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The Contribution of Classroom Interaction to the Development of Students' Communicative Competence in EFL Classes

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Dedication

Praise is to Allah who has given me spirit, courage to overcome all the difficulties and to continue the way of my studies.

I dedicate this work:

*to my parents who always help me, advice me
and have worried about me all the time and sacrifice to make me
happy*

To my dear brothers and sisters

To all my lovely friends and classmates

To all my teachers from primary school to university

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ABSTRACT

One of the most important keys that can lead EFL learners to develop their communicative competence is the effective and appropriate use of classroom interaction, in which they can be more exposed to the target language.

Classroom Interaction can be of great importance based on the fact that it is considered to be a productive teaching technique that provides learners with maximum exposure to the target language in the different interactive learning contexts that can improve their learning achievement and develop their communicative competence. The present research aims to define whether or not the students' communicative competence can improve through classroom interaction. It presents the relation between classroom interaction and the students' communicative competence showing that classroom interaction can be a best pedagogical strategy to develop not only the learners' speaking skill, but also to foster their capacity to develop their communicative competence. In the practical part, we used two questionnaires conducted for both students and teachers in the Section of English at the University of Ibn Khaldoun-Tiaret. All the participants have been randomly selected. In this study, we drew several conclusions and suggestions in order to get information about the impact of classroom interaction on developing the learners' communicative competence. we find that through an effective and well organized use of classroom interaction we can have students who are able to know the grammatical patterns of the language, and also to utilize these patterns in real world interactions, which result in the development of their communicative competence.

The purpose of this study focused on investigating the effects of classroom interaction in enhancing the students' communicative competence

Keywords: EFL, classroom interaction, communicative competence

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The development of the communicative skills is one of the major requirements in the learning of a foreign language. The starting point from which these skills can be combined is the classroom interaction in which learners are exposed to the target language in different learning situations. During classroom interaction; learners can have a range of opportunities to acquire the grammatical competence, and the linguistic structure of the language. In other words, through the excessive and well utilize of classroom interaction; students can have the opportunity to develop their communicative competence and develop their knowledge and skills. For EFL learners, it is very important to experience real communicative situations in which they will learn how to express their own views and opinions. Classroom Interaction then, is necessary and useful as an educational strategy to increase learning.

Interaction in the classroom refers to the conversation between students and teachers in which active participation and learning becomes dynamic. Classroom interaction then involves the verbal exchanges between learners and teachers. However, teachers should know that the learners need to do most of the talk to encourage their speaking, since this skill requires practice and experience to be developed.

Statement of the Problem

Classroom interaction is a key to reach the ultimate aim of learning any language. To use language in communication in its spoken or written forms is that aim. Studies in language learning have intended to the requirement of classroom interaction or students' oral participation in class. For that reason, it is essential to foster situations in which learners can face real communication in a foreign language context, as it is necessary to create a positive environment to encourage the learners' interaction; so they can make their way to be communicatively competent. Foreign language teachers should be aware of how to create an interactive classroom atmosphere to enable learners to practice the language. The problem raised in this work is specifically about how interaction in the classroom may improve students' oral production and their ability to communicate effectively. The focus has always been on grammar and structure, and usually there is no interaction inside the class. Despite the efforts made by teachers to try new methods and strategies to improve students' communicative competence; they are still incapable to play an effective role in group discussions as they lack the necessary interaction strategies needed in the classroom,. Since the communicative competence is required in academic and professional performances, the lack of oral production skills becomes a severe disadvantage.

Aims of the study

Knowing the effectiveness of students' classroom interaction, this work aims at investigating the improvement of students' communicative competence through classroom interaction, and to explain how effective classroom interaction in EFL classes is important. Moreover, we find that doing a research about it is something interesting. This research aims at drawing both teachers and students' attention to the great benefits they can acquire through effective and well planned employ of classroom interaction for the purpose of fostering the communicative competence. Thus, our prime objective is to come up with new understanding of how and to what extent interaction in the classroom could help the students to develop their communicative competence.

Research Questions

Many researchers and teachers believe that classroom interaction has an effect on students' learning. Therefore, certain questions are worth to ask:

- To what extent can classroom interaction help to improve students' communicative competence in EFL classes?
- How is it possible to use classroom interaction to foster and influence students' communicative competence?

Research Hypotheses

We hypothesize that:

- If teachers give better chances for interaction and communication in class, the learners can probably become more competent communicators and, hence the students' communicative competence may be enhanced.
- The more students are exposed to the target language in different contexts and the more they use it in realistic interactions, then their communicative competence would develop.

Tools of Research

The data collection in this study will be through two main questionnaires used to obtain data through participants, we would administer two main questionnaires; one for teachers, and the other for Third year students (Licence). We targeted this population believing that it is the most fertile context from which we can gather and measure information on variables of interest, and to find out whether the students give importance and value to interaction that take place in the classroom.

Structure of the Study

This research studies the link or connection between classroom interaction and students' communicative competence. It explores the assistance of classroom interaction to the development of communicative competence and whether it has got an impact on the learning process. The work will be divided into three chapters.

The present dissertation includes of three main chapters. The first chapter provides a literature review about interaction inside language classrooms, and also the function of interaction in the learning process, illustrating the teacher talk as well as that of the student talk. The role of the teacher in the classroom interactions is clarified. This chapter represents a review of classroom interaction followed by the explanation of the different forms of classroom interaction. We also display the factors influencing students' oral participation. We continue by giving the definition of communicative competence in foreign language classes, we demonstrate the different components of communicative competence. Finally, we introduce the notion of communicative language teaching as a broad approach to teaching. The second chapter is devoted to the practical part of the study. It provides a description of the questionnaires directed to the students and the teachers, and the analysis and the interpretation of the results. The third chapter we discuss the results and findings of this research with some suggestions and recommendations for both teachers and learners on how to improve learners' communicative competence depending on classroom interaction as a pedagogical strategy.

CHAPTER ONE

Classroom Interaction and Communicative Competence

Introduction

It is often to come across graduates of university English departments facing difficulties to demonstrate the communicative competence expected from them as English language learners. However, it seems to be generally conventional that through classroom interaction students' language development and communicative competence can be facilitated. It is argued that classroom interaction is an essential factor which contributes in the development of communicative competence; instructors need to encourage participation and interaction in the classroom. Thus, providing learners with chances to practice the target language is claimed to be possible through classroom interaction, which is likely to contribute to language learning development.

In this chapter, we discuss the literature review about the definition of interaction in the language classroom, and then we explain the role of interaction in the classroom referring as well to teacher talk and student talk, including with classroom interaction in relation to the development of communicative competence, starting with definitions of communicative competence and its model. Afterwards, we deal with the main forms of classroom interaction and we illustrate different interactive principles. Finally we state the significance and the main implications of classroom interaction.

1.1 Definition of Classroom Interaction

Classroom interaction encompasses both teachers and learners as the primary entrants. As stated by Tsui (1995) ‘*classroom interaction is a co-operative effort among participants, in which each participant contributes in determining the direction and outcome of the interaction*’

Classroom interaction has a big role for the learners to acquire and understand the second language. Since it helps them to develop their knowledge and to be skilful which facilitates communication in the classroom. Classroom interaction is the collaboration between the learners and the teachers in order to create a positive atmosphere, which can be helpful for the learners to improve their skills and practice the language successfully. Moreover classroom interaction is based on the learners ‘cooperation and it has a relationship with second language acquisition, which creates an atmosphere that helps and involves learners in communication in classroom.

Classroom interaction is critical in teaching and learning foreign languages. It is a useful tool for engaging students and makes them active learners it involves the oral exchanges between them and also with their teachers

Most researchers observe that keeping silent in the classroom without being active may affect the acquiring process of the foreign language, learners may lack the ability to communicate, whereas classroom interaction gives them multiple chances and opportunities to use and practice the language in real situations.

Interaction in the classroom becomes more common especially in a second and foreign language classroom. For learners who are studying English in a non-native English setting, it is very important for them to experience actual communicative situations in which they will learn how to convey their own views and opinions to promote their communicative competence

1.2 Interaction

A number of researchers have focused their attention on classroom interaction and how it affects the teaching-learning process. In other words, interaction is the relation between two persons or more which create debates between the learners in the classroom. Additionally, it helps them to build their own knowledge which facilitate the communication between them

Interaction is an important word for language teachers. It is the fundamental fact of pedagogy. Douglas (2001) states that the next move after lesson planning is to step into the classroom and begin the process of stimulating the interaction. It has a significant importance in the classroom too; it is an essential part in learning and teaching processes. Allwright and Baily (1991) hold that interaction is something people can do together i.e. collectively. Obviously, in the classroom it is considered as important for the teacher to manage who should talk, to whom, on what topic, in what language and so on. However, Throughout interaction, students can raise their language store as they listen to or read authentic linguistic material, or even output of their fellow students in discussions, skits, joint problem-solving tasks, or dialogue journals. In interaction, students can use all they possess of the language all they have learned or casually absorbed in real life exchanges. (As cited in Brown, 2000, p.165)

In teaching learning process, there are so many interactions happened in the classroom, for example teacher – students, student – student, etc. (Krashen 1980, 1982 in Tsu Bik-may, 1985). It is simply said that classroom for English students, is a place for them to absorb the knowledge to be applied in the real classroom and everything which is happened inside the classroom is really important for the students' development communicative competence

Interaction is defined as “*reciprocal events that require at least two objects and two actions. Interaction occurs when these objects and events naturally influence one another*” (Wagner, 1994:8). Therefore, interactions do not take place only from one side, there must be mutual influence through giving and receiving messages in order to reach communication.

Ellis (1999) sets interaction as “*the social behavior that occurs when one person communicates with another*” (p.1). Thus, classroom interaction might be defined as a two-way process between the participants in the learning process. The teacher influences the learners and vice versa.

Thus, Brown (2001: 165) defines interaction as the collaborative exchange of thoughts, feelings, or ideas between two or more people, resulting in a reciprocal effect on each other. Interaction happens when there is understanding between two or more person than giving responds. In learning the second language, this is the most important aspect that must be achieved by the learners.

1.3The Role of Interaction in the Classroom

According to a review of studies in the area of classroom interaction and language learning presented by Hall and Verplaetse (2000), to show the role and significance of interaction in the classroom they state the following: *The role of interaction in additional language learning is especially important. It is in their interactions with each other that teachers and students work together to create the intellectual and practical activities that shape both the form and the content of the target language as well as the processes and outcomes of individual development. (Hall and Verplaetse, 2000, p.10)*

According to Hedge, learners are able to make a comprehensible output through interaction which provides them with opportunities to exercise the target language. Another point is that interaction allows learners to get feedback from the teacher or other learners which can help them to improve their language system. She adds that when learners interact in the classroom they are working on to cope with their lack of language knowledge; for example, students speaking slowly, repeating or clarifying their ideas while talking. She refers to this process as ‘negotiation of meaning’ which can lead to reach a comprehensible output. Moreover, The learners should explain things explicitly for each other in the class in order to encourage the learners engagement and interaction, the role of pair and group work is given much importance since learners are pushed through interaction with each other to produce appropriate language which provides input for other learners. (2000, p. 13)

In classroom interaction, the teacher and students use a variety of interactional features to negotiate meaning with each other. On the other hand, the finding of the present study supported the theory which says that input is available for the students not only from the teacher, but also from the students themselves through classroom interaction using the interactional features

1.3.1 Teacher Talk

Researchers indicate that the quantity and quality of teacher talk affect students' behavior in the classroom and hence their learning. In order to give learners opportunities to speak, teachers should reduce teacher talk time. Another point that should be given more interest is the affective part of teacher talk especially in the feedback move. As Tsui (1995, p. 43) points out if a teacher continuously provides negative feedbacks to students' talk, students' questions or students responses, it will create a sense of disappointment and frustration among students and will prevent students contribution. On the other hand, if the teacher provides encouraging feedback; Then, this will increase the students' motivation to learn and to work one's way in the different activities and to create a warm and social climate in the classroom.

1.3.2 Student Talk

There are many aspects in student talk, as explained by Brown (2000), in some cases student response to the teacher within a specific and limited range of on hand or previously practiced answers; this can be due to several reasons, such as students' poor oral proficiency of the language, fear of making mistakes is another key factor that hinders students' oral participation. Some students choose to keep silent just to avoid being laughed at by their peers. D. Rnyei (2001) proposes that teachers should change the habit of correcting every single mistake and giving selective corrections instead. It is useful for students to understand that everyone including the teacher may make mistakes in speaking.

1.3.3 Negotiation of Meaning

According to Gass (1997, p.107) negotiation of meaning refers to "*communication in which participants' attention is focused on resolving a communication problem as opposed to communication in which there is a free flowing exchange of information*". As a result, meanings are not simply transferred from one person to another but 'negotiated'. Pica (1994) holds that negotiating meaning, as a particular way of modifying interaction, can achieve a great deal of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) by helping learners make input comprehensible and modify their own output and can give more opportunities for them to acquire the second language (L2) form and meaning.

1.4 The Teacher's Role in Classroom Interaction

In current language classroom; the teacher has got many roles to play depending on the different situations that take place in the classroom. In fact, he may facilitate the communicative process in the classroom by promoting and establishing interactive situations. The role of the teacher is very crucial in motivating and creating interest in the topics. He is regarded as a 'facilitator of learning', according to Littlewood (1981, p. 92) these roles include the following:

- A general supervisor of learning, who regulates the activities so that they form a coherent progression from lesser to greater communicative ability.
- A classroom leader, who is responsible for grouping activities into lessons and for their overall organization.
- A language trainer, who presents new language, controls, evaluates and corrects learners' performance. The teacher does two things that is correcting errors and organizing feedback.
- In free communicative activities he will act as a consultant or adviser, helping where necessary. He may move around the classroom and monitor students' progress, strengths and weaknesses.
- Sometimes he will participate in an activity as a 'co-communicator' with the learners. He may encourage learners without taking their main role. The teacher should encourage and motivate learners to participate, and gives them suggestions about how they may proceed in an activity
- Also the teacher should make her/himself available when the learner needs him in necessary situations.
- The teacher also need to be an observer in his classroom, because observation is an important step towards changing teaching practices

Hedge Tricia (2000: 26) also points out important roles the teachers can play, *"As controller in eliciting nationality words; as assessor of accuracy as students try to pronounce the words; as corrector of pronunciation; as organizer in giving instructions of the pair work, initiating it, monitoring it, and organizing feedback; as promoter while students are working together and as resource if students need help with words and structures during the pair work."*

1.5 Forms of Classroom Interaction

According to Angelo (1993), classroom interaction comprises teacher-learner and learner-learner interaction. However, Van Lier (1996) has pointed out that these two types of classroom interaction present different opportunities for negotiation, Interaction does not occur only between the teacher and learners, it occurs between learners themselves as well, either collectively or in pairs.

In classroom, interaction can occur in different manners or more precisely “patterns of interaction”. Learner-learner interaction and teacher-learner interaction.

1.5.1 Teacher-learner interaction

In the classroom, the teacher often asks questions to learners and learners answer the questions and vice versa; this form is called teacher-learner interaction. Generally, Teacher-learner interaction is the relationship between the teacher and group of learners. In this type of interaction the teacher plays a significant role which represented in motivating his learners and try to create situation that lead them to interact by asking questions, accepting their ideas, giving positive feedback, and involving them in the lectures, the teacher takes the role of a leader or controller and decides about the type and process of the activity. In this form of interaction, the teacher is central to the classroom interaction while students are passive listeners. Sometimes, students are required to participate only by answering questions which their teacher already knows the answers. This relation benefits both teachers and learners, for the learners, it helps them to express their ideas in front of their classmates. And for teachers, it will be easy for them to explain and clarify things which support the teaching process.

1.5.2Learner-Learner Interaction

Learner-learner interaction happens among learners. In this form of interaction, the teacher plays a role as a monitor and learners are the main participants. Learner-learner interaction occurs in groups or in pairs called peer interaction. It occurs between the learner and his classmate in classroom. Johnson (1995) stated that the existence of this type among the learners is considered as a positive part of the learning process in which learners can develop their knowledge and capacities that make them more active during the lectures. In fact, cooperation in groups also contributes to a more relaxed atmosphere in the classroom, reduces anxiety and embarrassment, and thus leads to an increase in both the quantity and quality of practice (Ur, 1996, Altay and Ozturk, 2004).

Naegle Paula (2002: 128) adds that *“talking students with their peers about the content of the course is a powerful way for them to reinforce what they have learned.”*

Teachers should encourage cooperation rather than competition, because students learn from each other, the reasons are that learners in pairs or groups have the right to talk freely besides, Learners in groups are equal. It gives a rise to interaction. Doughty and Pica (1986), confirm that “group work is more likely to lead to negotiation of meaning than interaction with the teacher.” Also group work is helpful for the learners who feel afraid to say something in front of their classmates or teachers; they will find it easier to express themselves in front of the group or their peers.

1.6 Communicative Competence

Hymes (1972) defined communicative competence not only as an innate grammatical competence but also as the ability to use grammatical competence in a variety of communicative situations. However, bringing the sociolinguistic perspective into Chomsky's linguistic view of competence. He tried to put assertion on the fact that the knowledge of grammatical rules is not sufficient for speaking a language and for communicating. He believed that the ability to communicate efficiently in a given language is more essential than just knowing its rules of grammar. The term communicative competence can be defined simply as what Brown said:

“Learners do not first acquire language as a structure system and then learn how to use this system in communication, but rather actually discover the system itself in the process of learning how to communicate for that, students should learn how to use a language in their daily communication in order to demonstrate their mastery of a language” (2003:28)

Joan Kelly Hall defined the term communicative competence as the knowledge and the capacity to comprehend and utilize the linguistic characteristics basically and efficient. In the communicative approach, most researchers agree on the need for the communicative competence to support learning and make the classroom interaction successful. Johnson (1995:161) claims that *“classroom communicative competence is essential in order for the second language students to participate in and learn from their classroom experience.”*

All of the elements of communicative competence (CC) (grammatical, discourse, sociolinguistics, pragmatic, and strategic) are involved in human interaction. All aspects must work together for successful communication to occur

1.7 Components of Communicative Competence

1.7.1 Structural Competence

When we talk about structural competence it is necessary to distinguish between declarative knowledge (what students know about the language, e.g. using the auxiliary verb do for negation) and procedural knowledge (if students can use linguistic structures).

The final reason of any teaching of language structures in a communicative context should be the acquisition of procedural knowledge. This can be finished by merging grammar and lexical structures in meaningful teaching units that help a communicative purpose, i.e. grammar and lexical units must be selected according to the communicative function or speech act that students should acquire and not vice versa as it still occurs in many language courses. Researchers insist that teachers should start by asking what they want their students to be able to do with the language and adopt language structures accordingly.

1.7.2 Discourse Competence

Discourse competence is the capacity of organizing conversation and written text logically and understandably, or as Trujillo and Ortega (2010:198) define it:

“the ability of a user/learner to arrange sentences in sequence so as to produce coherent stretches of language.” .Brown (2007:247) supposed that *“it is the ability we have to connect sentences in stretches of discourse and to form a meaningful whole out of series of utterances, Discourse means everything from simple spoken conversation to lengthy written texts (articles, books, and the like)”*. It is the teacher’s role to give classroom activities that foster both written and spoken discourse in meaningful contexts.

1.7.3 Sociolinguistic Competence

Sociolinguistic competence can be defined as the ability to use the rules and conventions that govern communication in a specific target culture. These rules and conventions do not only relate to form (how a message should be expressed in a specific context) but also to contents (which topics are appropriate in a given context in the target culture). Students have to show that they are able to master these culture-specific aspects and behave appropriately in a variety of communicative contexts.

Also, it is the kind of competence that *“requires an understanding of the social context in which language is used”* (Cited in Brown, 2007:220).

1.7.4 Strategic Competence

As explained by Canale and Swain (1980:25) strategic competence can be defined as *“how to cope in an authentic communicative situation and how to keep the communicative channel open”*. A lack of planned competence may account for situations when students with a static knowledge of grammar and a wide range of vocabulary get stuck and are unable to carry out their communicative intent. At oral language exams such students may even flop, and their teachers often cannot realize how that could happen to their ‘best students’. However, there are students who can communicate successfully with only one hundred words—they depend almost entirely on their strategic competence.

1.7.5 Intercultural Competence

Intercultural Competence can be defined as *“a complex of abilities needed to perform effectively and appropriately when interacting with others who are linguistically and culturally different from oneself”* (Fantini 2006: 12). It refers to the capacity to step beyond one’s own culture and function with other individuals from linguistically and culturally varied backgrounds; therefore it does seem to have a wide scope. According to (Norris et. al. 2007:2) nowadays

“The contexts for intercultural competence research widened to include study abroad, international business, cross-cultural training, expatriates living overseas, and immigrant acculturation”. There are a vast range of options to estimate Intercultural Competence. Assessing this competence is much easier nowadays than in the past since teachers can rely on free popular IT applications (such as Facebook, Twitter or Messenger) to motivate students to communicate and even carry out collaborative tasks with students from different countries or cultures.

1.8The Importance of Classroom Interaction

It is conventional that classroom interaction is so important and helps learners to develop necessary skills like exploring knowledge and building up communicative skills, as it is at the heart of the modern theories of communicative competence; it engages learners in interactions among themselves or teacher-learners encounters in the classroom. Pairs or groups interaction affords a foundation for language learning in general; it offers the learners with the necessary potentials to practise in community and to negotiate meanings as well. At the same time, it allows learners to know how they can understand and make themselves understood. Through classroom interaction the learners will be able to get themselves involved in concepts, ideas. it helps the learners to think critically and share their views among their peers. Nunan (1989) claimed that interaction helps learners their thinking in terms of interpreting, analyzing, and manipulating information. Classroom interaction involves face-to face learners who collaborate in the classroom to practice and use the language in real situations, it allows learners to negotiate meaning to understand what others say and to make themselves understood in the process of communication.

In brief, classroom interaction is the starting point which paves the way for learners to develop their communicative competence which they will need not only within classroom boundaries; but in the real world and in true social contexts outside the classroom as well. So interaction is considered as a key factor for successful communication and for better improvement of learners' communicative competence.

Conclusion

Interaction is considered as an important thing in any EFL classroom, because through interaction learners will communicate and share their ideas which can be helpful in their communicative competence development. Interaction is at the heart of the current theories of communicative competence; it involves learners in face-to-face or teacher-learners encounters in the classroom. Pairs or groups interaction provides a basis for language learning in general; it gives the learners practice in community and negotiation of meanings through taking turns.

Chapter Two

Investigating the Extent to which Classroom Interaction Can Contribute to Foster Students' Communicative Competence

Introduction

This chapter is about drawing out teachers' and students' opinion about the effect of classroom interaction on fostering the communicative competence, since the teachers and the learners are the main variables of this study; their views and opinions are very crucial to test the stated hypothesis. It is devoted to the practical side of the present study. It tackles the purpose of this study, the description of research tools, and the participants of the research.

It determines the population, the sample, and the tools used to collect data. The investigation is started by introducing the population of this study, then, we describe, analyze and explain the results of students' and teachers' questionnaires. It will help to confirm or disconfirm the hypothesis about whether classroom interaction has a role in enhancing the students' communicative competence or not

2.1 Methodology

2.1.1 Hypothesis

The hypothesis on which this present study is: The more teachers give students opportunities for interaction and communication in class and the more they are exposed to the target language in different contexts, in which they can use the target language in realistic interactions, the greater may be their communicative competence.

2.1.2 Population

The participants involved in this study are teachers and learners at the university of Ibn Khaldoun-Tiaret, the department of English. This study deals with Thirdt year licence students in the English department at the University of Ibn Khaldoun-Tiaret, during the academic year 2020-2021.

a- The Students

Since working with the totality of that population is practically impossible, we chose forty (40) students randomly among the total number of the third year LMD students' population (320) at the University of Tiaret, they were males and females. The students responded to the questionnaire in the classroom, and this number of students have experienced the concept of interaction with their teachers in the previous years.

b-The Teachers

Teachers of English at the University of Tiaret answered to the questionnaire . They were ten (10) teachers selected randomly from the whole population of about (44) teachers. The reason behind such a choice was to examine the degree to which teachers' are aware of the important role of classroom interaction in developing students' communicative competence and to help their students become communicatively competent.

2.2 Description of the Data Collection Tools

For the present study, the researcher designed two questionnaires, the first one was given to L3 students. The second one was addressed to the teachers. The questionnaires contain questions of the multiple choice type, where the teachers/students put a tick in the corresponding boxes. And also a number of open-ended, close-ended questions with a space to fill. The results of the questionnaires render to observe the extent to which classroom interaction can contribute to develop students' communicative competence.

The students' questionnaire consists of ten (10) questions which aim to know their opinions about the nature of classroom interaction which this latter can possibly help them in order to develop their communicative competence. These questions are requiring from the students to choose „yes“ or „no“ answers, or to pick up the appropriate answer from a number of choices or open questions requiring from them to give their own answers and justify them

The teachers' questionnaire consists of seven (07) questions about their degree, their attitudes, opinions and definitions of the notion “classroom interaction”. They are also asked about the sort of communicative activities they teach in class and whether these activities influence learners' communicative competence or not. The aim behind teachers' questionnaire was to investigate teachers' knowledge of classroom interaction

2.3 Analysis of Students' Questionnaire

Question One 01: appoint your gender

a- Male

b- Female

Option	Number	Percentage
a	10	25%
b	30	75%
Total	40	100

Table 1: Students' gender

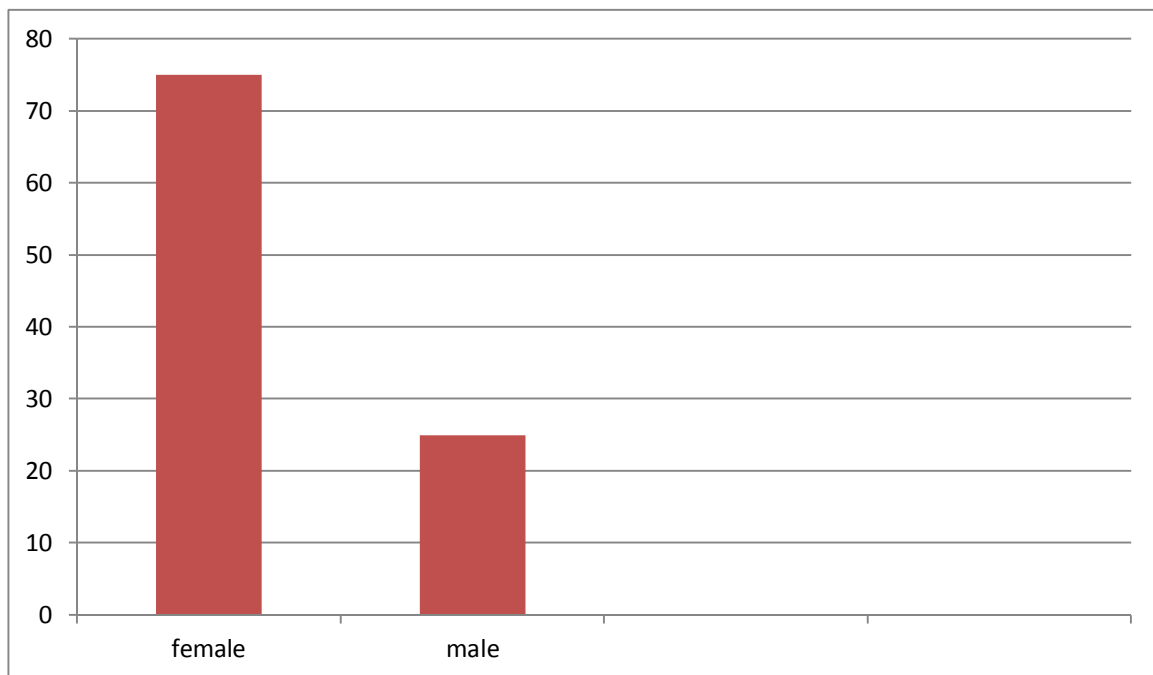


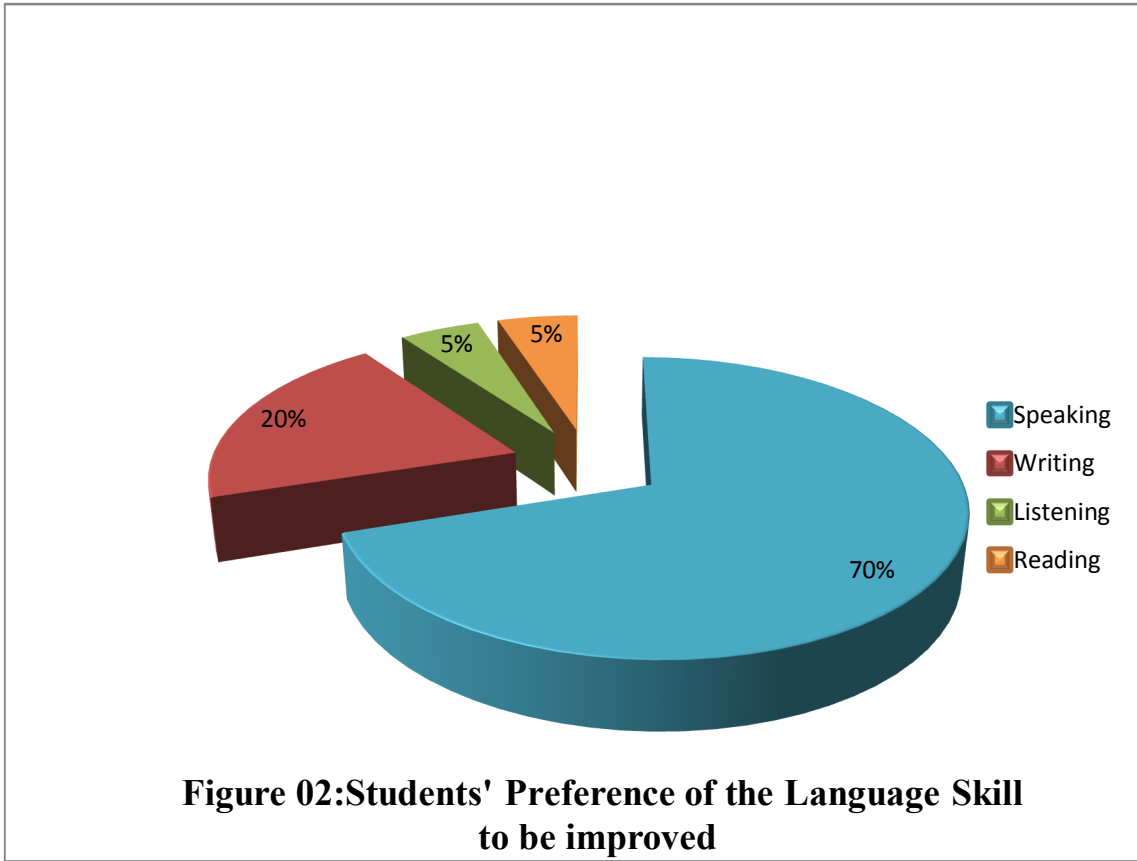
Figure1: Students' gender

As shown in the graphic, the majority of the repondents are females (75%) whereas the male number is only (25%), females are likely more interested to learn English language in comparison to males.

Question Two02: Which language skill you would like to improve the most?

	Speaking	Writing	Listening	Reading	Total
Number of Students	28	8	2	2	40
Percentage %	70%	20%	05%	05%	100%

Table 2: Students' Most Wanted Language Skill to be Developed



Through this question, students were asked to tell us which language skills they really want to improve ,(70 %) of the participants preferred the speaking skill to be developed. (20 %) chose writing skill. (05 %) picked up listening to be the most wanted skill to be improved which is the same percentage for reading skill. the majority of students have chosen the speaking skill since they consider it as a skill that they need to develop the most. this results we conclude that the main aim of learning a foreign language is to be able to speak it proficiently .

Question Three 03: How is your level in English?

option	Very good	Good	Average	Less than average	Total
Number of Students	22	10	06	02	40
Percentage %	55%	25%	15%	05%	100%

Table 3: Students' level in English

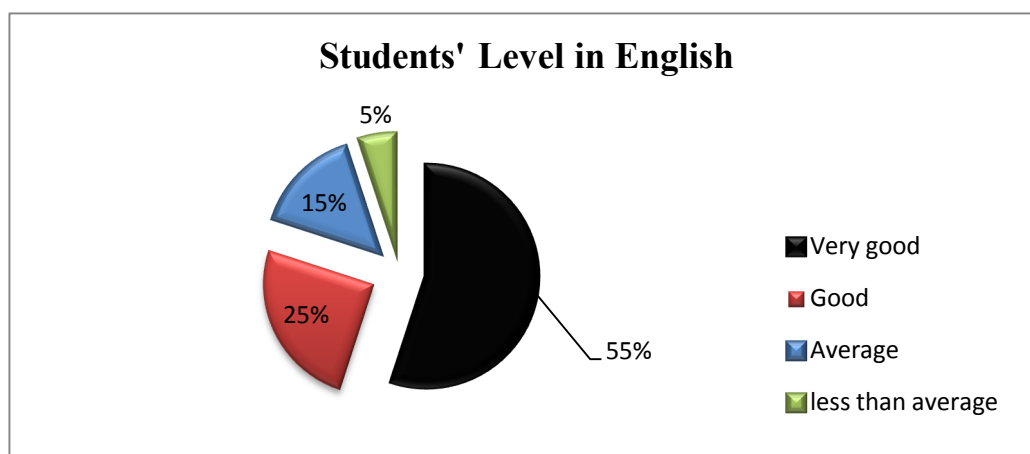


Figure 3: Students' Level in English

This question aims at knowing the students levels in English, The results showed (55 %) of the students claimed that they are very good in English, (25 %) of them are good enough. Some others, pointed out that their level in English is Average. However, only (5 %) of the whole sample their level is less than average. So, the most given responses was very good and good.

Question Four 04:

How often do you interact in English with your classmates inside the classroom??

Option	Always	Sometimes	Never	Total
Number of Students	12	25	03	40
Percentage %	30%	62,5%	07,5	100%

Table 04: Learners’ Interaction inside the Classroom

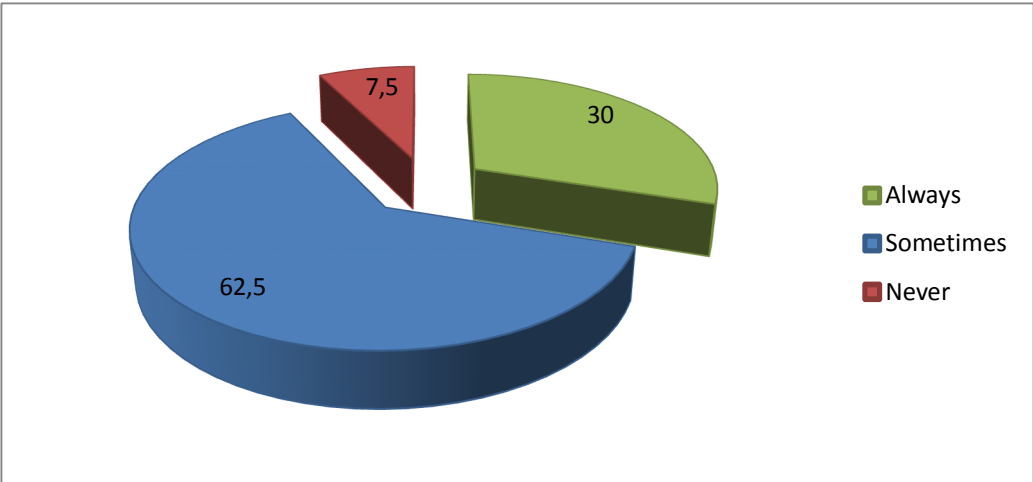


Figure 4: Learners’ Interaction in English inside the Classroom

Apparently, most of the students (62, 5%) said that they sometimes interact with other learners in English into the classroom to share their ideas. (30 %) claimed that they always interact. While three students (07, 5) chose ‘never’. Even though a good number of students admitted that they interact in English inside the class, what is worth mentioning is the fact that only three students said that they never interact in English.

Question Five 05: During classroom activities, do you prefer?

a. Individual work, b. Pair work, c. Group work .

option	Individual work	Pair work	Group work	Total
Number of Students	05	12	23	40
Percentage %	12,5%	30%	57,5%	100%

Table 5 : Students’ preferences the types of work

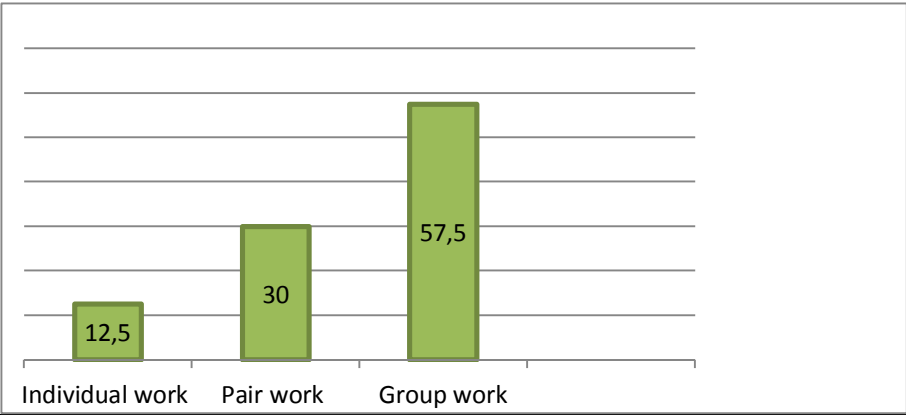


Figure 05: Students prefer to work during Classroom Activities

This question aims at investigating the nature of the learners and their interests, whether they like to work in collaboration or individually. We wanted to have a clear idea about the way students prefer to work during classroom activities. As shown in the figure above, (57, 5%) of the learners preferred to work in groups. (30 %) of them picked up pair work, whereas the rest of them (12, 5 %) chose to work individually, they feel comfortable when they work alone.

Question Six 06: What type of activities that motivates you ?

Option	Communicative activities	Grammatical activities	Total
Number of Students	36	04	40
Percentage %	90%	10%	100%

Table 06 : Students’ interest about the types of activities

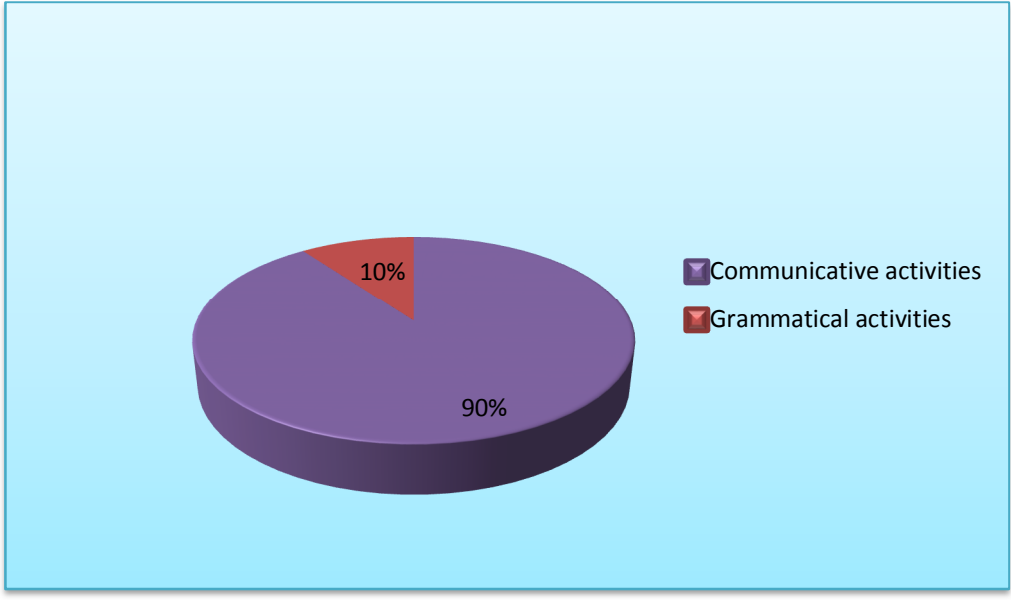


Figure 06: Students’ Preference concerning the Type of Activities

This figure above showed a better perception about to what extent are students interested in communicative activities, and to what extent they would like to develop their communicative competence. However, the vast majority (90 %) of the students confirmed that they prefer the communicative activities more, whereas only (10%) chose the grammatical activities. This shows that students would like to improve their communicative abilities by having various communicative activities that allow more interaction and as a result get their communicative competence even better.

Question Seven 07: Do you find any obstacles when communicating in English?

<u>Option</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>Number of students</u>	30	10	40
<u>Percentage %</u>	75%	25%	100%

Table 07: Students’ Difficulties When Communicating in English

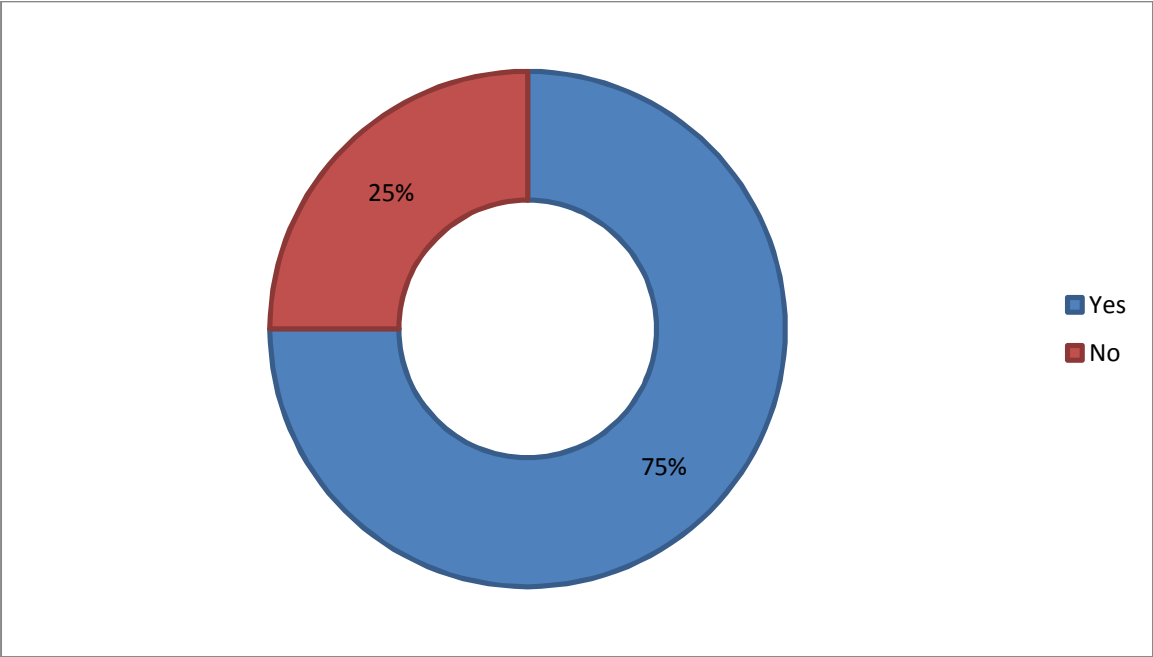


Figure 07: Students’ Obstacles When Communicating in English

This question aims to know whether learners have any holdbacks in communication. However, the largest part which is (75 %) admitted that they still have certain difficulties when it comes to communication in English. Only (25 %) declared that they have no obstacles when communicating with others. These results make clear that students are in need for more communicative activities inside the class.

Question Eight 08 : During the lecture, What do you do?

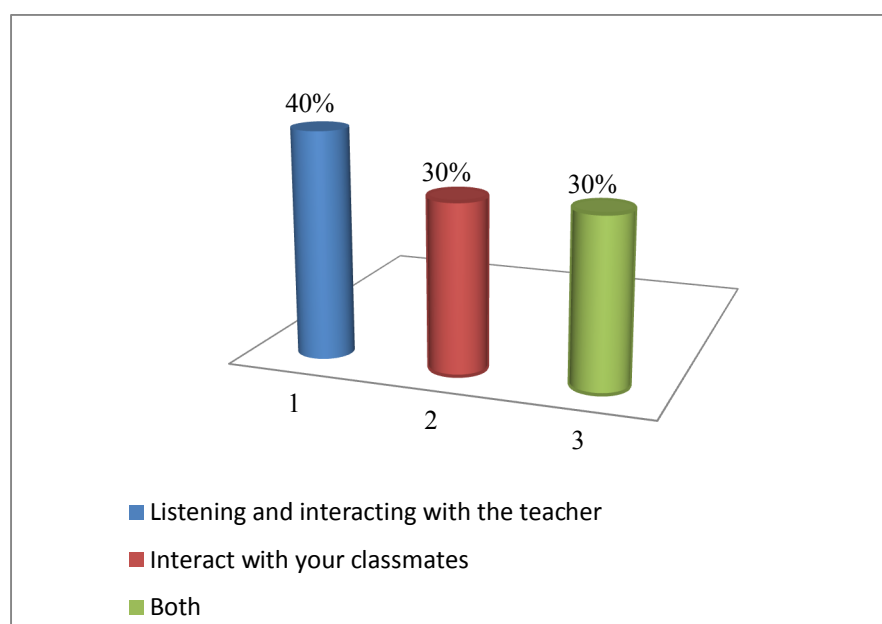


Figure 08 : students' preference to learn

The graph shows that 40% of the population like to listen and interact with the teacher during the lesson, they set trust on the teacher. whereas 30% of them prefer to be in touched with their classmates , they find that Claasmates information are more interesting .However the others 30% like both interacting with the teacher and their classmates.

Question Nine 09 : If you do not interact, is it because

- a. Lack of motivation?
- b. The topic is not interesting?
- c. Fear of teachers' negative feedback?
- d. You are afraid to make mistakes?

Obstacles that hinder Students' Interaction	Number of students	Percentage %
a/Lack of motivation	8	20%
b/The topic is not interesting	6	15%
c/Fear of teachers negative feedback	9	22,5%
d/You are afraid to make mistakes	17	42,5%
	40	100%

Table 08: Obstacles that hinder Students' Interaction

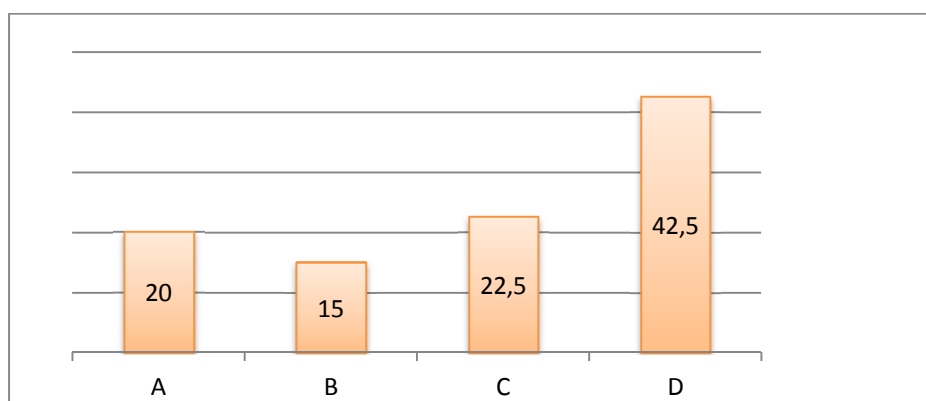


Figure 09: Students' Reasons Behind not Interacting

We report from the results shown that (42,5%) of the students do not interact because they are afraid to make mistakes. Others (22,5%) selected (C), while (20%) chose (A). However, (15%) of the participants answered that the topic is not interesting.

The fact that the majority of participants went for the proposition (D) reveals a serious problem that may slow down students' learning process and influence students' communicative skills in a negative way.

Question Ten 10: Do you think that classroom interaction contributes to improving your communicative competence?

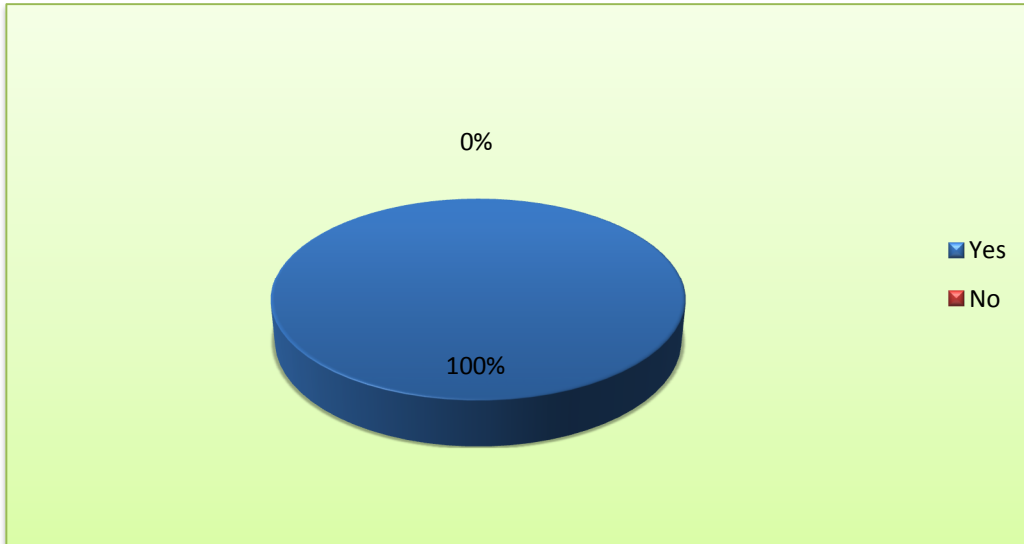


Figure 10: students' awareness about the contribution of classroom interaction

The data displayed that all students (100 %) agreed that classroom interaction can help them to develop their communicative competence. When they were asked to justify their answer, all the students assented that classroom interaction is regarded as a device which helps learners to be competent enough to share their views among their peers. As they agreed that it is in this particular context that learners get the chance to be corrected when making speaking mistakes and hence developing their communicative competence.

2.4 Analysis of Teachers' Questionnaire

Question One 01: Degree(s) held

- a- MA (Master)
- b- MA (Magister)
- c- PHD (Doctorate)

Option	MA (Master)	MA (Magister)	PHD (Doctorate)	<u>Total</u>
Numbers	00	06	04	10
Percentages%	00%	60%	40%	100%

Table 09: Teacher's degree

The aim behind this question is to know if the university requires high degrees to teach. The results show that there are six (06) teachers have MA (Magister) degree which means 60% and four (04) teachers who hold the Doctorate which means 40%.

Question Two 02: Do you think that the role of classroom interaction is essential in the teaching-learning process?

- a. Yes
- b. No

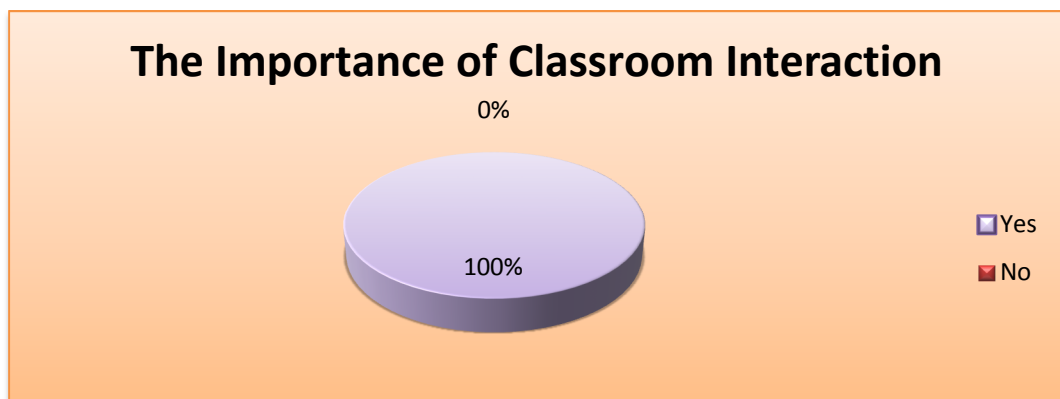


Figure 11: The Importance of Classroom Interaction

This question was asked to see to what extent teachers consider classroom interaction as an essential factor in the teaching-learning process. Yet, all the teachers (100 %) agreed that the role of classroom interaction is significant and when they were asked to justify they said that classroom interaction helps learners to encourage more to be involved in the lecture.

Question Three 03: How often do you give your learners opportunities to interact with you or with their classmates?

Option	<u>Always</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>Rarely</u>	<u>Never</u>	Total
Number of Teachers	05	05	00	00	10
Percentage %	50%	50%	00%	00%	100%

Table 10: Students Frequency of Engagement in Classroom Interaction

The results showed that (50 %) of the teachers sometimes invite their learners to interact with each other, while (50 %) of them claimed that they always give their students opportunities of interaction in class. However, rarely and never were not picked up which means that teachers know about the significance of providing learners with enough opportunities to interact inside the classroom.

Question Four 04: Which type of interaction do your students enjoy more?

- a. Teacher -learner interaction. b. Learner -learner interaction.

O	Teacher-learner interaction	Learner-learner interaction	TOTAL
N	03	07	10
%	30%	70%	100%

Table 11: Students' Most Enjoyable form of Interaction

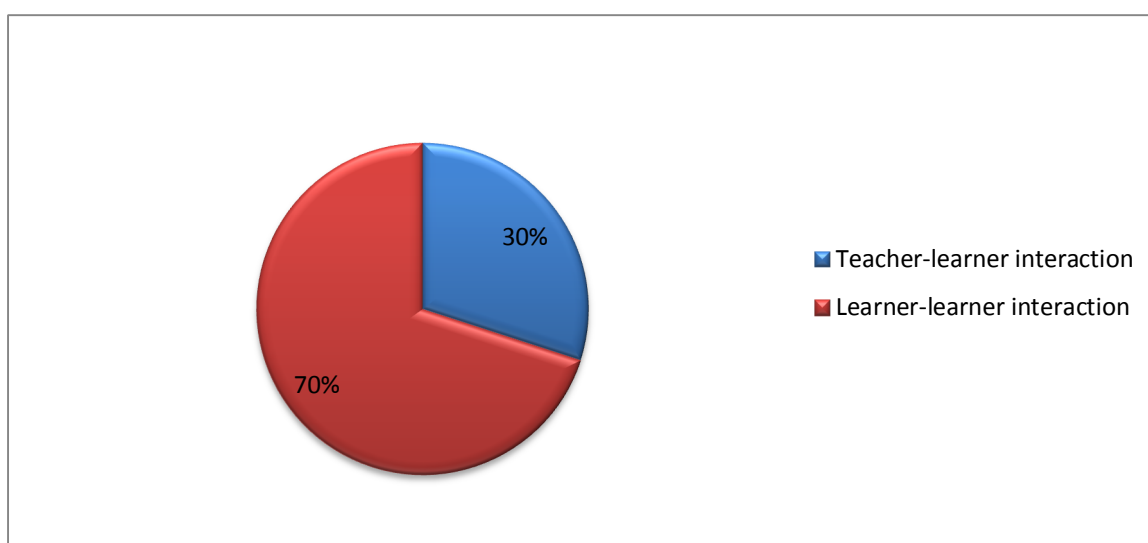


Figure 12: Students' Most Enjoyable form of Interaction

As shown in the Figure above (70 %) of the teachers answered that students enjoy learner-learner interaction more than teacher-learner interaction. while, only (30 %) of the teachers proclaimed that their students enjoy teacher-learner interaction.

Teachers who selected learner-learner interaction explained that students feel more confident when they interact with each other, they thought that learners enjoy the type of learner-learner interaction because It provides learners with self-confidence .whereas the rest who went for teacher-learner interaction justified their answers by saying that the guidance of the teacher has a great impact on students because teachers control classroom interaction.

Question Five 05: what do you do to make your students interact in the classroom?

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

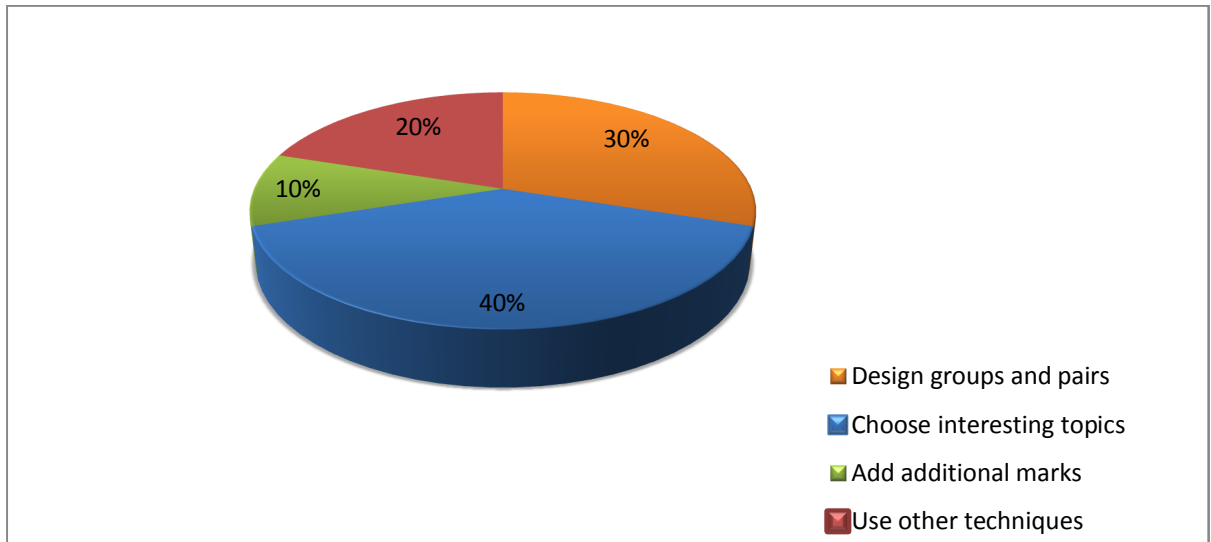


Figure 13: Teachers' decision to promote their learners interaction

The answer above reveals that (30%) of the teachers prefer designing groups and pairs works to facilitate interacting during the lesson. (40%) of teachers choose interesting topics as a good way that push the learners to interact. (20%) of them suggest to use other techniques, while The remaining one likes to add additional marks.

Question Six 06: In current EFL classrooms, do you think that the role of the teacher is:

- a. A source of information and knowledge? b. A guide and facilitator of learning?

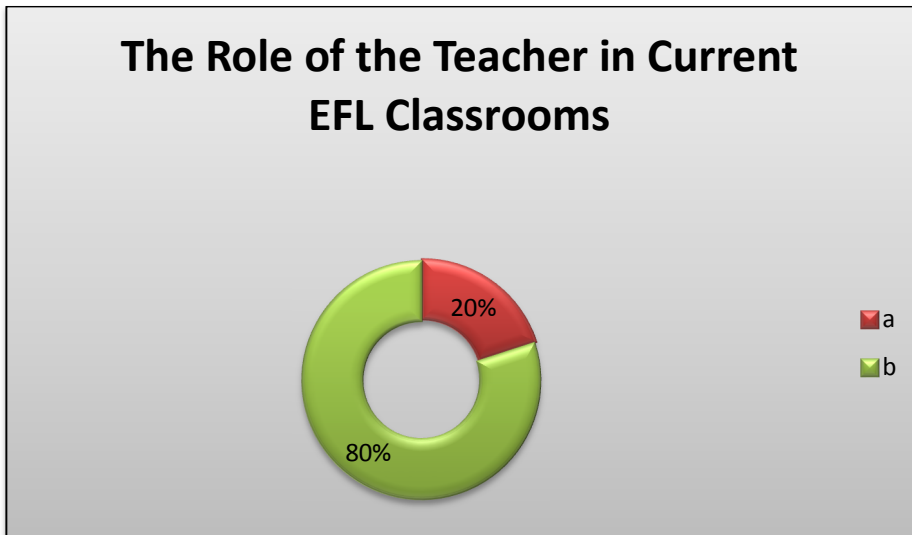


Figure 14: The Role of the Teacher in Current EFL Classrooms

The aim of this question is to see what extent teachers are aware of the changing role of the teacher especially in present EFL classes. However, the great majority of teachers (80 %) chose ‘b’ while (20 %) chose ‘a’, this shows that most of the teachers notice the changes that are happening in the field of teaching and the teacher is no more the only one who possesses knowledge.

Question Seven 07: Do you think that classroom interaction can help to develop students' communicative competence?

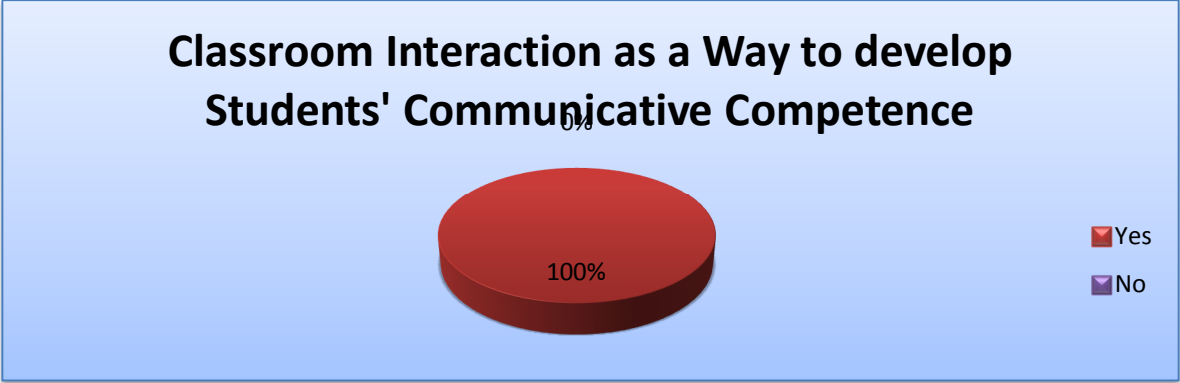


Figure 15: Classroom Interaction as a way to develop Students' Communicative Competence

All the teachers (100 %) agreed that classroom interaction can help learners to develop their communicative competence, which is a good sign of teachers' determination to allow more interaction inside their classes. They justified their choice by stating that communicative competence can be reached through a successful classroom interaction that should be based on a variety of techniques.

Chapter Three

Discussion of Findings and Recommendations

Introduction

After trying to make an investigation about the role of classroom interaction, and also the investigation of the extent to which students' communicative competence can be developed as a result of well use of classroom interaction, we will devote this chapter to the discussion of our findings, followed by some recommendations and suggested solutions that we saw as important for the purpose of developing students' communicative competence. Finally, the chapter will display the limitations of the present study especially the hindering pedagogical ones.

3.1 Discussion of the Findings

The answers given by both teachers and students confirmed that classroom interaction is of great importance in fostering learners' communicative competence, they consider that promoting it can have a positive impact on learners' language development in general and their communicative competence in particular. However, From the students' questionnaire, we can see that quite a number of students still maintain high aspirations for learning English at university; improving speaking skill is one of the most important things for them.

The results have showed that most of the students choose to interact because they like to take part in classroom discussions as they find it interesting to negotiate meanings with the teacher or with their peers which can be very beneficial for the development of their communicative skills.

The study has found evidence that both the teachers and the learners agree on the importance of classroom interaction in developing the learners CC. And also revealed that teachers are acquainted with the great role of classroom interaction and they all agreed that it is productive when it comes to its function in the improvement of students' communicative competence. As they confirmed that in order for classroom interaction to take place all participants including teachers and learners should take part in the different classroom activities in an interactive settings. What has been noticed from the teachers responses to the question about giving the opportunity to the learners to share their communicative needs shows that the majority of teachers give their learners the chance to express their weaknesses while communicating. This means that teachers consider the participation as an important factor in the developement of the learners'CC which can be helpfull for them while communicating with teachers and classmates as well.

When it comes to forms of interaction, the majority of teachers ensured that students find it more encouraging and interesting to interact with their peers rather than with the teachers. This gives evidence that this form of interaction should be promoted by creating classroom tasks that require group work and negotiation of meanings among learners.

The results made it obvious that classroom interaction can help students to acquire the basic characteristics of the communicative competence.

3.2 Recommendations and Suggestions

Developing the communicative competence of EFL learner is the primary and absolute goal of English teaching. Nevertheless, success in a language means more than just scoring high in an intelligence test. It involves turning ones considerable inactive grammatical competence into a real practical mastery of the language by using it effectively and appropriately in everyday activities. In developing communicative competence in the English language, the learner must not only know the language but must possess the ability to handle linguistic variations and the various uses of the language in the context. Thus, we would like to make suggestions some effective solutions for both teachers and learners on how can interaction enhance the communicative competence among language learners, and how teachers can deal with their learners to make them interact and communicate succesfully.

3.2.1 Seminars attended for teachers

Change must happen in individuals first, and this change can be expanded to larger groups and institutions. That is why we recommend a change in teachers' way of presenting the communicative tasks as a starting point. In this respect, regular seminars will be very helpful to teachers, it assists teachers to improve the teaching quality. The role of seminars is to guide the teachers to teach the way they need to teach.

3.2.2 Oral Conversation

This involve interaction with friends through oral conversation via the internet devices, which is best accomplished in interactions in a friendly atmosphere which can help the EFL learner to think in the target language and talk in a natural, and communicative way.

3.2.3 Asking Questions for Clarification and Cooperation

The EFL learner asks the speaker who could be either the teacher or his mate to repeat or explain already made statement for clarification purposes. By this, he goes into an interactional dialogue with the speaker and this helps him to develop communicative competence in English.

3.2.4 Using Language Acquisition Videos and Audiovisual Aids

Watching and listening to native speakers during the CNN or BBC news casting on television and radio, watching life events in English movies and discussing what has been heard and learnt, supports the EFL learner in developing vocabulary on everyday activities which improves his communicative competence in English. It has been suggested by different speech-language specialists that the use of language acquisition videos is a fun and interesting way to encourage and facilitate second language output and communicative competence.

3.2.5 Drama

Spoken proficiency can be acquired by performing a drama. It helps the EFL learner to develop his communicative skills; to create and use language effectively. This is another way of developing communicative competence.

3.3 Recommendations for Further Research

Most of time, as the case of Algerian schools, the only place where students interact in the target language (English) is the classroom. Thus, learning may surely take place when learners are fully involved to negotiate the meaning and comprehend the linguistic system of the target language. It is essential that creating a suitable communication atmosphere could be of great use.

Learners need to be self confident and trust their learning capacities. This will encourage them to interact during the lesson. Learners should also know the significance of classroom interaction in order to interact effectively with others.

Teachers need to develop a relationship with their students so that they feel safe while producing either orally or in written tasks. In addition, a positive communication atmosphere may encourage learners' participation and helps them improve their cooperative and communicate skills. Among the techniques that can smooth the progress of students-student interaction in the form of group work is the jigsaw Activity which is a cooperative learning technique in which the teacher divides the text or task to be discussed into pieces. The teacher asks learners to count off according to the number of pieces of text (1-2-3 for the text below) All of the 1's work together, all of 2's etc. to read and prepare to present their pieces of text. The groups should make notes, or introduce their remarks about the topic. By doing a jigsaw task students can have the chance to negotiate meaning because of the information gap. Teachers should create situations which make their learners interact with others inside and outside the classrooms

3.4 Limitations of the Research

The results and discussion have indicated that our hypotheses are supported. However, our research went in good conditions except for some periods in which we felt unable to deal with. As a result, we were forced to abolish some important sections, especially that of testing students in their ability to communicate effectively.

The first limitation in this research is the size of sample. It would not represent the whole population, and thus it would limit our ability to make a wider general results. Besides, after distributing the teachers' questionnaire, the sample size given was ten teachers, and thus, was not possible to represent the whole population.

The second limitation is time constraints , it means that we had faced some problems with time. We needed plenty of time to bring rich information which can be valuable to our research. Longer time would help us to use a different tool and a larger sample of students and teachers. This would give our results different dimensions. The last limitation, the total lack of resources whether in our university or other local universities. This made us in front of one option which is the internet as almost the only source except for one or two e-books hardly available on the web.

And above of else, the learners were not enough coaporative with me, they took a long time to answer the questionnaire probably because of their business especially this period.

Conclusion

Based on the idea that improving the communicative competence within the different classroom interactions can be achieved progressively, we can conclude that through time and excessive practice of the target language along with teachers' guidance; learners have a great chance to be communicatively competent.

Through this chapter we tried to suggest some recommendations that concern certain strategies that may provide a helping hand to EFL learners in their process of learning the language in general and to develop their communicative competence in particular. We attempted to focus on the role of classroom interaction as a complete part of teaching and learning in terms that it offers a sequence of effective practices that develop the patterns of thought students need to improve their own achievement.

The teacher should be dynamic in his way of teaching and constantly reconsiders choosing the right teaching materials that fit his learners and lead them to be involved in interactive learning that will result in the enhancement of their communicative competence.

General Conclusion

Studies have addressed the necessity of classroom interaction or students' oral participation in class since getting students to respond in language class, especially a foreign language class is not an easy task that most language teachers face. There are many reasons why the researcher considers classroom interaction as a strategy to develop students' communicative competence worthy of investigation. First, Classroom interaction is an essential aspect in the context of foreign language learning because the target language is both the subject and the means of instruction. Moreover, Developing the learners communicative competence through interaction is the main concern of some teachers, since they consider it as an important means for an effective and successful communication. However, the aim of this study is to investigate the role of classroom interaction in enhancing the EFL learners communicative competence.

This study is involved in the exploration of the classroom interaction effect on language learning and the extent to which it can help develop EFL learners' communicative competence. This study have shown that during regular interactions in the classroom, learners can reduce their speaking mistakes, produce new grammatical forms and words.

The data gathered (from both teachers' and students' questionnaires) served our research to provide several suggestions. The findings of the present study reveal that the well established classroom interaction in which learners can use the language in different learning situations is likely to improve students' mastery of their communicative competence .

Our suggestions discussed at the end of the research try to hint on the importance of classroom interaction as a learning tool, Besides teachers should recognize students' communicative difficulties in order to work on them as they should foster learning situations that allow learners to have more contact with the language.

Finally, we hope that this research will help promote awareness about classroom interaction in developing the communicative competence among teachers and most importantly among learners.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Students' Questionnaire

Appendix II: Teachers' Questionnaire



Students' Questionnaire

Dear students,

This questionnaire is part of a research for Master Degree. It aims at investigating the contribution of classroom interaction in developing students' communicative competence. You are kindly requested to fill it in. Your help is greatly needed to complete the work and will be so much appreciated. Please, tick the appropriate box (✓) and make full statements whenever necessary.

Questions

Question 01: appoint your gender

c- Male

d- Female

Question 02: Which language skill you would like to improve the most?

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

Why?

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

Question 03: How is your level in English?

a. Very good b. Good c. Average d. Less than average

Question 04 : How often do you interact in English with your classmates inside the classroom??

a. Always b. Sometimes c. Never

Justify please

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

Question 05: During classroom activities, do you prefer?

Individual work. b. Pair work. c. Group work.

Justify please

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

Question 06: What type of activities that motivates you ?

- a. Communicative activities
- b. Grammatical activities

Question 07: Do you find any obstacles when communicating in English?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Question 08 : During the lecture, What do you do?

- a. Listening and interacting with the teacher
- b- Interact with your classmates
- c- Both

Question 09: If you do not interact, is it because

- a. Lack of motivation?
- c. Fear of teachers' negative feedback?
- b. The topic is not interesting?
- d. You are afraid to make mistakes?

Question 10: Do you think that classroom interaction contributes to improving your communicative competence?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Justify.....
.....

Thank you for your time and collaboration.

Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear teachers,

This questionnaire is part of a research for Master Degree. It aims at investigating the contribution of classroom interaction in developing students' communicative competence. You are kindly requested to fill it in. Your help is greatly needed to complete the work and will be so much appreciated. Please, tick the appropriate box (✓) and make full statements whenever necessary.

Questions

Question 01: Degree(s) held

- a- MA (Master)
b- MA (Magister)
c- PHD (Doctorate)

Question 02: Do you think that the role of classroom interaction is essential in the teaching-learning process?

- a. Yes b. No

Justify please

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

Question 03: How often do you give your learners opportunities to interact with you or with their classmates?

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

Question 04: Which type of interaction do your students enjoy more?

- a. Teacher -learner interaction. b. Learner -learner interaction.

Justify please

.....
.....

Question 05: what do you do to make your students interact in the classroom?

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

Question 06: In current EFL classrooms, do you think that the role of the teacher is:

- a. A source of information and knowledge?
b. A guide and facilitator of learning?

Question 07: Do you think that classroom interaction can help to develop students' communicative competence?

- a. Yes b. No

Justify please

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Thank you for your time and collaboration

Summary

The present research aims to define whether or not the students' communicative competence can improve through classroom interaction. It presents the relation between classroom interaction and the students' communicative competence showing that classroom interaction can be a best pedagogical strategy to develop not only the learners' speaking skill, but also to foster their capacity to develop their communicative competence. In the practical part, we used two questionnaires conducted for both students and teachers in the Section of English at the University of Ibn Khaldoun-Tiaret. All the participants have been randomly selected. In this study, we drew several conclusions and suggestions in order to get information about the impact of classroom interaction on developing the learners' 'communicative competence. we find that through an effective and well organized use of classroom interaction we can have students who are able to know the grammatical patterns of the language, and also to utilize these patterns in real world interactions, which result in the development of their communicative competence. The purpose of this study focused on investigating the effects of classroom interaction in enhancing the students' 'communicative competence

Résumé

La présente recherche vise à définir si oui ou non la compétence communicative des élèves peut s'améliorer grâce à l'interaction en classe. Il présente la relation entre l'interaction en classe et la compétence communicative des élèves, montrant que l'interaction en classe peut être une meilleure stratégie pédagogique pour développer non seulement la compétence orale des apprenants, mais aussi pour favoriser leur capacité à développer leur compétence communicative. Dans la partie pratique, nous avons utilisé deux questionnaires menés à la fois pour les étudiants et les enseignants de la Section d'anglais de l'Université Ibn Khaldoun-Tiaret. Tous les participants ont été choisis au hasard. Dans cette étude, nous avons tiré plusieurs conclusions et suggestions afin d'obtenir des informations sur l'impact de l'interaction en classe sur le développement de la «compétence communicative» des apprenants. nous constatons que grâce à une utilisation efficace et bien organisée de l'interaction en classe, nous pouvons avoir des étudiants capables de connaître les modèles grammaticaux de la langue, et également d'utiliser ces modèles dans les interactions du monde réel, ce qui entraîne le développement de leur compétence communicative. Le but de cette étude s'est concentré sur l'investigation des effets de l'interaction en classe sur l'amélioration de la compétence communicative des élèves.

المخلص

يهدف البحث الحالي إلى تحديد ما إذا كان يمكن تحسين كفاءة الطلاب التواصلية من خلال التفاعل في الفصل الدراسي أم لا. إنه يعرض العلاقة بين التفاعل في الفصل الدراسي وكفاءة الطلاب في التواصل، مما يدل على أن التفاعل في الفصل الدراسي يمكن أن يكون أفضل استراتيجية تربوية لتطوير ليس فقط مهارات التحدث لدى المتعلمين، ولكن أيضًا لتعزيز قدرتهم على تطوير كفاءتهم التواصلية. في الجانب العملي استخدمنا استبيانين تم إجراؤهما لكل من الطلاب والمعلمين في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة ابن خلدون تيارت. تم اختيار جميع المشاركين بشكل عشوائي. في هذه الدراسة، توصلنا إلى العديد من الاستنتاجات والاقتراحات من أجل الحصول على معلومات حول تأثير التفاعل الصفّي على تطوير كفاءة التواصل لدى المتعلمين. نجد أنه من خلال الاستخدام الفعال والمنظم جيدًا للتفاعل داخل الفصل الدراسي، يمكننا الحصول على طلاب قادرين على معرفة الأنماط النحوية للغة، وكذلك استخدام هذه الأنماط في تفاعلات العالم الواقعي، مما يؤدي إلى تطوير كفاءتهم التواصلية. الغرض من هذه الدراسة التركيز على التحقيق في آثار التفاعل الصفّي في تعزيز الكفاءة التواصلية لدى الطلاب