.000	1.000	1.376	1.963	3.078	6.314	12.71	31.82	63.66	318.31	636.62
2	0.000	0.816	1.061	1.386	1.888	2.920	4.303	6.965	9.925	22.327	31.599
3	0.000	0.765	0.978	1.250	1.638	2.353	3.182	4.541	5.841	10.215	12.924
4	0.000	0.741	0.941	1.190	1.533	2.132	2.776	3.747	4.604	7.173	8.610
5	0.000	0.727	0.920	1.156	1.476	2.015	2.571	3.365	4.032	5.893	6.869
6	0.000	0.718	0.906	1.134	1.440	1.943	2.447	3.143	3.707	5.208	5.959
7	0.000	0.711	0.896	1.119	1.415	1.895	2.365	2.998	3.499	4.785	5.408
8	0.000	0.706	0.889	1.108	1.397	1.860	2.306	2.896	3.355	4.501	5.041
9	0.000	0.703	0.883	1.100	1.383	1.833	2.262	2.821	3.250	4.297	4.781
10	0.000	0.700	0.879	1.093	1.372	1.812	2.228	2.764	3.169	4.144	4.587
11	0.000	0.697	0.876	1.088	1.363	1.796	2.201	2.718	3.106	4.025	4.437
12	0.000	0.695	0.873	1.083	1.356	1.782	2.179	2.681	3.055	3.930	4.318
13	0.000	0.694	0.870	1.079	1.350	1.771	2.160	2.650	3.012	3.852	4.221
14	0.000	0.692	0.868	1.076	1.345	1.761	2.145	2.624	2.977	3.787	4.140
15	0.000	0.691	0.866	1.074	1.341	1.753	2.131	2.602	2.947	3.733	4.073
16	0.000	0.690	0.865	1.071	1.337	1.746	2.120	2.583	2.921	3.686	4.015
17	0.000	0.689	0.863	1.069	1.333	1.740	2.110	2.567	2.898	3.646	3.965
18	0.000	0.688	0.862	1.067	1.330	1.734	2.101	2.552	2.878	3.610	3.922
19	0.000	0.688	0.861	1.066	1.328	1.729	2.093	2.539	2.861	3.579	3.883
20	0.000	0.687	0.860	1.064	1.325	1.725	2.086	2.528	2.845	3.552	3.850
21	0.000	0.686	0.859	1.063	1.323	1.721	2.080	2.518	2.831	3.527	3.819
22	0.000	0.686	0.858	1.061	1.321	1.717	2.074	2.508	2.819	3.505	3.792
23	0.000	0.685	0.858	1.060	1.319	1.714	2.069	2.500	2.807	3.485	3.768
24	0.000	0.685	0.857	1.059	1.318	1.711	2.064	2.492	2.797	3.467	3.745
25	0.000	0.684	0.856	1.058	1.316	1.708	2.060	2.485	2.787	3.450	3.725
26	0.000	0.684	0.856	1.058	1.315	1.706	2.056	2.479	2.779	3.435	3.707
27	0.000	0.684	0.855	1.057	1.314	1.703	2.052	2.473	2.771	3.421	3.690
28	0.000	0.683	0.855	1.056	1.313	1.701	2.048	2.467	2.763	3.408	3.674
29	0.000	0.683	0.854	1.055	1.311	1.699	2.045	2.462	2.756	3.396	3.659
30	0.000	0.683	0.854	1.055	1.310	1.697	2.042	2.457	2.750	3.385	3.646
40	0.000	0.681	0.851	1.050	1.303	1.684	2.021	2.423	2.704	3.307	3.551
60	0.000	0.679	0.848	1.045	1.296	1.671	2.000	2.390	2.660	3.232	3.460
80	0.000	0.678	0.846	1.043	1.292	1.664	1.990	2.374	2.639	3.195	3.416
100	0.000	0.677	0.845	1.042	1.290	1.660	1.984	2.364	2.626	3.174	3.390
1000	0.000	0.675	0.842	1.037	1.282	1.646	1.962	2.330	2.581	3.098	3.300
Z	0.000	0.674	0.842	1.036	1.282	1.645	1.960	2.326	2.576	3.090	3.291
	0%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	95%	98%	99%	99.8%	99.9%
	Confidence Level										

Our chosen significance level is $\alpha = 0.05$. The critical t value is the cut-off points of the alpha level and the degree of freedom in the t distribution table ($t = 2$) (Appendix K).

According to the statistics, the calculated t value is $t=4.60$, the alpha level is set at $\alpha < 0.05$, the degree of freedom is $df= 70$, and the critical t value is $t_{crit} = 2$. In this respect, the calculated t value is greater than the critical T value ($4.60 > 2$). In this case, we reject the null hypothesis, and conclude that the experimental group and the control group are significantly different.

Discussion of the Test Results

Throughout the treatment, the experimental group students have experienced the PBL approach to develop their oral performance through conducting projects collaboratively in the form of PowerPoint presentations. However, the control group students were taught through the traditional teaching method using classroom discussions and debates. The statistical analysis of the data collected from assessing the students' oral performance along the experiment revealed that there are significant differences between the experimental and control groups in favor of the experimental group. Thus, students who faced the PBL instruction showed significant progress in their speaking skill in terms of its five aspects: Comprehension, vocabulary, grammar, fluency, and pronunciation. Accordingly, the outperformance of the experimental group allowed us to reject the null hypothesis and to confirm the research hypothesis.

Based on these results, we can state that the oral performance of the experimental group students was developed due to the treatment, being the PBL approach, in comparison to the oral performance of the control group who were taught using the traditional method.

4.4. Students' Attitudinal Questionnaire

Analysis of the Questionnaire

Section One: PBL and the Speaking Skill Development

This section aimed to investigate the experimental group's attitudes towards the

effectiveness of PBL in developing their oral performance. It contains 13 items.

Table 50: PBL and the speaking skill development

Item	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1. PBL improved my oral performance	19	59,4%	10	31,2%	3	9,4%	0	0%	32	100%
2. PBL was helpful to broaden my vocabulary	25	78,1%	4	12,5%	2	6,3%	1	3,1%	32	100%
3. PBL was helpful to improve my pronunciation	24	75%	5	15,6%	3	9,4%	0	0%	32	100%
4. Through practice inside and outside the classroom, I developed my fluency	28	87,5%	4	12,5%	0	0%	0	0%	32	100%
5. PBL provided me with an opportunity to use English in my daily-life situations	28	87,5%	4	12,5%	0	0%	0	0%	32	100%
6. Regular listening to classmates' presentations helped me to improve my listening and comprehension skills	27	84,4%	5	15,6%	0	0%	0	0%	32	100%
7. PBL made a significant contribution to reducing my grammar mistakes while speaking	25	78,1%	6	18,8%	1	3,1%	0	0%	32	100%
8. Through PBL, I developed turn-taking skills, which is important for the outside world	22	68,8%	8	31,3%	2	6,3%	0	0%	32	100%
9. I can initiate an English conversation easily	18	56,2%	12	37,5%	2	6,3%	0	0%	32	100%
10. My speaking performance gives me a real sense of achievement	17	53,1%	13	40,6%	2	6,3%	0	0%	32	100%
11. PBL provided me with an opportunity to develop my oral performance inside and outside the class as well	28	87,5%	4	12,5%	0	0%	0	0%	32	100%
12. After experiencing PBL, improving my oral performance becomes more important than getting a high score	22	68,8%	6	18,8%	2	6,3%	2	6,3%	32	100%
13. PBL increased my interest in developing my speaking skills	26	81,2%	6	18,8%	0	0%	0	0%	32	100%

The results in Table 50 reveal that a significant number of students expressed a positive attitude towards the effectiveness of PBL in developing their speaking skills. 59, 4% of participants strongly agreed and 31, 2% agreed on the fact that PBL improved their oral performance. However, 9, 4% of the participants disagree with the idea.

Indeed, the students' responses to Item 12 showed that the majority of them became more aware of the importance of developing their oral performance rather than getting a high score in the oral expression subject. 68, 8% strongly agreed and 18, 8% agreed with the idea. However, a small percentage of informants (6, 3%) disagree, and two informants strongly disagree.

The students' answers also demonstrate that the speaking aspects are improved compared to their level before introducing PBL. First, as far as vocabulary is concerned, 87, 1% strongly agreed and 12, 5% agreed on the significant role of PBL in broadening their vocabulary. By contrast, a small number of participants (two students) 6, 3% disagree and one student (3, 1%) strongly disagrees.

Second, concerning pronunciation, a significant number of students (24 participants representing 75% and 5 participants representing 15, 6%) expressed their positive attitudes towards the effect of PBL on the improvement of their pronunciation. However, three participants (9, 4%) disagree.

Third, students' responses to Item 4 showed that all the students developed their fluency through speaking practice inside and outside the classroom. 87, 5% strongly agreed and 12, 5% agreed with the idea.

Fourth, as for accuracy, a significant number of informants strongly agree 87, 1% and 18, 8% agree that PBL significantly contributed to reducing their grammar mistakes while speaking. However, only one participant (3, 1%) disagrees.

In addition, all students (87, 5% strongly agree and 12, 5% agree) confirmed that

PBL provided them with an opportunity to use English appropriately in real-life situations. Indeed, almost all the students claimed that PBL provided them with an opportunity to practice their English speaking inside and outside the classroom. As demonstrated in Table 50, 87, 5% of students strongly agree and 12, 5% of them agree.

The majority of the students came to consensus concerning listening comprehension, starting conversations, and respecting turn-taking rules. First, 84, 4% of the students strongly agree and 15, 6% agree on the vital role of PBL in enhancing their listening and comprehension skills. Second, as illustrated in Table 50, 56, 2% of the students strongly agreed and 37, 5% agreed with the fact that they can initiate an English conversation easily after experiencing the PBL strategy. Yet, two students (6, 3%) chose to disagree with the idea. Third, almost the majority of the participants (68, 8% strongly agree and 31, 3% agree) opined that PBL was convenient for developing turn-taking skills which is important for the outside world. However, a slightly significant number of participants 6, 3% disagree with the clue.

Finally, for Item 10, it is clear from the table that half of the participants (53, 1%) strongly agreed with the idea that their speaking performance in front of their teacher and classmates gives them a real sense of achievement. Moreover, a significant number of participants 40, 6% agreed on the clue. Two participants expressed their disagreement towards this idea.

Section Two: Students' Attitudes towards the PBL Environment

This section aimed to find out participants' attitudes towards the integration of PBL in the oral expression subject. This section contains 8 items.

Table 51: Students' attitudes towards the PBL environment

Item	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1. The PBL environment was enjoyable and exciting	22	68,8%	10	31,2%	0	0%	0	0%	32	100%
2. I have great pleasure in attending oral expression classes	28	87,5%	4	12,5%	0	0%	0	0%	32	100%
3. I have strong motivation to participate in oral lessons	24	75%	5	15,6%	3	9,4%	0	0%	32	100%
4. PBL classes were a boring experience	0	0%	0	0%	4	12,5%	28	87,5%	32	100%
5. PBL provided us with an authentic learning environment	26	81,2%	6	18,8%	0	0%	0	0%	32	100%
6. The PBL environment helped to create a friendly atmosphere	22	68,8%	8	31,3%	2	6,3%	0	0%	32	100%
7. PBL topics were related to real life, so I did not feel bored in the classroom	22	68,8%	8	31,3%	2	6,3%	0	0%	32	100%
8. I feel nervous when attending PBL classes	0	0%	0	0%	6	18,8%	26	81,2%	32	100%

The findings show that a high proportion of students have positive attitudes towards the PBL environment. 68, 8% of the participants strongly agree and 31, 2% agree on the fact that the PBL environment was enjoyable and exciting. Indeed, almost all the participants (87, 5% strongly agree and 31, 2% agree) had a great pleasure in attending the oral expression class, which indicates that the integration of PBL helped to attract students' attention and to raise their interest in attending oral classes.

Therefore, they never found it a boring experience, for their answers to Item 4 showed that 87, 5% of the participants strongly disagree and 12, 5% disagree. Moreover, the students' answers to Item 7 reveal that almost all the participants (68, 8% strongly agree and 31, 3% agree) did not feel bored in the oral class because the topics discussed were related to real life. Yet, two participants (6, 3%) disagree with the clue. Thus, 81, 2% of the participants never felt nervous when attending the PBL classroom. Nevertheless, 18, 8% expressed their disagreement.

As far as the PBL environment is concerned, almost the majority of participants (81, 2%) strongly agree that PBL provided them with an authentic learning environment since they discuss real-life topics. However, 18, 8% of the students expressed their disagreement with the idea. In addition, more than half of the participants 68, 8% strongly agree and 31, 3% agree that PBL was effective in creating a friendly learning atmosphere since it promotes collaboration and teamwork. However, two participants (6, 3%) disagree with the idea. Hence, the students' participation rates in the classroom increased (75% of the students strongly agree and 15, 6% agree), for they had a strong sense of motivation to participate in oral lessons. Nevertheless, only three participants (9, 4%) disagree.

Section Three: Students' Attitudes towards the Effectiveness of PBL

The main aim of this section is to probe into the participants' attitudes towards the effectiveness of PBL in the learning process. It contains 11 items.

Table 52: Students' attitudes towards the effectiveness of PBL

Item	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1. I feel more responsible to develop my speaking skill	14	43,8%	14	43,8%	4	12,5%	0	0%	32	100%
2. Teachers' and peers' feedback helped me develop my critical thinking skill	19	59,4%	8	31,3%	2	6,3%	3	9,4%	32	100%
3. I become more confident to speak in oral class	27	84,4%	4	12,5%	1	3,1%	0	0%	32	100%
4. I gained an intercultural insight after attending the oral expression subject	27	84,4%	4	12,5%	0	0%	1	3,1%	32	100%
5. I feel free to give my opinion concerning the topics to be discussed	25	78,1%	6	18,8%	1	3,1%	0	0%	32	100%
6. PBL lessons improved my general knowledge	17	53,1%	13	40,6%	2	6,3%	0	0%	32	100%
7. PBL promoted teamwork and collaboration inside and outside the classroom	30	93,7%	2	6,3%	0	0%	0	0%	32	100%
8. I developed my information and communication technologies thanks to PowerPoint presentations	17	53,1%	13	40,6%	2	6,3%	0	0%	32	100%
9. PBL contributed much to my creativity	22	68,8%	6	18,8%	2	6,3%	2	6,3%	32	100%
10. Speaking assignments were unnecessary and a waste of time	1	3,1%	1	3,1%	2	6,3%	28	87,5%	32	100%
11. English Speaking practice outside the classroom was very useful	17	53,1%	13	40,6%	2	6,3%	0	0%	32	100%

As far as the research findings related to this section are concerned, Table 52 reveals that students show positive attitudes towards the effectiveness of PBL in the learning process. 43,8% of the students strongly agree, and the same number of participants (43.80%) also expressed their agreement on becoming more responsible to develop their speaking skills. However, four participants (12.5%) disagree with the idea.

Regarding critical thinking, more than half of the students (59,4%) strongly agree and 31,3% agree with the fact that they developed their critical thinking thanks to their

teacher's and even peers' feedback. On the other hand, three participants 9,4% show their strong disagreement with this idea and the two remaining participants disagree.

As indicated in Table 52, 84, 4% of the participants strongly agreed and 12, 5% agreed on the idea that they gained enough self-confidence to take part in the speaking tasks. By contrast, only one student (3, 1%) disagrees.

Concerning cultural awareness, almost all the participants considered that PBL is effective in gaining intercultural insight. The participants' agreement about this idea was divided between strongly agree and agree by the percentages of 84, 4% and 12, 5% respectively. Nevertheless, one student (3, 1%) strongly disagrees.

As demonstrated in Table 52, 87, 1% of the students strongly agree and 18, 8% of them agree on the fact that they feel free to give their opinions concerning the topics to be discussed in the oral expression subject. However, a slight percentage of informants (3, 1%) representing one student shows disagreement.

Answers to Item 6 about the rich knowledge reveal that 53, 1% of the informants strongly agree and 40, 6% agree that they improved their general knowledge through PBL presentations. Yet, two participants disagree with the idea.

As far as teamwork and collaboration are concerned, almost all the participants 93, 7% strongly agreed and 6, 3% agreed that PBL promoted teamwork and collaboration between students inside and outside the classroom.

Moreover, 53, 1% of the students displayed their strong agreement and 40, 6% agreed on the fact that PBL improved their information and communication technologies skills due to using PowerPoint. However, two participants (6, 3%) showed their disagreement.

As far as the impact of PBL on students' creativity is concerned, a significant number of informants (68, 8%) strongly agree and 18, 8% agree that PBL contributed to

the development of their creativity. In addition, a slight number of participants (6, 3%) disagrees and the same percentage of participants (6, 3%) strongly disagrees.

Students' answers to Item 10 concerning the speaking assignment demonstrated that almost all the participants (87, 5%) expressed their strong disagreement and two participants (6, 3%) disagree on the fact that speaking assignments were unnecessary and a waste of time. By contrast, one student strongly agrees with the idea and one student showed an agreement position.

Regarding the last item in this section, more than half of the students (53, 1%) strongly agree that the speaking practice outside the classroom was very helpful and useful for them. Also, a significant percentage of students (40, 6%) represented their agreement position. Then, 6, 3% of the students disagree.

4.4.1. Discussion of the Results

The findings obtained from the students' responses to the attitudinal questionnaire towards the effectiveness of the PBL instruction indicated that almost all the participants have positive attitudes towards the integration of PBL in the oral expression subject. Actually, the results reveal the effectiveness of PBL in the learning process in general and in developing the speaking skill in particular.

As far as the students' speaking skill is concerned, results from section one showed that students agreed on the fact that PBL was an effective instruction to improve their oral performance (90, 6%) because it encourages practice inside and outside the classroom. Moreover, this innovative teaching approach had a significant contribution to developing the speaking sub-skills, naming fluency (87, 5%), listening and comprehension (84, 4%), vocabulary (78, 1%), accuracy (78, 1%), and pronunciation (75%). Furthermore, PBL provided students with a great opportunity to use the English language in real-life situations. It is worth noting that almost all the participants (81, 2%) opined that the PBL

approach increased their interest in participating in oral expression not just for the sake of grades, but to develop their oral performance. In addition, after experiencing the PBL strategy, students can initiate an English conversation easily since they developed their turn-taking skill through collaboration and team work. Actually, displaying an oral presentation in front of the teacher and classmates gave the students a real sense of achievement.

As far as the PBL environment is concerned, all the participants agreed that the PBL strategy created an enjoyable, exciting, and friendly learning atmosphere. Besides, it increased students' pleasure (87, 5%) and motivation (75%) to attend oral expression classes. Furthermore, the PBL approach promotes an authentic learning atmosphere through discussing real-life topics, so students will feel neither bored nor nervous when attending oral expression classes.

Students' responses to section three showed the efficiency and usefulness of PBL in enhancing students' academic achievement because it promotes autonomous and active learning. This is not surprising, 87, 6% of the students claimed that they became more responsible to develop their speaking skill due to the dynamic learning environment and active practice inside and outside the classroom (93, 7%). In addition, the PBL instruction had a significant contribution to the development of 21st century skills, such as collaboration (100%), critical thinking (90, 7%), and creativity (87, 6%). It is worth noting that PBL presentations improved students' intercultural awareness (84, 4%), and they developed their general knowledge (53, 1%) because of the diversity of the topics discussed and presented. In addition, PBL helped students to gain more self-confidence (84, 4%) and to take part of oral expression tasks (78, 8%).

The findings clearly indicated that the PBL approach inside oral expression classes gained a positive attitude among students because it provides them with an opportunity to

practice authentic language inside and outside the classroom. The participants' responses confirmed that PBL is an effective learning strategy for developing students' speaking skills and increasing their motivation and interest towards attending and participating in oral expression classes. The findings also revealed that the PBL environment is very attractive and enjoyable for learning purposes. Furthermore, the integration of PBL in the learning process develops the students' 21st century skills necessary for the outside world.

Findings from the attitudinal questionnaire are compatible with Yaman's (2014) findings, in his doctoral dissertation entitled "EFL Students' Attitudes towards the Development of Speaking Skills via Project-based Learning". He concluded that PBL "has significantly positive effects on the students' in terms of developing positive attitudes towards the lessons" (p. 178).

4.5. Focus Group Interview

Analysis of the Interview

After finalizing the interview, the teacher transcribed the recordings (a sample in Appendix L), and then the qualitative responses to each question were analyzed by means of content analysis, and they were categorized under the following themes: a) Benefits of PBL, b) the PBL environment, and c) challenges of using PBL.

a) Benefits of PBL

The students' responses under this theme were hovering around the most important benefits they gained and developed through the integration of the PBL instruction in the classroom. The theme consists of the following sub-themes.

• Speaking Skill Improvement

Almost all students ascertain that PBL had positive effects on their oral performance. They claimed that this strategy helped them in improving their speaking abilities in terms of different aspects. Several responses indicated that the participants

show positive feedback and attitudes towards the effectiveness of the PBL approach in enhancing their speaking skills. The following are some of the positive comments as stated by the participants:

Student 3

“Speaking English was my biggest dream. Through the every session presentation, I become more fluent and I can express my ideas freely”

Student 14

“This new strategy helped me to develop my English pronunciation and fluency because of the repetition and preparation of the presentations”

Student 9

“Listening to my friends presentations helped me to learn new words and enlarge my English dictionary”

Student 20

“I was surprised by the development I realized in my oral performance. Now I can speak in the classroom more than before”

Student 5

“Before, I found difficulties in understanding the English language, but now and through listening to my classmates’ presentations, my listening comprehension has improved and I can understand the language easily”

Student 11

“After the preparation of the oral presentations, I feel like I made less grammar mistakes than before when I speak English”

Student 17

“I feel more comfortable when I speak English. I become more confident when I speak or participate in the classroom”

• Real-World Practice

Authenticity is one of the most important benefits of PBL that was cited by the respondents. PBL provided students with an opportunity to discuss and prepare presentations about real-world topics. It is widely acknowledged that the topics presented in the oral expression lessons have better be within the students' interests to increase their engagement in the classroom. The respondents' comments are:

Student 8

“The topics discussed in the classroom were interesting and has a relation to our daily life”

Student 19

“I think discussing real life topics was very helpful for us to practice the English language”

Student 10

“PBL provided us with an opportunity for acting different roles to use the English language in the real-world situations”

Student 21

“The topics and activities we faced last year in the oral expression subject were boring and had no relation with our daily-life. However, this year, the oral courses become more interesting and enjoyable because we tackled the topics that attract our attention”

• Enhancing Autonomous Learning

A number of participants considered that PBL enhanced their engagement in the classroom. They reported that they became more active in the oral expression classes, and were willing to take control over their learning process. Their comments are:

Student 12

“I am more active in the oral classes now. I was passive before because I was just

listening to the teacher”

Student 23

“In PBL, everyone tried to be active in presenting his or her findings even the ones who were shy and whose English was not good”

Student 18

“PBL changed my learning process from being passive to an active learner”

Student 15

“I started to be more responsible in my learning process. I tried to speak better in every session and do my best next presentation”

Student 36

“I noticed that we started passive in the beginning of the year because of our experience in the last year. But, when we engaged in the presentations, we become more and more active and tried to make more efforts every time”

Student 27

“Before, I attended the oral expression subject only for the sake of getting a good mark in the exam. But this idea was changed after experiencing PBL and presentations. I become more interested in developing my oral performance”

• Promoting Motivation

Motivation is one of the most important outcomes of the PBL approach. Almost all the students reported that PBL promoted their motivation to attend, and to participate in, the oral expression classes. Some of their comments are:

Student 18

“I am very pleased to attend PBL class because it increased my motivation to develop my speaking skill”

Student 14

“The PBL strategy promoted my motivation through putting me in the core of my learning process”

Student 20

“Preparing oral presentations increased my motivation to participate and present in the oral expression class”

Student 31

“The PBL strategy inspired our motivation to attend oral expression subject and listen to our classmates’ presentations”

Student 22

“Working collaboratively and cooperatively increased our motivation to develop our speaking skill and attend the oral expression class”

• **Increasing Self-Confidence**

Self-confidence was another benefit reported by the participants. Students expressed that through the oral presentations in front of their teacher and classmates, they became less afraid of making mistakes; they increased their confidence to speak English and their willingness to participate in speaking activities. Students’ comments are illustrated below:

Student 4

“PBL increased my confidence to speak in English and I become more comfortable”

Student 16

“Before, I was so afraid of my teacher’s and peers’ negative reactions. But now I am no more afraid as I developed my self-confidence through the intensive preparation and presentations”

Student 9

“When I finish my presentation, I gain a sense of achievement; I become so proud of

myself”

Student 11

“PBL helped me to overcome my shyness. Now I can speak in English everywhere”

Student 23

“Thanks to PBL, the oral expression becomes my favorite subject because I can speak freely and listen to my friends presenting their findings. It’s really an interesting experience”

• **Promoting creativity**

Creativity is one of the surprising PBL benefits that were reported by some of the participants. Their comments are presented below:

Student 28

“After PBL experience, I become more creative in designing PowerPoint presentations”

Student 34

“The PBL strategy promoted my creativity in terms of the way I present and use language for every session”

Student 15

“From session to session and presentation to presentation I noticed that my classmates become more creative and every time they try to be different”

Student 6

“The PBL instruction helped to use technology as I had no experience on making PowerPoint presentations before. Now, I could prepare it by myself easily”

b) The PBL Environment

The majority of the participants expressed their positive attitudes towards the PBL learning environment as being new, attractive, and enjoyable for them. Moreover, they

stated that PBL creates a more enthusiastic learning atmosphere, which is different from the boring traditional one. Some of the participants' responses are:

Student 28

“The PBL strategy is a new and totally different teaching and learning approach from the class we had before”

Student 19

“I preferred learning through PBL because the learning environment it creates is very interesting and not stressful”

Student 20

“I was nervous before attending the boring oral expression class. But now I wait for it every week because I find myself in an enjoyable learning atmosphere”

Student 31

“Teamwork creates a positive learning atmosphere that encourages students to develop their knowledge and skills in a competitive way”

Student 2

“In the group working, we worked and discussed together; every member gave an idea, thus we learn from each other in an enjoyable learning atmosphere”

c) Challenges of Using PBL

Besides all the above mentioned benefits of PBL and students' positive comments, we also recorded some challenges and difficulties that the participants' faced when experienced PBL strategy and they are stated in this theme that contains the following sub-themes:

- **Lack of Time**

Some students reported that PBL is a time-consuming strategy in terms of PowerPoint preparation and the search for information. They claim that oral expression

was the only subject in which they had no homework; however, with PBL they need to design presentations which takes time. Their comments are presented below:

Student 3

“The PBL strategy needs time to design the presentation and repeat it many times before displaying it in the class, and I think this is the only negative point”

Student 9

“Designing the PPT presentation was difficult because we had no experience before and we need time to learn it”

Student 30

“We faced a problem concerning time management with PBL, it took time to prepare the presentation and search for the information online”

Student 12

“I think the major challenge concerning PBL is the lack of time. We spend a lot of time on searching for the information besides the other subjects’ assignments”

Student 10

“We have never thought that in oral expression subject we have preparation and home works but everything changed when we dealt with PBL since it requires a lot of preparation and we have no time”

- **Intensive preparation**

Some participants complained about the quantity of projects. They were not satisfied with every-week presentations because they had other subjects and tasks to prepare.

Student 13

“I have a lot of things to do after the class, and PBL needs a lot of preparation so I was not able to finish everything”

Student 29

“We faced some difficulties in preparing the presentations every week because it takes a lot of time and intensive preparation”

Student 8

“We have to repeat the presentation many times before the class so as we can perform it in a good way”

Discussion of the Interview Results

The purpose of the focus group interview was to explore the experimental group students' views and perceptions towards PBL, its benefits, and the challenges they faced. The obtained qualitative results were analyzed and thematically categorized into three main themes: Benefits of PBL, the PBL environment, and the challenges of using PBL.

The responses divulged that the participants show positive attitudes and beliefs about the PBL instruction. Their positive comments reflected their benefits from the treatment using PBL. Indeed, PBL helped the students to improve their speaking abilities, which is consistent with the results of the speaking tests.

First of all, the participants expressed their significant positive attitude towards incorporating PBL into the oral classes because it developed their speaking skills in terms of its various aspects. Indeed, participants ascertain that they benefited from the presentations inside the classroom in enhancing their fluency and language pronunciation. In addition, they appreciated listening to each others' presentations, which helped them in developing their comprehension and listening skills. Likewise, they appreciated the out-class preparation because it helped them to enlarge their vocabulary and to reduce their grammar mistakes. Definitely, the integration of PBL in oral expression classes had a significant effect on developing the students' oral performance.

Indeed, besides the improvement of students' speaking skills and oral performance,

other positive outcomes were mentioned by the participants when they were asked about the benefits they gained from PBL. The respondents agreed that they became more active and engaged in the learning process because they had enough real-world practice.

Furthermore, authentic and real-life topics are more interesting for students as they increase their motivation and willingness to speak and to participate in oral expression classes.

Furthermore, the participants figured out that the PBL environment through presentations was attractive and enjoyable for them. In addition, participants mentioned that they experienced a new learning environment that is totally different from the traditional one because it was less stressful and non-threatening, and it promoted self-confidence as it inspired their creativity. Also, the PBL collaborative aspect provided shy students with the opportunity to overcome their shyness and to become more confident. Unsurprisingly, it is apparent from the students' responses that the implementation of PBL in the oral class increased their motivation, which is one of the most important PBL outcomes.

Despite the variety of PBL benefits, the challenges still exist. From the interview, the main challenges recorded from the participants were the lack of time and intensive preparation with regard to PowerPoint presentations. Participants confirmed that PBL was beneficial for them, but at the same time it was time-consuming when searching for the information and preparing the presentation.

To conclude, almost all the participants showed positive attitudes towards PBL, and they were satisfied with the learning experience they went through. Thus, it can be stated that PBL has significant benefits for students, namely improving their speaking skill, enhancing their autonomous learning, promoting their motivation and creativity, and increasing their self-confidence as well. Moreover, PBL creates an interesting learning

environment. However, time shortage and intensive preparation might be some of the hindering challenges.

Conclusion

This chapter was devoted to the quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data obtained from the different research instruments along the experiment phase. We started by calculating the reliability of research instruments so as to ensure their consistency. The first section introduced the analysis and discussion of teachers' responses to the questionnaire that was administered before starting the treatment. The second section presented a detailed analysis of the experimental and control groups' speaking test results, from the pretest, three progressive tests, and the posttest, that were collected during the experiment. Then, the scores obtained were compared using a sample T-test. The last part presented the qualitative records gathered from the focus group interview with participants of the experiment group. It aimed to divulge their views regarding the integration of PBL in the oral expression subject. The analysis and interpretation of the results were presented in tables and figures followed by a discussion of findings.

CHAPTER FIVE :

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND

SUGGESTIONS

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Introduction

The previous chapter displayed a detailed analysis and interpretation of the results yielded from different research instruments; i.e., the speaking tests, the questionnaires, and the focus group interview. The findings answered the three research questions:

- a. To what extent is the PBL instruction effective in improving the EFL students' speaking skills?
- b. What are the students' attitudes and views towards the integration of PBL in the oral expression subject?
- c. Does the implementation of PBL affect the students' engagement in the learning process?

The current chapter presents the main conclusions drawn from the results obtained from the study along with answers to the research questions. It also puts forward some recommendations and their pedagogical implications for the successful PBL integration in EFL classes. Lastly, some suggestions are provided for future researchers who are interested in adopting the PBL instruction.

5.1. General Conclusion

The main concern of the current study is to scrutinize the impact of the PBL approach on EFL second-year students' speaking skills. We intended to explain the cause-and-effect relationship between the integration of PBL (independent variable) to enhance students' speaking abilities (dependent variable). We also targeted to answer research questions and to test the research hypotheses, set at the beginning of the study, throughout the different phases of the investigation.

The ground for this study began with the researcher's personal interest to suggest a new teaching and learning method to develop the students' speaking skill that fits their

needs and interests. The researcher observed during her academic career as a student and a part-time teacher that students at the Department of English cannot find enough opportunities to practice English speaking inside and outside the classroom in real-life situations. Moreover, the oral expression subject was generally a teacher-centered instruction, and the learning process was restricted to the classroom context. Hence, to prove the existence of the observed problem, the researcher relied on previous research studies about the topic under investigation, and a preliminary study was conducted in the form of a students' questionnaire. The results indicated that the students' speaking level was low, and the adopted teaching method was not adequate and does not fit their interests and needs. Therefore, the need for a new teaching approach becomes a necessity.

Accordingly, the researcher decided to handle the thorny problem of EFL students' oral performance through the implementation of the PBL approach in oral classes.

Accordingly, we hypothesized that:

- a. The PBL instruction may be effective in developing the EFL students' speaking skills
- b. Students would have positive attitudes towards PBL as an approach to develop their oral performance
- c. Students may show more interest and engagement as PBL is different from the ordinary passive learning environment.

To test the validity of our hypotheses, we adopted mixed methods or triangulation, being the quasi-experimental method and the descriptive method, to get deeper insights about the issue under investigation and to collect the needed data.

The subjects of the study were 72 second-year conveniently-selected students and nine oral expression purposively-selected teachers from the Department of English at Batna-2 University. The students constitute the experimental group and the control group

with 36 students in each. The quantitative and qualitative data were collected through speaking tests, questionnaires, and a post-treatment focus group interview.

Throughout the treatment which lasted sixteen (16) weeks during the whole academic year 2018-2019, the researcher herself designed and delivered the speaking lessons for both groups, being their teacher. The experimental group was taught using PBL and its features and principles, while the participants of the control group received speaking lessons through the traditional teaching method based on classroom discussions and debates. To limit the scope of the study and to confirm the effect of PBL on the speaking skill, it was important to select an evaluation rating scale to assess the students' oral performance in terms of five speaking aspects: Comprehension, vocabulary, grammar, fluency, and pronunciation.

Before we started the treatment (pre-treatment phase), a questionnaire had been administered to nine teachers to divulge how the oral expression subject is taught at the Department of English at Batna-2 University. In fact, the responses revealed that teachers have varying experiences in terms of teaching years, which reflects their adoption of different teaching methods and strategies since there is no official oral expression syllabus; however, it is individually designed. In such a subject, the students' oral performance is assessed based on the main speaking aspects, namely vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, fluency, and comprehension as well.

Unfortunately, the findings indicated that most of the teachers do not use any technological materials in the classroom as they focus on classroom discussions and debates as the main teaching in-class activities. Besides, no out-class activities are provided to give the students more opportunities to practice their speaking skills. Worthily noted is that all the teachers positively perceive the PBL instruction and the significant

effect of its features on the students' academic performance in general and in the development of their speaking skill in particular.

The results of the pretest ascertained that there is no statistically significant difference between both groups' oral performances as they were similar in terms of their speaking abilities which were below the average. Furthermore, the initial assessment of the participants' oral performance revealed that second year students encounter serious weaknesses and difficulties in performing an adequate and appropriate oral production in terms of the five speaking aspects: Comprehension, vocabulary, grammar, fluency, and pronunciation. Therefore, these findings helped the researcher to initiate the implementation of the PBL approach and to attribute any development of the students' oral performance to the new integrated strategy.

After administering the pretest, the researcher introduced the speaking lessons which were divided into four units. Every unit consists of real-life topics and projects which are related to the students' daily life. Indeed, the experimental group students' were divided into groups of two students to work collaboratively, and each group selected a project theme based on the topic of each unit to prepare a final presentation to display orally in the classroom. On the other hand, the control group students discussed the same real-life topics but without any preparation or collaboration; only classroom discussions based on their knowledge about the topic are focused upon.

Throughout the treatment phase, three progress tests were administered to both groups to evaluate the progress (if any) in the students' oral performance. The results obtained revealed that the participants of both groups showed progress at varying rates in terms of the speaking aspects. However, it was clearly indicated that the experimental group transcended and outperformed the control group. The experimental group students recorded good scores in comprehension, vocabulary, and pronunciation aspects, while the

control group's scores were above average. Concerning grammar and fluency, the achieved scores of the experimental group were above average, by contrast to the control group scores which were still poor.

At the end of the treatment, a posttest was administered to both groups to check whether there are any differences between their scores. Interestingly, the statistical analysis of the findings gathered through the posttest yielded that there is a significant difference between the experimental and control groups' scores in favour of the experimental group. In fact, participants who experienced the PBL instruction did significantly better in the posttest than those students who were taught through the traditional method. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected, and the research hypothesis was confirmed. Accordingly, we can state that the oral performance of the experimental group students was developed due to the implementation of the PBL approach

Thoroughly, the analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data gathered from the students' attitudinal questionnaire supported by the focus group interview, which were administered during the post-treatment phase, turn out to be in favour of the PBL approach. The students' positive responses indicated that they had positive attitudes towards the integration of PBL in the oral expression subject. Actually, the results reveal the effectiveness of PBL in the learning process in general and in developing the speaking skill in particular. Indeed, besides the improvement of students' oral performance, other PBL benefits were mentioned by the participants:

- ✓ Real-world practice
- ✓ Enhancing autonomous learning
- ✓ Promoting motivation
- ✓ Increasing self-confidence
- ✓ Promoting creativity

- ✓ Creating an attractive and enjoyable learning environment

However, students complained about some difficulties which they faced during their PBL experience, which were the lack of time and intensive preparation. Indeed, the PBL approach requires a lot of preparation when searching for information and designing the PowerPoint presentations.

Thus, the present study provides a significant evidence for the effect of the PBL approach in developing EFL second year students' speaking skills. Moreover, this implemented approach increased the students' motivation, engagement, autonomous-learning, and positive attitudes towards the oral expression subject. Hence, these facts strongly support the research hypotheses. As a result, these findings are consistent with the results of other studies which proved the effectiveness of the PBL approach in developing students' speaking skills, such as the studies of Wilhelm et al. (2008), Maulany (2013), Radjab et al. (2013), Yaman (2014), Abubakar (2015), Yiyang (2015), Rochmahwati (2016), Yang and Puakpong (2016), Zare-Behtash and Sarlak (2017), Simbolon et al. (2019), and Marlina (2021).

From the researcher's observation throughout the investigation, the experimental group students show great interest, engagement, and motivation towards the oral lessons as they reduced their absences and attended all the sessions with great enthusiasm. Moreover, they created an enjoyable learning atmosphere when collaborating and presenting their findings. Hence, it can be concluded from this observation that the integrated treatment enhanced not only the students' speaking skill, but also their motivation and autonomous learning. By contrast, the control group students showed less interest and motivation towards the speaking class. This fact was obvious from their irregularity in attending the oral expression session and the boring learning atmosphere.

It should be noted that we frequently registered requests from students belonging to

different groups to attend the oral expression class with the experimental group because they have heard about the enjoyable and attractive learning atmosphere that the new integrated teaching approach creates. After the teacher's approval, and at the end of the session, we asked the attendees to provide us with their observations to enrich our study. Every time, they gave positive comments saying that the learning environment is very interesting and effective in developing the students' oral performance.

5.2. Answers of Research Questions

In the present study, the different data gathering tools were employed for the sake of answering the research questions. According to the quantitative and qualitative findings, we drew the following answers:

Research Question 1. To what extent is the PBL instruction effective in improving the EFL students' speaking skills?

The quantitative and qualitative findings obtained from the different research instruments (speaking tests, the attitudinal questionnaire, and focus group interview) indicated that the PBL approach has a significant positive impact on improving second year EFL students' speaking skills. Therefore, the intensive practice inside and outside the classroom effectively contributed to enhancing students' oral proficiency in terms of its five aspects, naming comprehension, vocabulary, grammar, fluency, and pronunciation

Research Question 2. What are the students' attitudes and views towards the integration of PBL in the oral expression subject?

Students clearly indicated their positive attitudes towards integrating the PBL approach in the oral expression subject. Such stances reflect their motivation in attending the oral class, their engagement, and the positive comments we recorded throughout the interview. From the students' point of view, the PBL instruction provided them with an opportunity to practice their English speaking inside and outside the classroom, enhanced

their oral performance, and promoted their autonomous learning and collaboration.

Research Question 3. Does the implementation of PBL affect the students' engagement in the learning process?

In fact, PBL is perceived as an effective teaching approach to promote students' engagement in the learning process and to foster their autonomous learning. Moreover, PBL provides students with greater opportunities to go beyond the classroom context by involving them in real-life practices to create their own knowledge. The reported benefits of the PBL approach suggest that we could replace the passive traditional teacher-centered instructions with active student-centered learning.

5.3. Recommendations and their Pedagogical Implications

In the light of the present study's results and discussions that indicated the effectiveness of the PBL approach in improving the students' speaking skill, the following recommendations are worthily stated:

- a. Teachers should cope with modern teaching methods and strategies that fit the 21st century students' needs and interests.
- b. The PBL approach is strongly recommended for teaching speaking to EFL students of different levels taking into consideration their age, linguistic proficiency levels, needs, and interests.
- c. The PBL approach is highly recommended as a teaching approach as it develops not only the language skills, but also 21st century skills, namely autonomous learning, critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and problem solving.
- d. Considering all the PBL benefits recorded in this study, it is recommended to incorporate PBL into all subjects as it helps to shift from the teacher-centered traditional approach to modern learner-centered classes.

- e.** PBL as a student-centered instructional approach is recommended to be implemented in EFL classes because it is feasible to promote students' engagement and motivation.
- f.** PBL preparation and final product presentations are highly recommended in the EFL classes because they help students to gain more self-confidence and to improve their performances.
- g.** The development of the speaking skill and its aspects should be given more attention in our EFL curriculum through emphasizing in-class and out-class activities.
- h.** Students should be aware of the aspects and components of the speaking skill so that they can develop and evaluate them properly.
- i.** The implementation and design of PBL lessons should take into account the diversity of students' learning styles.
- j.** The time allotted to the oral expression subject should be increased as it is the only session where students can speak freely and express themselves orally.
- k.** Students should be offered enough opportunities to practice speaking inside the classroom by minimizing the number of students in every group.
- l.** PBL projects and oral activities should be related to real-life and should target authentic purposes.
- m.** Teachers should create a relaxed and non-threatening learning environment so as to help students get rid of their psychological factors that hinder them from developing their speaking skills.
- n.** Students should be encouraged to be more active, autonomous, and less dependent on the teacher as the only source of information.
- o.** PBL entails a necessary change in the teachers' role from being dominant, authority figure, and information provider to a facilitator and guider.

- p.** Besides the intensive focus on vocabulary and pronunciation, EFL teachers should give more attention to the enhancement of the different speaking aspects, namely conversation management, turn taking, discourse organization, non-verbal communication, and fluency as well.
- q.** Teaching EFL speaking through PBL should be grounded in an adequate project that fits students' needs, interests, and learning styles and strategies.
- r.** Teachers are recommended to adopt a variety of project-based activities in the classroom, taking into consideration students' level, needs, interests, and learning styles. Thus, students can create videos to tell a story, to present news, to interview people about a specific topic of interest.
- s.** Teachers of oral expression should collaborate and coordinate to design a unified syllabus of the EFL oral expression subject supported by the implementation of the PBL approach.
- t.** Students should be offered more opportunities to self-evaluate their oral performances and to comment on their peers' performance (peer feedback), which helps them to become more independent and more involved in the learning process.
- u.** Teachers should encourage public performances to increase the students' awareness of the sense and the importance of public speaking.
- v.** Students should be supported to improve their technological skills, such as searching for information on the Internet and using PowerPoint for their presentations.
- w.** Supportive feedback should be offered immediately after the students' presentations in order to help them identify their speaking weaknesses and to find the appropriate ways of overcoming them.
- x.** Students' assessment should not be limited to teachers, but students should assess their own oral performance and those of their classmates.

- y. To increase students' and teachers' awareness of the effectiveness of PBL in EFL learners' performances, there is a need for conducting seminars, conferences, study days, and workshops to motivate them to adopt this innovative teaching and learning approach in an appropriate way.
- z. To deal with the problem of time management to do projects in PBL, students need constant guidance, encouragement, and support from their teachers to help them set achievable learning goals in a set time frame.

5.4. Suggestions for Further Research

In the light of the present study findings, the following research studies can be suggested especially for future researchers who are interested in exploring the PBL instruction.

- a. Further research is needed to explore the effectiveness of PBL in developing different EFL students' skills such as listening, reading, and writing.
- b. Further research can be conducted with participants from different educational levels in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the effectiveness of PBL.
- c. Further research is needed to explore the effectiveness of PBL in raising students' intercultural awareness.
- d. Further research is needed to extend the research on the PBL effectiveness in developing students' performances and academic achievement from different branches and universities.
- e. Further research is needed to explore the effectiveness of other project-based activities with different types of end products in the EFL higher education.
- f. Further research studies are needed to deeply investigate the effectiveness of PBL in one aspect of the speaking skill, especially fluency and pronunciation.
- g. Further research is needed to investigate the relationship between PBL and students' motivation.

- h. Further research is needed to investigate the effect of PBL on the development of students' autonomous learning.
- i. Further research is needed to explore how PBL can be adaptable to take account of students' different learning styles.
- j. Further research is needed to investigate the efficacy of PBL through the comparison of its effects on different skills such as speaking and listening, which would be more enlightening for EFL teachers.
- k. Another prospective study can look into the impact of PBL on English for specific purposes (ESP) courses.
- l. Further research is needed to examine the effect of other variables, such as age and gender, on students' engagement in the PBL environment.
- m. Further research is needed to investigate EFL teachers' attitudes towards the PBL strategy, which is useful in order to achieve better understanding of the integration of PBL in the EFL context.
- n. Further research is needed to explore the impact of PowerPoint presentations in oral classes on students' fluency, listening comprehension, and pronunciation.

Conclusion

This chapter outlined the main conclusions drawn from the research findings, and presented some recommendations and suggestions for both educators and for further researchers. It can be concluded that PBL is a new and effective teaching instruction in which students effectively develop their speaking abilities, enhance their autonomous learning, collaborate, and promote their motivation and engagement in the classroom. The current study highlighted interesting points to be considered in the Algerian EFL classes regarding the appropriate integration of the PBL approach in oral expression classes to

enhance students' oral performances.

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Appendices

Appendix A. Student's Preliminary Questionnaire

Dear students,

You are kindly requested to answer the following questions concerning your relationship with the speaking skill, oral expression course, and oral expression teachers' methods. We are looking for your personal opinion and sincere answers to guarantee the success of our investigation.

Thank you for your cooperation

1. Specify your gender Male Female
2. Specify your age
3. Classify the following four skills in terms of importance according to you?
 - a- Listening b-Speaking c-Reading d-Writing
4. Which of the following skills you prefer to express your ideas and thoughts through?
 - a- Speaking b-Writing
5. Do you find difficulties when speaking English?
 - a. Yes b. No
6. If "yes, are those difficulties due to your inadequate mastery of:
 - a. Vocabulary
 - b. Grammar
 - c. Pronunciation
 - d. Fluency
 - f. Others, please specify
.....
7. Do you feel that your oral skill is improving due to the oral session?

a. Yes b. No

Justify your answer

.....

8. How often do you participate in the oral expression session?

a. Very often b. Sometimes c. Rarely d. Not at all

9. In the oral expression subject, do you find yourself in:

a. Teacher-centered classroom b. Learner-centered classroom

Justify your answer

.....

10. Which of the following activities does your oral expression teacher use more?

a_ Debates and discussion b_ Role play c_ Dialogues and interviews d_ Presentations

11. Do you think that working in groups will help you more in developing your speaking ability?

a. Yes b. No

Justify your answer

.....

12. Was your first year teacher's method in teaching Oral expression helpful for the students' nowadays?

a. Yes b. No

Justify your answer

.....

13. What are the topics which you prefer discussing in the oral expression session?

a. Political b. Literature c. religion d. Culture e. Sport f. Social life

Others, specify

14. State any further suggestions, if there are, that you find them helpful to develop students' speaking abilities through the oral expression course.

.....

.....

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.....

.....

.....

Appendix B. Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear teachers,

This questionnaire is part of a research work carried out in the framework of a Doctorate degree entitled: "Developing the speaking Skill in English as a foreign Language through Project-Based Learning". It aims at gathering information about the techniques that you use to teach the oral expression subject to second year students. Hence, your contribution would be of great help for getting deep understanding of the issue under investigation.

You are kindly requested to tick the appropriate box and provide your opinions and comments wherever necessary.

Thank you

Section One: Background Information

1. Specify your age _____
2. Specify your gender Male Female
3. Specify your qualification _____
4. How long have you been teaching the oral expression subject? _____

Section Two: Oral Expression Subject / Speaking Skill

5. How do you consider students' level in English speaking?

Good Average Low

Justify your choice

.....

6. Based on your experience, state some factors and problems that hinder students from developing their speaking skill in the oral expression subject

.....

7. The oral expression syllabus is:

Officially distributed Planned with colleagues Self-prepared

8. What are the learning objectives that you intend to achieve in the oral expression subject?

.....

9. Which of the following speaking activities do you use in your oral expression classes?

Debates and discussions Role-play

Presentations Story telling Songs

Games

Songs

Others:

10. What are the materials that you use in oral expression classes?

.....

11. Do you provide out-class activities to encourage your students develop their speaking skill outside the classroom?

Yes No

12. What speaking aspects do you focus on for assessing the students' oral performance?

.....

Section Three: Teachers' Perceptions of Project-Based Learning

13. Based on your knowledge, what are the main features that define the PBL approach?

.....

14. Do you think integrating the PBL approach in the EFL context helps students develop their academic performances?

Yes No

Justify

.....

15. Could you please state some benefits of integrating the PBL approach in EFL classes?

.....

16. Do you think a student-centered learning environment is beneficial to EFL students?

Yes No

17. Do you think the PBL approach may encourage students to make more efforts to develop their performances than in traditional classes?

Yes No

Justify your choice

.....

Section Four: Project-Based Learning and the Speaking Skill

18. Does group work enhance the learners' speaking skill?

Yes No

19. Do you think preparing final products to display in oral expression classes develops the students' oral performance?

Yes No

20. Do you think discussing authentic and real-life topics in the oral expression subject fosters students' motivation to speak English?

Yes No

21. Do you recommend the use of PowerPoint presentations in the oral expression classroom to motivate students to speak and improve their speaking skills?

Yes

No

22. Do you think integrating the PBL approach increases students' interest to perform better orally?

Yes

No

Justify

.....

Appendix C. Students' Attitudinal Questionnaire

Dear students,

This questionnaire is part of a research work carried out in the framework of a Doctorate degree entitled: "Developing the Speaking Skill in English as a Foreign Language through Project-Based Learning". It aims to specify your attitudes towards the oral expression subject and the speaking skill after experiencing the PBL approach. Hence, your contribution would be of great help for getting deep understanding of the issue under investigation.

You are kindly requested to tick the appropriate box

Thank you

Section One: PBL and the Speaking Skill Development

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. PBL improved my oral performance				
2. PBL was helpful to broaden my vocabulary				
3. PBL was helpful to improve my pronunciation				
4. Through practice inside and outside the classroom, I developed my fluency				
5. PBL provided me with an opportunity to use English in my daily-life situations				
6. Regular listening to classmates' presentations helped me to improve my listening and comprehension skills				
7. PBL made a significant contribution to reducing my grammar mistakes while speaking				
8. Through PBL, I developed turn-taking skills, which is important for the outside world				
9. I can initiate an English conversation easily				
10. My speaking performance gives me a real sense of achievement				
11. PBL provided me with an opportunity to develop my English oral performance inside and outside the class as well				
12. After experiencing PBL, improving my oral performance becomes more important than getting a high score				
13. PBL increased my interest in developing my speaking skills				

Section Two. Students' Attitudes towards the PBL Environment

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. The PBL environment was enjoyable and exciting				
2. I have great pleasure in attending oral expression classes				
3. I have strong motivation to participate in oral lessons				
4. PBL classes were a boring experience				
5. PBL provided us with an authentic learning environment				
6. The PBL environment helped to create a friendly atmosphere				
7. PBL topics were related to real life, so I did not feel bored in the classroom				
8. I feel nervous when attending PBL classes				

Section Three. Students' Attitudes Towards the Effectiveness of PBL

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. I feel more responsible to develop my speaking skill				
2. Teachers' and peers' feedback helped me develop my critical thinking skill				
3. I become more confident to speak in the oral class				
4. I gained an intercultural insight after attending the oral expression subject				
5. I feel free to give my opinion concerning the topics to be discussed				
6. PBL lessons improved my general knowledge				
7. PBL promoted teamwork and collaboration inside and outside the classroom				
8. I developed my information and communication technologies thanks to PowerPoint presentations				
9. PBL contributed much to my creativity				
10. Speaking assignments were unnecessary and a waste of time				
11. English Speaking practice outside the classroom was very useful				

Appendix D. Focus Group Interview Questions

1. Can you qualify the project-based learning instruction with an adjective?
2. How do you evaluate your oral performance after experiencing the PBL approach?
3. What can you say about the effect of PBL on your speaking sub-skills?
4. Can you state some benefits you gained from learning through PBL?
5. What can you say about the learning environment you have experienced this year?
6. How do you consider your role in the learning process through PBL?
7. What can you say about the topics discussed?
8. Did PBL help you to actively take part in the oral expression lessons? Explain
9. How do you find the experience of learning in group?
10. What were the difficulties and challenges you encountered during PBL?

Dveloped by the researcher

Appendix E. Opinion Questions Asked in the Pre-Test and Posttest

1. What are the requirements for being a happy person?
2. What do you think of wearing school uniforms in the Algerian schools?
3. What are the characteristics of an intelligent person?
4. What are the ways to resolve relationship problems in families or at work?
5. Will English replace French language in Algeria?
6. What do you think about video games for children?
7. Should smoking be banned in public spaces?
8. Do you think most people use their time and money carefully?
9. Where do you get your news about what's happening in the world? Why?
10. Describe the benefits of talking many languages.
11. What are the effects of technology on Algerian students?
12. Nowadays people are becoming more selfish, do you agree?
13. Do you agree with: "money makes the world go around"?
14. When you buy something, what is most important to you: price, quality, fashion trend, status/image?
15. What are the techniques that teachers can use to create an enjoyable and interesting learning atmosphere?
16. What are the characteristics of a 'real friend'?
17. Do you agree with "Men should do an equal share of the housework with women"?
18. What are the most important criteria for choosing a good job?
19. How can you describe the role of women in Algerian society?

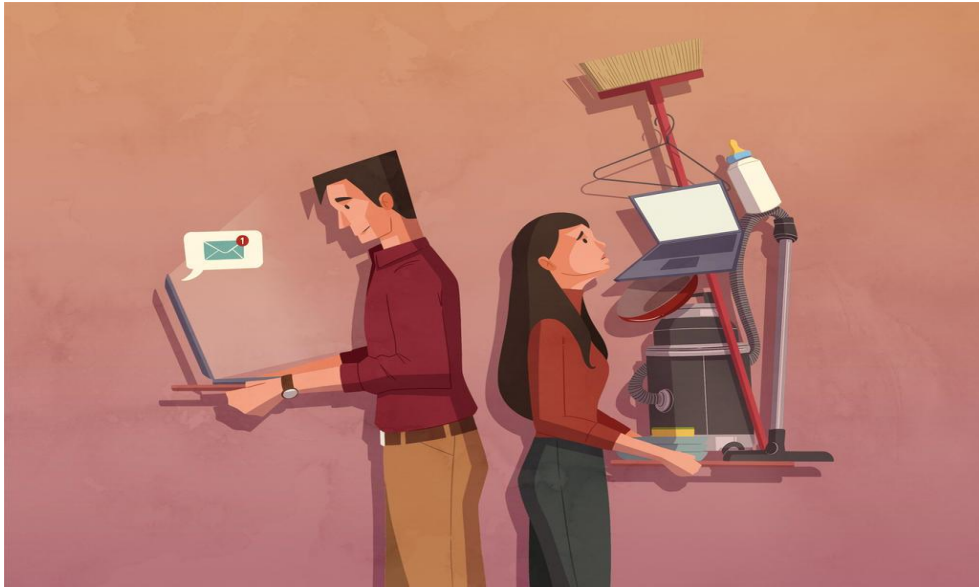
Adapted from Yaman (2014, p. 268)

Appendix F. If Questions Asked in the Pre-Test and Posttest

1. If you could be a character from a movie, who would you be?
2. If you were given the opportunity to start your life again, what would you change?
3. If you could invent something, what would it be?
4. If you could eat only one type of food for the rest of your life, what would you choose and why?
5. If you were given three wishes, what would you wish for?
6. If you could live in any country in the world, where would you like to live?
7. If you could invent something, what would you choose?
8. If you had the chance to be intelligent, famous, happy, or rich, which one would you choose?
9. If telephone was not invented, how would people's life be?
10. If you have two-hours left on earth, what would you do?
11. If you had to live without internet for a week, what would you do to keep your life busy?
12. If you were a member of the opposite sex for one day, what would you do?
13. If you were the president of your country, what would you do?
14. If you could have any super power, which one you want to have?
15. If you could only use one website for the rest of your life, what would it be?
16. If you were trapped on an island, what three things would you bring?
17. If you could make one law in the world, what would it be?
18. If you were given 1 million dollars, what would you do with it?
19. If you could spend a day with anyone, who would it be and why?

Developed by the researcher

Appendix G. Pictures Used in Progress Test N1








Appendix H. Criteria for Speaking Performance Assessment (primary form)

Criteria	Comprehension	Vocabulary	Grammar	Fluency	Pronunciation
5	Appears to understand everything without difficulty	Speaks in L2 with accurate English words	Produces complete and accurate sentences	Speaks in L2 very fluently and effortlessly.	Speaks in L2 Intelligibly and has few traces of foreign accent.
4	Understands nearly everything at normal speed, although occasional repetition may be necessary.	Speaks mostly in L2 with few L1 words	Produces some phrases instead of complete sentences with consistent and accurate word order or produces consistent omitted sentence	Speaks in L2 less fluently due to few problems of vocabulary/selection of word.	Speaks mostly in L2 Intelligibly with mother tongue accent.
3	Understands most of what is said at slower-than-normal speed with many repetitions.	Produces 4-6 English words.	Produces inconsistent and incorrect sentences/ phrases	Speaks mostly in L2 with some long pauses and hesitancy.	Speaks mostly in L1, but produces 1-3 English words and pronounce them in intelligible mother tongue accent.
2	Has great difficulty understanding what is said, often misunderstands the Qs.	Produces 1-3 English words. due to very limited vocabulary	Answers mostly in L1, with 1-3 English words/phrases (Madsen, 1983).	Speaks mostly in L1, Tries to speak in L2 but so halting with so many pauses.	Speaks mostly in L1, but produces 1-3 English words. Needs some repetition in pronouncing the words to understand them.
1	Unable to comprehend the material so that unable to express/respond the questions correctly.	Vocabulary limitations so extreme as to make conversation in L2 virtually impossible so that the student speaks in L1 all the time.	Unidentified because of speaking in L1 all the time.	Unidentified because of speaking in L1 all the time.	Unidentified because of speaking in L1 all the time

Appendix I. Short Story for Progress Test N2

YouTube ^{DZ}



Learn English Through Story. Rich man, poor man

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tELWkyJdUto>

One day a postman came to my village. The postman brought me a letter from my son, Saul.

“Is your name Adam?” the postman asked.

“Yes,” I said.

“I’ve got a letter for you.” The postman read the envelope: “Adam of the village of Minta.”

“A letter for me. Who is it from?” I asked.

The postman looked at the envelope again. “From Saul,” he said. He gave me the letter and walked away.



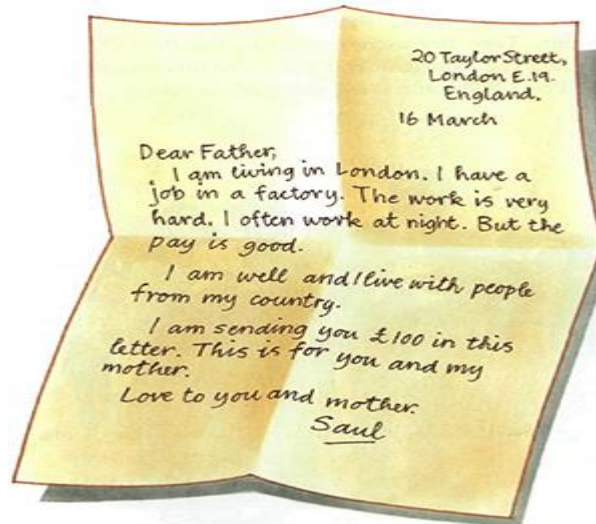
“Martha, Martha,” I called to my wife. “Come here. We have a letter from our son, Saul.”

Martha came out and looked at the letter. She was excited but she was also worried.

“A letter from Saul,” she said. “Is he alive and well? I’m going to find the school teacher. He can read the letter.”



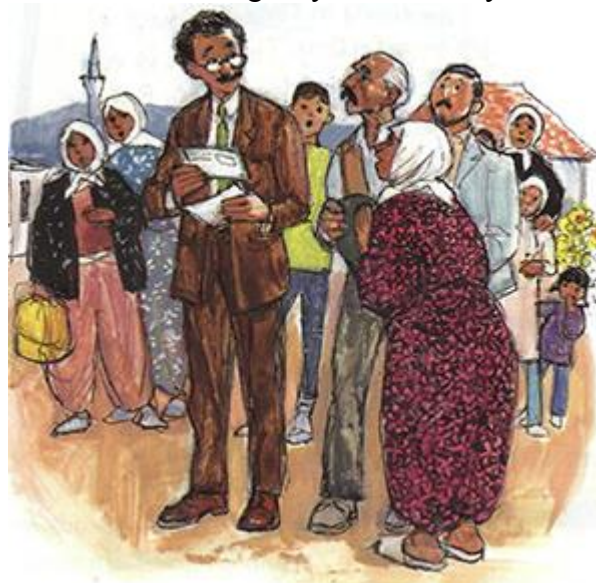
There was no school fifty years ago. So I cannot read or write. I live in a small village. The only work is farming. My only son, Saul, left the village two years ago and my three daughters are married. Saul is making a lot of money in a foreign country. Martha and the school teacher came back. A lot of other people came. Everyone wanted to hear my letter. The school teacher opened the envelope and read the letter.



“One hundred pounds!” I said to the school teacher. “You’re wrong. It’s a mistake.”
 “No”, the school teacher said. “I’m not wrong. It’s not a mistake. Here is the money.” And he gave me a piece of paper.

“What is this?” I asked.

“A money order,” the school teacher said. “Go to Darpur. Take this money order to the Post Office in Darpur. The money order is worth one hundred pounds. The Post Office official will give you the money.”



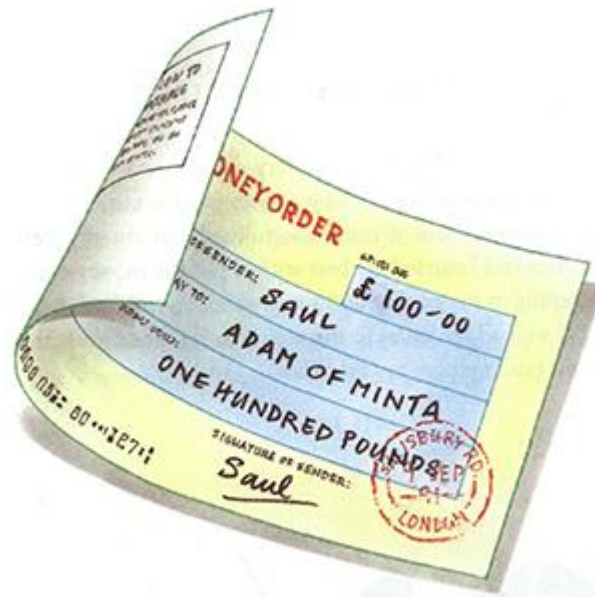
“One hundred pounds!” I said again.

Everyone laughed and said, “Adam, you are a rich man. You can buy many things for your farm and for your house.”

“And I can buy some good food and drink in Darpur. I am going to give a party for you all,” I told my friends.

Martha said, “Saul is a good son.”

That evening, the village people talked about the money order and my money. Martha and I also talked about the money. We needed many things for the farm.



Appendix J. Animated Short Film for Progress Test N3



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=15nR7nhFRZE>

Appendix K. Table of Critical Values of T- Test

t Table

cum. prob one-tail	$t_{.50}$	$t_{.75}$	$t_{.80}$	$t_{.85}$	$t_{.90}$	$t_{.95}$	$t_{.975}$	$t_{.99}$	$t_{.995}$	$t_{.999}$	$t_{.9995}$
two-tails	1.00	0.50	0.40	0.30	0.20	0.10	0.05	0.02	0.01	0.002	0.001
df											
1	0.000	1.000	1.376	1.963	3.078	6.314	12.71	31.82	63.66	318.31	636.62
2	0.000	0.816	1.061	1.386	1.886	2.920	4.303	6.965	9.925	22.327	31.599
3	0.000	0.765	0.978	1.250	1.638	2.353	3.182	4.541	5.841	10.215	12.924
4	0.000	0.741	0.941	1.190	1.533	2.132	2.776	3.747	4.604	7.173	8.610
5	0.000	0.727	0.920	1.156	1.476	2.015	2.571	3.365	4.032	5.893	6.869
6	0.000	0.718	0.906	1.134	1.440	1.943	2.447	3.143	3.707	5.208	5.959
7	0.000	0.711	0.896	1.119	1.415	1.895	2.365	2.998	3.499	4.785	5.408
8	0.000	0.706	0.889	1.108	1.397	1.860	2.306	2.896	3.355	4.501	5.041
9	0.000	0.703	0.883	1.100	1.383	1.833	2.262	2.821	3.250	4.297	4.781
10	0.000	0.700	0.879	1.093	1.372	1.812	2.228	2.764	3.169	4.144	4.587
11	0.000	0.697	0.876	1.088	1.363	1.796	2.201	2.718	3.106	4.025	4.437
12	0.000	0.695	0.873	1.083	1.356	1.782	2.179	2.681	3.055	3.930	4.318
13	0.000	0.694	0.870	1.079	1.350	1.771	2.160	2.650	3.012	3.852	4.221
14	0.000	0.692	0.868	1.076	1.345	1.761	2.145	2.624	2.977	3.787	4.140
15	0.000	0.691	0.866	1.074	1.341	1.753	2.131	2.602	2.947	3.733	4.073
16	0.000	0.690	0.865	1.071	1.337	1.746	2.120	2.583	2.921	3.686	4.015
17	0.000	0.689	0.863	1.069	1.333	1.740	2.110	2.567	2.898	3.646	3.965
18	0.000	0.688	0.862	1.067	1.330	1.734	2.101	2.552	2.878	3.610	3.922
19	0.000	0.688	0.861	1.066	1.328	1.729	2.093	2.539	2.861	3.579	3.883
20	0.000	0.687	0.860	1.064	1.325	1.725	2.086	2.528	2.845	3.552	3.850
21	0.000	0.686	0.859	1.063	1.323	1.721	2.080	2.518	2.831	3.527	3.819
22	0.000	0.686	0.858	1.061	1.321	1.717	2.074	2.508	2.819	3.505	3.792
23	0.000	0.685	0.858	1.060	1.319	1.714	2.069	2.500	2.807	3.485	3.768
24	0.000	0.685	0.857	1.059	1.318	1.711	2.064	2.492	2.797	3.467	3.745
25	0.000	0.684	0.856	1.058	1.316	1.708	2.060	2.485	2.787	3.450	3.725
26	0.000	0.684	0.856	1.058	1.315	1.706	2.056	2.479	2.779	3.435	3.707
27	0.000	0.684	0.855	1.057	1.314	1.703	2.052	2.473	2.771	3.421	3.690
28	0.000	0.683	0.855	1.056	1.313	1.701	2.048	2.467	2.763	3.408	3.674
29	0.000	0.683	0.854	1.055	1.311	1.699	2.045	2.462	2.756	3.396	3.659
30	0.000	0.683	0.854	1.055	1.310	1.697	2.042	2.457	2.750	3.385	3.646
40	0.000	0.681	0.851	1.050	1.303	1.684	2.021	2.423	2.704	3.307	3.551
60	0.000	0.679	0.848	1.045	1.296	1.671	2.000	2.390	2.660	3.232	3.460
80	0.000	0.678	0.846	1.043	1.292	1.664	1.990	2.374	2.639	3.195	3.416
100	0.000	0.677	0.845	1.042	1.290	1.660	1.984	2.364	2.626	3.174	3.390
1000	0.000	0.675	0.842	1.037	1.282	1.646	1.962	2.330	2.581	3.098	3.300
Z	0.000	0.674	0.842	1.036	1.282	1.645	1.960	2.326	2.576	3.090	3.291
	0%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	95%	98%	99%	99.8%	99.9%
	Confidence Level										

Appendix L. Transcription of a Sample Focus Group Interview

1. Can you qualify the project-based learning instruction with an adjective ?

New, interesting, enjoyable, attractive, different, beneficial, helpful

2. How do you evaluate your oral performance after experiencing the PBL approach ?

“I was surprised by the development I realized in my oral performance. Now I can speak in the classroom more than before”

3. What can you say about the effect of PBL on your speaking sub-skills ?

“This new strategy helped me to develop my English pronunciation and fluency because of the repetition and preparation of the presentations”

4. Can you state some benefits you gained from learning through PBL ?

“PBL helped me to overcome my shyness. Now I can speak in English everywhere”

“After PBL experience, I become more creative in designing PowerPoint presentations”

“I am very pleased to attend PBL class because it increased my motivation to develop my speaking skill”

5. What can you say about the learning environment you have experienced this year ?

“I was nervous before attending the boring oral expression class. But now I wait for it every week because I find myself in an enjoyable learning atmosphere”

6. How do you consider your role in the learning process through PBL ?

“I started to be more responsible in my learning process. I tried to speak better in every session and do my best next presentation”

7. What can you say about the topics discussed?

“PBL provided us with an opportunity for acting different roles to use the English language in the real-world situations”

8. Did PBL help you to actively take part in the oral expression lessons? Explain

“Yes, everyone tried to be active in presenting his or her findings even the ones who were shy and whose English was not good”

9. How do you find the experience of learning in group?

“Working collaboratively and cooperatively increased our motivation to develop our speaking skill and attend the oral expression class”

10. What were the difficulties and challenges you encountered during PBL ?

“I think the major challenge concerning PBL is the lack of time. We spend a lot of time on searching for the information besides the other subjects’ assignments”

الملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى التحقيق في التأثيرات المترتبة على التعليم القائم على المشاريع، أو ما يعرف ب (PBL) بشأن مهارات التحدث لدى طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية من خلال إجراء دراسة حالة على طلاب السنة الثانية في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية في جامعة باتنة 2. وبالتالي، افترضنا أن PBL هو نهج تدريسي فعال يطور مهارات التحدث لدى الطلاب ويزيد من مشاركتهم واهتمامهم بموضوع التعبير الشفهي. وبالإضافة إلى ذلك، افترضنا أن الطلاب سيظهرون مواقف إيجابية تجاه إدماج PBL في مادة التعبير الشفهي. لاختبار صحة هذه الفرضيات البحثية وتحقيق الأهداف المسطرة للدراسة، تم استخدام الأساليب المختلطة لكل من المنهجين شبه التجريبي والوصفي. أجريت الدراسة خلال السنة الدراسية 2018-2019. المشاركون في الدراسة هم اثنين وسبعون (72) طالبا في السنة الثانية مقسمين إلى مجموعتين: مجموعة تجريبية و مجموعة ضابطة تضم كلا منهما ستة و ثلاثون (36) طالبا، إضافة إلى تسعة (9) أساتذة التعبير الشفهي. تلقت المجموعة التجريبية دروساً في التحدث باستخدام التعلم القائم على المشروعات (PBL) ومبادئها، بينما تم تدريس المجموعة الضابطة بالطريقة التقليدية. في الواقع، تم جمع البيانات النوعية والكمية باستخدام (1) اختبارات التحدث، (2) استبيان المواقف للطلاب، و (3) مقابلة جماعية بعد التجربة لاستكشاف وجهات نظر طلاب المجموعة التجريبية ومواقفهم اتجاه التعلم القائم على المشروعات (PBL). تُظهر نتائج البحث أن تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية طور بشكل كبير مهارة التحدث لدى الطلاب، خاصة وأن المجموعة التجريبية تفوقت على المجموعة الضابطة على مستوى الأداء الشفوي. علاوة على ذلك، توضح النتائج أن طلاب المجموعة التجريبية أبدوا مواقف إيجابية اتجاه التعلم القائم على المشروعات، وأن هذه الأخيرة فعالة في تطوير ليس فقط مهارة التحدث، ولكنها أيضاً تزيد من مشاركة الطلاب في الفصول الشفوية وتعزز التعلم المستقل. بعد هذه النتائج، تم اقتراح سلسلة من التوصيات وتطبيقاتها التربوية مع بعض الإقتراحات لأبحاث مستقبلية أخرى حول موضوع التعلم القائم على المشاريع (PBL).

الكلمات المفتاحية: التعلم المعتمد على المشاريع (PBL)، المواقف ، معلمي وطلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة

أجنبية ، مهارة التحدث

Résumé

Cette étude vise à étudier les effets de l'apprentissage par projet, ou ce que l'on appelle (PBL) sur les compétences orales des étudiants d'anglais comme langue étrangère en réalisant une étude de cas sur des étudiants de deuxième année du département d'anglais de l'Université de Batna 2. Nous avons émis l'hypothèse que PBL serait une approche pédagogique efficace qui développe les compétences orales des étudiants et augmente leur implication et leur intérêt pour le sujet de l'expression orale. De plus, nous avons émis l'hypothèse que les étudiants manifesteraient des attitudes positives envers l'intégration de la PBL dans l'expression orale. Pour tester la validité de ces hypothèses de recherche et atteindre les objectifs de l'étude, l'utilisation mixte de méthodes quasi-expérimentales et descriptives a été utilisée. L'étude a été menée au cours de l'année universitaire 2018-2019 sur soixante-douze (72) étudiants de deuxième année répartis en deux groupes: un groupe expérimental et un groupe témoin, chacun composé de trente-six (36) étudiants, en plus de neuf (9) enseignants d'expression orale. Les données qualitatives et quantitatives ont été collectées en utilisant des tests d'expression orale, un questionnaire sur l'attitude des étudiants, et un entretien de groupe post-expérience pour explorer les perspectives et les attitudes des étudiants du groupe expérimental vis-à-vis de l'apprentissage par projet (PBL). Les résultats de la recherche montrent que l'apprentissage de l'anglais comme langue étrangère a considérablement amélioré les compétences orales des étudiants, en particulier que le groupe expérimental a surpassé le groupe témoin au niveau de la performance orale. De plus, les résultats montrent que les étudiants du groupe expérimental ont montré des attitudes positives envers l'apprentissage par projet, et que ce dernier est efficace pour développer non seulement les compétences orales, mais augmente également la participation des étudiants aux cours oraux et favorise l'apprentissage indépendant. Après ces résultats, une série de recommandations et leurs applications pédagogiques ont été proposées avec quelques suggestions pour d'autres recherches futures sur le sujet de l'apprentissage par projet (PBL).

Mots-clés: Apprentissage par projet (PBL), attitudes, enseignants et étudiants EFL, aptitude à l'expression orale, expression orale.