

The Effectiveness of Learning and Innovation Skills (Communication and collaboration) in Enhancing the Oral Competence of Algerian EFL Learners.

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الملخص:

تهدف هذه المقالة الى التحقيق في فعالية دمج مهارات التعلم والابتكار في حصص التعبير الشفهي للغة الإنجليزية كلفة اجنبية. تعرف مهارات التعلم والابتكار على انها المهارات التي تفصل الطلاب المستعدين للحياة المعقدة بشكل متزايد وبيئات التعلم في القرن الحادي والعشرين وأولئك الذين ليسوا كذلك. حيث أجريت الدراسة في مركز جامعة بركة في العام الدراسي 2017 / 2018 اين شهد أربعون طالبا من السنة الأولى في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية التعاون والتواصل كمهارات رئيسية عند التعامل مع المهام الشفوية وتطبيق استراتيجيات التعلم النشط المختلفة للتغلب على العقبات التي يواجهونها في التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية. قام الباحث بالدراسة في شكل عمل بحثي في الفصل الدراسي حيث تناول فيها الاستراتيجيات ومهام التحدث التي يتم تنفيذها مع الطلاب. أوضحت النتائج التي تم الحصول عليها بمساعدة استبيان كيف تأثر الطلاب بشكل إيجابي بمهارات التعلم والابتكار الى حد انهم استطاعوا ان يحولوا فرص التعلم للمشاركة في المحادثات الحية والتعبير عن الآراء والأفكار وتقييم وجهات نظر بعضهم البعض. لذلك يرى الباحث ان دمج مهارات التعلم والابتكار ضرورية لتحسين الكفاءة الشفوية لطلاب الانجليزية كلفة اجنبية. الكلمات المفتاحية : مهارات التعلم الابتكار، التواصل والتعاون ، الكفاءة الشفوية ، استراتيجيات التعلم النشط

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Abstract:

This article aims at investigating the effectiveness of integrating learning and innovation skills (communication and collaboration) in EFL oral expression sessions. Learning and innovation skills are being recognised as the skills that separate students who are prepared for increasingly complex life and work environments in the 21st century and those who are not. The study was carried out at Barika University center, in the academic year 2017/2018, where forty first-year students at the department of English experienced communication and collaboration as the main skills when dealing with oral tasks, applying different active learning strategies to overcome the obstacles they face in speaking English. The researcher conducted the study in the form of classroom action research in which he reflected on the strategies and .speaking tasks students carried out in class

The obtained results with the help of questionnaires evidenced how students were positively influenced by the learning and innovation skills to an extent that students could transform learning opportunities to participation in lively conversations, expression of opinions and ideas, presentation of information and evaluation of each others' point of view. Therefore, the researcher deems the integration of learning and .innovation skills necessary to improve the oral competence of EFL learners

Keywords: Learning and innovation skills, Communication, collaboration, oral .competence. active learning strategies

فعالية مهارات التعلم والابتكار (التواصل والتعاون) في تعزيز الكفاءة الشفوية لطلاب اللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية.

Introduction

A large percentage of the world's learners want to study English in order to improve their oral competence to get the means by which all global variables are communicated, as English is viewed as an international language (EIL). Teaching this competence is a great challenge for teachers in the area of foreign languages because

poor mastery of the competence is the result in most cases. On the one hand, the reasons could be that students do not have enough opportunities and time to practise the language, or the tasks in class are inappropriate and irrelevant to learners. On the other hand, the poor mastery could be due to the complexity of the competence involving 'the myriad complex processes' working interactively (Goh & Burns, 2012, p. 35). Speaking is used for many different purposes, and each purpose requires different skills (Jack, & Willy, 2002, p. 201). In casual conversation our purpose may be to make contact with people or to be involved in discussion about current daily topics, when engaging in discussion with someone, we may have the intention to opine, persuade or clarify information. Sometimes, it is used to instruct or get things done. Each of the aforementioned purposes implies "knowledge of the rules that account for how spoken language reflects the context or situation in which speech occurs, the participants involved and their specific roles and relationships, and the kind of activity the speakers are involved in" (Brown, 2001, p. 201). All these elements are included in the model of Canale and Swain (1980) which accounts for the components of speaking ability that relies heavily on grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence

To cope with learners' oral competence poor mastery, on the one hand, the teacher is advised to choose the method depending on: objectives content, resources, learners' abilities and interests and class size (KIE, 2006, p. 3). On the other hand, taking into consideration the greatest shift in foreign language pedagogy from the teacher-centred learning to the learner-centred model where learners are given the opportunity to express themselves in speaking the language and much communication, collaboration and interaction are prioritised. This goal can not be obtained unless learners are directed to leave their comfort zone through practising the language in an interactive low pressure situations before they are asked to achieve the task in high pressure situations. The way towards this end requires learners to be engaged in tasks that involve negotiation for meaning, activities that lead to

transactional and interpersonal speaking, and personalized content in which learners are motivated to talk about their circumstances, interests and goals (Baily, 2003, pp. 96,97) .

As mentioned by Tanveer(2007), the majority of EFL learners face the challenge of speaking a foreign or second language in language classes, despite the fact that these learners may be good at learning other skills. In many situations, learners' feelings of anxiety and stress hinder their performance abilities. Studies conducted about this issue revealed that learners reticence to speak a foreign language is due to five factors (Bailey, 2003, p. 263): "1- the students low proficiency; 2- the students' fear of mistakes and the derision they thought they would face as a result; 3-the teachers intolerance of silence; 4- the teachers' uneven allocation of turns; 5- incomprehensible input from the teachers. " The three last factors surprised teachers as being creators of conditions contributing to learners' reticence .

The integration of learning and innovation skills provides an alternative instructional practice for teachers by creating more learner-centered classes, and appropriate learning atmosphere, focussing on communication and collaboration skills, and applying active learning strategies. Learners' needs, learning styles, and engagement techniques constitute an important pillar in this instructional practice. Therefore, communication and collaboration have benefits for both teachers and learners; teachers can have more concentration on learners' needs, observe their difficulties and their strengths; and learners can benefit from more practice opportunities in a relaxing learning atmosphere that guarantee the development of their oral competence .

With the aim to enhance Algerian EFL learners' oral competence, this paper first focuses on the issue of communicative competence, then it explores the key principles of teaching the oral competence to intermediate learners, and it elaborates on the tasks and strategies that motivate learners to create an atmosphere of communication

and collaboration, and finally it presents the method used in the investigation and the obtained results.

-1 Literature Review

1.1 The Notion of Communicative Competence

The linguistic competence was seen as the second and foreign language ability for decades, and the learner would be able to communicate once he /she mastered the grammar, vocabulary and the sounds of the target language. In the 1970s, Language teaching and learning witnessed another understanding that the linguistic competence is necessary but not sufficient for the learner to use the language competently. For effective communication in the language, learners need to master other elements of language. This view led to the notion of the communicative competence (Nunan, 2001, p. 52). The term was attributed to the American sociolinguist Dell Hymes in the mid1960s. Later, Sandra Savignon developed the notion and defined it as “the ability of the language learner to interact with other speakers, to make meaning, as distinct from the ability to perform on discrete –point tests of grammatical knowledge”(Savignon, 1991, p. 264). The lacking ability is the understanding of sociocultural context of language use . In 1980, the Canadian scholars Michael Canale and Merrill Swain added two other types of competences : sociolinguistic competence and strategic competence. After three years Canale suggested “the discourse competence” as the fourth element of the communicative competence.

According to Baily (2005) an effective speaker needs to master the ability to communicate appropriately in different contexts (p.3).This sociolinguistic competence encompasses politeness strategies, word choice, style shifting and register (degrees of formality and informality).The strategic competence refers to the person’s ability to use language strategies to compensate for gaps in skills and knowledge.They are mainly asking for clarification, asking for repetition, using fillers, getting someone’s attention, and using conversation maintenance cues. The discourse

competence refers to “how sentence elements are tied together”, It is the inter-sentential relationships which include both cohesion and coherence (Lazaraton, 2001,p. 104 cited in Nunan (2015). Richards, Plat and Weber (1985,p. 45) define cohesion as the relationships of grammar and/ or lexis between the different constituents of a sentence . On the other hand, cohesion involves elements such as reference ,synonyms , repetition and so on.

1.2 David Bohlke Complementary Perspective

To demonstrate what it means to have a competence in speaking another language, David Bohlke (2014, p.123) supplies the field of teaching and learning languages with a complementary perspective (Nunan, 2015, p. 53). It comprises the phonological skills, speech functions, interactional skills, and the extended discourse skills. The phonological skills refer to blending the phonemes, and using the appropriate stress and intonation by learners of the language. Speech functions require learners to fulfil some specific communicative functions related to daily situations such as agreeing, asking for clarification, ... Interactional skills relates to face to face interactions where learners are supposed to manage exchanges through regulating turn taking, negotiating meaning, and changing the topic, subsequently to starting , continuing and ending the conversation. In extended discourse skills, learners must be aware of structuring what they say to produce comprehensible stretches that include various kinds of spoken language such as narrative, expository, procedural, or descriptive discourse. Besides to these skills, the implementation of communication strategies such as asking questions in different ways to be less direct, or rephrasing to clarify an idea in order to deal with communication breakdowns can help overcome many problems encountered in conversations.

1.3 Key Principles for Speaking

In the introduction to the teaching of speaking, Baily (2003) formulated the key principles for speaking as being included in the following (Nunan, 2015, p. 54) :
(1) Being aware of the difference between second and foreign language and foreign

language learning contexts, (2) giving students practice with both fluency and accuracy, (3) providing opportunities for students to talk by using group work and pair work, (4) planning speaking tasks that involve negotiation of meaning, (5) and designing classroom activities that involve guidance and practice in both transactional and interactional speaking.

The first principle is drawn out to make the distinction between second language situations (SL) and foreign language (FL) ones. The first refers to a context where the target language is the main language of communication and in most cases the official language of country, whereas, the latter refers to the contexts where the target language is not widely used for communication and hence, learners have very limited chances to practise the language outside the classroom. The implication of this principle is that stakeholders need to consider the global, national, and local contexts, and identify why, when and for what purposes learners use English outside the classroom.

Giving students practice with both fluency and accuracy is an indispensable aspect for developing learners' speaking competence. In accuracy practice, the focus includes intelligible pronunciation, good choice of vocabulary and respect of grammar rules. Fluency in spoken English is essential. It refers to the acceptable speed and the few hesitations and false starts a learner commits when speaking. In fluency practice, learners are encouraged to convey meaning clearly and make their speech comprehensible with less focus on accuracy .

When providing learners with opportunities to talk by using group and pair work, learners' talking time is maximized and all learning styles are targeted. Besides, opportunities of negotiating meaning and social skills are promoted . All these advantages of group work and pair work help reduce teacher talking time and develop the skills of communication and collaboration among learners and learners and their teachers.

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Negotiation of meaning tasks are considered another fundamental principle for teaching speaking. Learners use this strategy to clarify mis-understandings in interactions and to make speech more comprehensible and understandable.

The fifth principle, designing classroom activities that involve guidance and practice in both transactional and interactional speaking, helps achieve the aims of language teaching and learning as Michael Halliday suggested about the use of the spoken language, when stating that “we use language to obtain goods and services, we use it to socialize , and we use it for pleasure” (Nunan, 2015, p. 56). So our planning needs to include the first two uses of language, transactional and interactional, as they constitute the dominant part of our everyday language use.

-2 Classroom techniques and tasks to promote Communication and Collaboration

Communication skills have become a cornerstone (fundamental pillar) in today's digital world. Studies have shown that communication skills not only increase learning, but target different learning styles and foster group work, generation of new ideas and self expression as well.(Hobbs& Frost, 2015). Communication is a keystone of P21 (Partnership for 21st century Skills). It consists of articulating one's thoughts and ideas orally and listening to others effectively in such a way to pay attention to their messages and perceptions. It also entails using new literacies and diverse technologies to attain knowledge and ascertain its effect. All in all, It is to be able to converse effectively in different contexts even in multi- lingual ones (P21, 2011a).

Collaboration which aims at working towards a unified aim, is the process of gathering individuals to work together. It is the best approach to solving various problems since it involves different people and organisations with different talents and backgrounds (Miller & Ahmed, 2008). Collaboration is a fundamental skill within the 21st frame work as collaborators need to show the ability to function successfully and respectfully within multiple groups, negotiate willingly and freely to reach agreements and hence, attain a common goal. It also requires the skill to divide

workload, appreciate others' contributions within the collective team (P21, 2011a). The factor of collaboration is a very crucial in a very successful world language. Friedman writes " In a flat world, where value is increasingly created, and complex problems solve, by whom you connect with horizontally, having a high trust society is even more of an advantage" (2005, p. 320)

Fostering the practice of communication and collaboration in EFL classes requires the implementation of a set of tasks and techniques in the classroom as a basis for out of class practices.

2.1 Small group discussion

Small group discussion is an interactive method used to teach oral competence. Burton(1990, p. 4) said, when participating in group discussion, the result would be the sense of a united purpose, learning good group management skills and effective interpersonal skills which are necessary for life roles in social and work contexts. Group discussion has been proved to be an effective strategy to help learners overcome their problems of shyness, reticence, and fear of making mistakes, because learners are practising the target language in low pressure situations. The actual potential of this task to foster learners oral competence is limited by certain conditions (Dakowska, 2005, p. 245):

- Topic enough Controversy and its openness to various perspectives and interpretations.
- Learners' interest and participation in the choice of the topic.
- Discussion is planned ranging from pairs or groups to open- class or panel forms of interaction.

The debate which is a more formal type of discussion, involves discussing a topic from two opposing points of view which previously assigned to members of the debating teams(Dakowska, 2005, p .246)

2.2 Pair and group work

They are the best means for increasing learners' speaking time. They have other benefits; they give learners more opportunities to negotiate for meaning, to engage in creative discussion, and to develop skills in turn taking. Role-plays are some examples of pair and group work. Baily (2005, p. 52) states that " A role play is a speaking activity in which the students take the part of other people and interact using the characteristics of those people." Simulations are another type of pair and group -work which are more elaborate than role -plays. In a simulation task, learners are given a task, a problem- solving situation in which they respond as themselves. Simulation tasks are good tasks for students who like to put their own ideas forward (Nunan,2015, p.58).

2.3 Conversations

Conversations are the context in which the foreign language learning actually occurs (Thornbury 2007). Teaching conversational skills can be challenging as not only English skills are required. Pragmatically, conversation lessons and exercises should first focus on building skills by eliminating some of the barriers that might be in the way of production.

As English teachers, it's our job to help students improve their conversational skills, but often 'teaching' is not really the answer. Generally speaking, most English learners feel that they need more conversation practice. Grammar, writing and other skills are all very important, but, for most students, conversation is the most important .

2.4 A class survey

A class survey is another type of a collaborative interview which may engage students in a communicative task. It entails students preparing a survey-type questions about a particular topic, moving around in the classroom, asking questions and noting the answers. Then, they return to their groups to analyse the findings which are later reported to the whole class (Thornbury, 2007, p. 83)

2.5 Interviews

" Interviews are semi-structured sequences of questions intended to elicit particular information from the people answering the questions"(Baily, 2003, p.44). Conducting an interview in a second or foreign language is a demanding task. However, with guidance of the teacher and practice of communication strategies in low pressure situations, students can gain confidence in the process of conducting interviews.

2.6Projects

Doing group projects can provide an environment for students to share knowledge and other useful skills with each other. This strategy pushes students to climb higher within the ladder of Bloom's Taxonomy, to analyze a problem and correctly adjust and apply knowledge in search of solutions.It also reinforces active skills such as;

- Critical Thinking — An ability to transcend simple recollection of information and upgrade to logical reasoning via analyzing information and applying correlating knowledge based principals.**
- Communication — The ability to share information, ideas, arguments and narrative clearly and correctly according the situation.**
- Cooperation — The ability to pool resources for the success of the group or project, whether the resources are information or ideas.**

To keep students engaged with the material, participate in the class, and collaborate with each other active learning strategies should dominate the scene. Do not expect your learners simply listen and memorise, instead have them help demonstrate a process , analyse an argument or apply a concept to a real world situation . Here are some other strategies that foster communication and collaboration among learners.

;3Strategies to foster communication and collaboration

- 3.1Ice- breakers

Teachers use ice-breakers to clear the way for learning by encouraging learners and making them more comfortable. Rodriquez (1982) believes that ice-breakers should create an atmosphere that is not only fun, but gives learners an opportunity to be energised and motivated as well. Ice-breaker strategies help learners to interact with

each other, share and discuss their perspectives. It is important to consider the principles of ice breakers stated by Sapp :(2007)

-1Simple : The simpler , the better.

-2Non-threatening : They should not make learners uncomfortable.

-3Open-ended : The uniqueness of learners should be allowed to be expressed.

-4Relevant: The needs of the group and the nature of the lesson should be taken into consideration.

-5Energizing : Ice-breakers should excite learners.

- 3.2Gallery Walk

It is a discussion strategy that encourages learners' engagement as they walk throughout the classroom. They work together in small groups to share ideas and respond to meaningful inquiries, documents, images, problem-solving situations or texts. This strategy fits learners' different learning styles and helps them get feedback on their work.It is a classroom-based active learning strategy where students are encouraged to build on their knowledge about a topic or content to promote higher-order thinking, interaction and cooperative learning. (Francek, 2015), and it can be used at any point in the lesson to engage students in a conversation.

- 3.3The classroom Mingle

- This is a another discussion strategy which allows learners to actively engage with new content by moving around the classroom, asking and answering questions with multiple members of the class. Mingle activities include class questionnaires, matching activities (finding your partner), group dictations, and role-plays. Afterwards, there is an opportunity for group review and reflection. Depending on the lesson, mingle tasks in the EFL classroom can focus on (1) language (form-focused mingles); (2) communicative functions (form-focused mingles in communicative disguise); and (3) meaning (meaning-focused mingles). This strategy can be used at any point in the lesson to structure meaningful conversation

3.3 Think –Pair –Share(TPS)

TPS is a collaborative learning strategy where students work together to solve a problem or answer a question about an assigned task. This strategy requires students to (1) think individually about a topic or answer to a question; and (2) share ideas with classmates. Discussing with a partner maximizes participation, focuses attention and engages students in comprehending the reading material.

- 3.4 Running dictation

A running dictation gets students out of their seats and engages reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. Students can work in pairs or in groups. One person is the designated writer. When time starts, one runner(s) from each group runs to the front and memorises as much text as possible from the excerpt placed at the front of the room . He or she then returns to the writer and reports what was read. The writer writes. This continues until the text is complete. The dictation can be made more competitive by awarding extra points to the pairs or groups who finish first. When a pair wins, the activity is stopped and, after making adjustments to their texts, all the pairs swap texts. The texts are then peer assessed and given points: one point per correct word and punctuation mark and minus one for each mistake, missing word or missing punctuation mark. This variation works well in that an incentive exists to dictate accurately and quickly.

- 3.5 Jigsaw

The jigsaw classroom is a cooperative learning strategy invented and developed in the early 1970s by Elliot Aronson and his students at the University of Texas and the University of California. In a jigsaw puzzle, each piece — each student's part — is essential for the completion and full understanding of the final product. Each

student's part is essential, then each student is essential; and that is precisely what makes this strategy so effective.

The Jigsaw strategy enables each student of a "home" group to specialize in one aspect of a topic. Students meet with members from other groups who are assigned the same aspect, and after mastering the material, return to the "home" group and teach the material to their group members. With this strategy, each student in the "home" group serves as a piece of the topic's puzzle and when they work together as a whole, they create the complete jigsaw puzzle.

- 3.6 The Four Corners Strategy

The Four corners is a co-operative teaching and learning strategy. The strategy can be applied when the teacher wants to point out the fact that not all learners in the class have the same viewpoint or that there are multiple solutions to some problems. This teaching method allows students who would normally not communicate in class to participate and communicate with their peers. The strategy encourages students to formulate their own opinions on a given topic, and allows them to contribute their ideas to class discussion. It helps the students to think at a higher level, reflect on what they have learned in class, voice out opinions safely, learn to critique on various issues, evaluate certain solutions, and communicate better. This strategy also enhances the responsibility of a student when making a conclusion or opinion .

3.7 The Round Robin Strategy (Round Table)

The Round Robin Strategy is a brainstorming strategy where students are situated around a table in an academic discussion. students generate ideas on a specific topic or question. However, with this strategy, there is equal participation among students as well as multiple discussions taking place. It is a means to enhance a collaborative group learning environment. The basic structure of a Round Robin session begins with a central theme, question, or issue which the facilitator identifies for discussion. Participants begin by considering the question. When a participant is contributing, the rest of the participants remain quiet during his or her answer. When the time reserved

for the exercise has passed, the facilitator concludes the session with a group discussion..

.4 Methodology

As the aim of this study is to enquire about the enhancement of the oral competence and how learning and innovation skills (communication and collaboration skills) could affect the quality and the learners' oral competence at Barika university center, it was undertaken in the form of classroom action research in which the researcher teacher reflected on the strategies and speaking tasks carried out with first year EFL students at Barika university center.

Action research practitioners reflect upon the consequences of their own questions, beliefs, assumptions, and practices with the goal of understanding, developing, and improving social practices.(Rowell, Lonnie L.; Polush, Elena Yu; Riel, Margaret; Bruewer, Aaron ,2015) . Kemmis and MacTaggar (1985), cited in Jiménez, Luna and Marin (1993) hold the view that action research deals with understanding, changing and innovating classroom practices by collecting information in a spiral way. It supplies teachers with the opportunity to inquire about learning problems and reflect on their classroom practices. For my case, my learners were reluctant to speak in front of their colleagues for the first time, but after reflecting on the situation and giving them time to practice in low pressure situations and practising with a friend , then they were able to face their friends and speak to them.

4.1Setting and Population

The study was carried out at Barika university center in the academic year 2017- 2018 and the target population was the registered first year learners of English as a foreign language at the center. Forty learners, 11 males and 29 females aged between 17 and 27, participated in the study which lasted for six months by the amount of three hours per week. Students were from different regions of Batna province (Barika, Ain-Touta, Batna,Ras el Ayoune...).

4.2Data Collection Instruments

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The study made use of four instruments: 1 - questionnaires which were used to inquire about learners' opinions and experiences related to speaking English. 2 - videotapes (recordings) were important instrument in the study to capture all detailed information , to analyse it and to refer to it at different times. 3- Classroom observation was also carried out to supplement and provide more first- hand information .4- The diary was used to help the researcher reflect and rethink regarding his teaching practice and note special and meaningful teaching experiences.

4.3Procedure

The diagnosis and the needs analysis which was carried out through the data collection instruments revealed the problems learners face when speaking the English language. Learners spoke only isolated words or disconnected sentences. They had problems with word order and sentence structure. They were not active in the speaking class and they were reluctant to ask questions in discussion sessions because of the fear of making mistakes in grammar and pronunciation, besides to being reticent to speaking in front of other learners. In the first cycle and based on the identified problems the tasks were prepared to help learners improve their oral competence. The selected topics were related to learners' personal experiences and interests. Among the chosen topics we can mention the following : How to be a good speaker, telling lies, telling jokes, immigration, students' demonstrations, you are the journalist reading the news, At the supermarket... . Students tackled the aforementioned topics applying communication and collaboration strategies such as ice-breakers, the running dictation, jigsaw, the classroom mingle, interviews, group discussion, projects, think-pair-share, role play... ,

During the second cycle, when learners tried to implement the tasks, they showed much hesitation and lots of signs of stress, besides to reticence. To overcome those problems learners were asked to practise in low pressure situations before they demonstrated to the class; they did a self talk, drafted the talk or practised with a

colleague or two colleagues. The strategy of using numbers to choose the participant was also used (to make all learners feel concerned) .

To end the study learners were asked to do a role play at the supermarket. Posters of different items (vegetables, fruits, clothes, electronic devices,...) were stuck on the walls of the classroom and learners were free to choose the item for their role play. After practising in a low pressure situation learners were invited to demonstrate before the class.

4.4 Findings

Relying on the information provided by the instruments applied, the researcher notes that communication and collaboration among learners offered them the opportunity to get rid of their anxiety and fear .It also provided them with the chance to negotiate for meaning and pronunciation. Teacher feedback and peer feedback also helped them found meaningful interaction and fruitful discussion. The data collected about learners' attitudes and opinions after the implementation of the communication and collaboration skills through the active learning strategies are summarised in the following graphs :

Figure 1 showed that the classroom environment helped learners to practise the strategies comfortably as all learners could move around and consult their colleagues (learners were sitting in U- shape and there was much space behind them).

Looking at the results shown in figure 1, 42.5% (17 learners) of the participants in the study confirmed they strongly agree that the learning environment and sitting in a different way (U- shape) , using videos and the selected topics motivated them to be active learners in oral sessions. Another 52.5 %(21 learners) stated that they agree that using the aforementioned elements was a great impulse for them to improve their interaction with each other. Only 5% of the respondents stated that they neither agree nor disagree with the effects of classroom environment as a motivating factor to enhance the speaking competence. Lastly, 00% of the participants disagree or strongly

disagree that a good learning environment motivates learners or learning to take place.

Figure 1: The Effects of Classroom Physical Environment

The implementation of active learning strategies was the focal point in the present study. As shown in figure 2, 17 participants (42.5%) declared that applying strategies such as Ice-breakers, find someone who..., running dictation, jigsaw, four corners, TPS, gallery walk, the classroom mingle,...) fostered their communication and collaboration in the classroom and gave them opportunities to practice oral English in a relaxing atmosphere. The majority of them (21 learners : 52.5 %) confirmed that they agree that the applied strategies were of great importance and helped them get rid of some problems such as shyness to speak in front of others and being nervous when asked to participate. Only 2 respondents stated that they neither agree nor disagree with the statement. To prove the efficiency of the strategies applied in the study, no single participant (00 participant: 00%) strongly disagrees or disagrees with the statement that the strategies we use in class (TPS, running dictation, interviewing,...) motivates me to perform better speaking.

Figure 2 : Implementing Active Learning Strategies

The data in figure3 indicate that interaction between teacher and learners and learners with other learners was a good means to encourage learners to overcome reticence. 14 participants (35%) strongly agree that it was useful for them to interact with the teacher and with each other. The same percentage of respondents agree with the statement. 11participants (27.5%) were not sure about the effects of interaction in the classroom and 01 participant disagrees with the statement and prefers other strategies .

Figure 03 :The Effects of interaction in the classroom

Collaboration is increasingly mentioned as an important educational outcome and most 21st century skills include collaboration as a key skill (Fadel & Trill, 2012). Thus, the ability to work effectively and efficiently with others has become an indispensable

requirement for learning, career and life success. Figure 4 below illustrates learners' views on the collaborative interactive learning.

Figure 4: Impact of Collaboration

14 participants (35%) strongly agree and 19 others (47.5%) agree that solving problems with classmates is a good way to learn speaking and correct grammar and pronunciation through peers feedback. Learners stated that through group work they could express their feelings, ideas and opinions very freely. The minority of respondents, 4 learners (10%) stated neutral answers towards the statement about the impact of collaboration, and the least number of learners (3 participants) disagree with the fact that solving problems with the help of each other is a good means to correct mistakes and improve the oral competence .

.5 Conclusion

The purpose of the study was to investigate on the effects of integrating communication and collaboration skills in developing the oral competence in learners of English language at Barika university center. Applying the cycles of action research helped the researcher to implement the active learning strategies. Forty learners experienced the aforementioned treatment through group work, pair work and discussion groups. They studied in a collaborative and interactive atmosphere. They interacted with each other and asked for details and feedback. They enjoyed their time applying active learning strategies to overcome shyness, reticence and fear of making mistakes.

The selected topics, which were the results of the negotiation between the teacher and learners, were relevant to learners needs and interests, thus, learners were engaged and were well- motivated to pursue the course of oral expression with a great desire.

Teacher feedback and peer feedback contributed to gaining confidence and correcting prevailing mistakes for most learners, and preparing in low pressure situations before

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delivering the oral production proved to be an indispensable element in developing the oral competence of EFL learner.

Lastly, I can point out that the learning and innovation skills should be thought of to be integrated in teaching oral competence due to their effects in solving learners' problems in oral expression sessions and to their impact in developing EFL learners oral competence .

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Appendix1Questionnaire

This questionnaire attempts to collect data about factors affecting your oral competence. Thus, you are requested to select the option that best reflects your personal opinion.

-1 Put a tick in the box that best reflect your opinion

No Statement Strongly

Agree Agree Neither

Agree nor

disagree Disagree Strongly

Disagree

01 Classroom physical environment is motivating (videos, activities, topics ,shape of the classroom: U-shape, ...) to practise speaking

02 The strategies we use in class (TPS, running dictation, interviewing,...) motivates me to perform better in speaking

03 Lots of interaction encourages me to participate in class

04 Solving problems with the help of each other is a means to learn how to speak and correct my mistakes

05 Working in groups and getting information from each other help me overcome my speaking problems and improve my oral performance