

## Teaching EFL speaking skills: What status to grant to pronunciation and listening instruction

Belkheir Bouhadjar Fethi \*<sup>1</sup>

Ecole Normale Supérieure d'Oran (Algeria),

[fethi.belkheir@gmail.com](mailto:fethi.belkheir@gmail.com)

Received: 01/05/2021

Accepted: 15/05/2021

Published: 25/07/2021

### Abstract:

The paper describes the speaking skills treatment at the tertiary level and more precisely with freshmen. A basic assumption in this study is that EFL learners' aural/oral communication expertise draws necessarily on their mastery of speaking, listening and pronunciation skills. To have a description of these skills treatment, a semi-structured interview is conducted with EFL teachers of Oral Expression and Phonetics from the University of Mostaganem, University of Oran and Ecole Normale Supérieure of Oran. The results show that despite of listening skills importance to oral-aural communication, they are not given any room in the learners' training. Teachers underestimate listening skills instruction believing that such skills can be acquired without any direct pedagogic treatment and are left to soak in through mere exposure. The instruction of speaking is not based on a well-defined nor structured course. The instruction of pronunciation follows a bottom-up approach failing to cover the suprasegmental features.

### Keywords:

---

\* *Corresponding author*

Communication; EFL; listening; pronunciation; speaking

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Dominance of the English language over almost all spheres of interaction worldwide has left no choice to Algeria but to include ELT at different levels of the educational system targeting communication and competence frameworks. A lot of efforts have been made to make the teaching-learning of the English language more effective and efficient. In this sense, the efficiency and effectiveness of the pedagogy adapted and/or adopted to promote the communicative power of the English language are questioned.

It is clear that using the English language for communication requires the mastery of macro-skills, namely Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing and micro-skills which include Grammar, Vocabulary, Spelling, and Pronunciation. We cannot deny that a successful user of the language for communicative purposes is to prove competence in combining these aspects accurately and fluently. Since we are inquiring into oral communication, we need to make it clear that three language skills are our main focus for this study, namely Speaking, Listening, and Pronunciation as they make up oral-aural communication.

Aims linked to oral-aural proficiency at the tertiary level are mainly developed in the subjects of Phonetics and Oral Expression. They are supposed to focus on improving students' speaking skills, listening skills, and pronunciation proficiency.

The aim of our study is to assess the state of oral interaction instruction within a multi-dimensional approach taking into consideration the instruction of speaking, listening and pronunciation in the modules of Oral Expression and Phonetics. In this sense, we intend to answer questions related to (1) the approach adopted to improve learners' oral-aural skills, (2) the declared objectives in the modules linked to the development of oral-aural skills and (3) the elements of pronunciation taught to improve oral-aural skills

## **2. Review of Literature**

Several scholars (Brown<sup>2</sup>, 1994; Luoma<sup>3</sup>, 2004; Nation<sup>4</sup>, 2011) see oral communication as an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving and processing information. In this vein, Pawlak<sup>5</sup> (2015) and Pawlak<sup>6</sup> (2018) suggests some approaches to communication amongst which we can have an interactional view, according to which communication strategies can be employed to deal with difficulties involved not only in production but also in comprehension, thus including as well what is referred to in the literature as negotiation of meaning.

The interactive characteristic of spoken English requires syllabus writers and language teachers to plan for and implement a framework that involves training EFL learners in different skills. Nunan<sup>7</sup> (1989, p. 32) describes skills and features that can lead to successful oral communication. He suggests that speakers ought to have (1) the ability to articulate phonological features of the language comprehensibly; (2) mastery of stress, rhythm, intonation patterns;(3) an acceptable degree of fluency; (4) transactional and interpersonal skills; and (5) conversational listening skills (successful conversations require good listeners as well as good speakers).

---

<sup>2</sup> Brown, H. D. (2001). *Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.). White Plains: NY: Longman.

<sup>3</sup> Luoma, S. (2004). *Assessing Speaking*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>4</sup> Nation, I. S. P. (2011). Second language speaking. In E. Hinkel (Eds.). *Handbook of Research in Second Language Teaching and Learning* (Volume 2) (444-454). New York, NY: Routledge 444-454.

<sup>5</sup> Pawlak, M. (2015). Advanced learners' use of communication strategies in spontaneous language performance. In M. Pawlak & E. Waniek-Klimczak (Eds.), *Issues in teaching, learning and testing speaking in a second language* (pp. 121-141). Heidelberg – New York: Springer.

<sup>6</sup> Pawlak, M. (2018). The use of pronunciation learning strategies in form-focused and meaning-focused activities: The impact of contextual and individual difference variables. In R. L. Oxford & C. M. Amerstorfer (Eds.), *Language learning strategies and individual learner characteristics situating strategy use in diverse contexts* (pp. 187-206). London: Bloomsbury

<sup>7</sup> Nunan, D. (1989). *Designing Tasks for the Communicative Classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Spoken language proficiency necessitates the mastery of listening and speaking which are considered complex cognitive skills (Rost<sup>8</sup>, 2005; Vandergrift<sup>9</sup>, 2010; Vandergrift<sup>10</sup>, 2011). In this sense, listening and speaking are multi-dimensional phenomena involving a cognitive nature and a social nature. An interlocutor tries to deal with a varying set of competences ranging from processing, interpreting and evaluating the message they receive to managing interaction with their interlocutors and the context they are in.

It is noteworthy that either in listening or speaking, a language user cannot be efficient without considerable phonological knowledge. A listener cannot process a sound they do not know. Similarly, a speaker can have ideas to share but might fail to express them without the necessary pronunciation skills and patterns. This skill represents a serious level of difficulty for listeners and speakers. Field<sup>11</sup> (2008, pp. 142-143) presents an inventory of the skills necessary to the listener in order to process sound and segment speech: (1) segment the stream of sound and recognize word boundaries, (2) recognize contracted forms, (3) recognize the vocabulary being used, (4) recognize sentence and clause boundaries in speech, (5) recognize stress patterns and speech rhythm, (6) recognize stress on longer words, and the effect on the rest of the word, (7) recognize the significance of language-related ('paralinguistic') features, most obviously intonation and (8) recognize changes in pitch, tone and speed of delivery.

It is clear that these skills cannot be used separately; they should rather be viewed in a more holistic approach. Consequently, listeners and

---

<sup>8</sup> Rost, M. (2005). L2 Listening. In E. Hinkel (Eds.), *Handbook of Research in Second Language Teaching and Learning* (pp. 503–527). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

<sup>9</sup> Vandergrift, L. (2010). Researching listening in applied linguistics. In B. Paltridge and A. Phakiti (Eds.), *Companion to research methods in applied linguistics* (pp. 160–173). London: Continuum.

<sup>10</sup> Vandergrift, L. (2011). Second language listening: Presage, product, and pedagogy. In E. Hinkel (Eds.), *Handbook of Research in Second Language Teaching and Learning (Volume 2)*. (455-4). New York, NY: Routedledge.

<sup>11</sup> Field, J. (2008). *Listening in the Language Classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

speakers should develop understanding and mastery of both the segmental and suprasegmental features of English pronunciation.

### 3. Method

We have chosen to conduct a semi-structured interview in order to be able to have in-depth conversations with the informants. We believe this is an appropriate procedure for us to get information about the informants' practices, attitudes, perceptions and views concerning speaking skills, listening skills, and the pronunciation of their learners.

A paper-based interview guide for each subject (Oral Expression and Phonetics) has been designed to assist the researcher when conducting the interviews. It comprises a set of questions and topics to deal with during the semi-structured interview to help the researcher focus and explore the areas planned during the conception phase (See Appendix 1).

The actual interviews can be found to be dissimilar to some extent from one another. In other words, the content in the guide represents a common core to all the interviews with some differences in terms of order and wording. Needless to say, another difference goes with the nature of semi-structured interviews, which allows the researcher to add or adapt questions in reaction to a given informant's responses. Since the interviews comprise questions and discussions that diverge from the paper-based interview guide, we have tape-recorded the interviews and have transcribed them.

Almost all the questions included in the interviews are open-ended. They are meant to help both the researcher and the teacher interviewed to delve into the issue and its variables. Our plan was to target the following aspects.

- Syllabus: The aim is to know whether teachers rely on a written syllabus to teach the subjects of Oral Expression and/or Phonetics. Moreover, we have attempted to get information about the type and structure of the syllabus if any.
- Objectives: We wanted to inquire into the objectives set in the two subjects and their congruency with the aims assigned to the 'Licence' and the profile set for the graduates in the canvas.

- **Speaking:** We endeavoured to unravel the interviewees' views concerning speaking skills and the pedagogy behind teaching speaking. This part of the interview, therefore, has been an opportunity to identify the speaking strategies and the speaking activities implemented in the course as a means to improve their learners' speaking skills.
- **Listening:** This part investigated the importance teachers give to the listening skills and their role in improving the students' oral proficiency. It inquired into the teachers' pedagogy so as to reveal whether listening is viewed as a process and, therefore given an overt treatment in the classroom or whether it is left for the learners to develop incidentally. We also wanted to learn about the learners' contact with aural English, and what sources of English they are exposed to. Does the teacher make use of audio and video material or is the teacher the one and only model?
- **Pronunciation:** Three aspects were targeted. The first one focused on whether pronunciation is formally taught. The second aspect dealt with the features of pronunciation included in the course. The last aspect tackled the approach adopted in the treatment of the elements of pronunciation. In other words, we have tried to shed light on the inclusion of pronunciation features, which features, and how these features are taught. As far as the subject of Phonetics is concerned, aspects two and three (which features are taught and how they are taught) only are applicable since, naturally, aspects of pronunciation are treated in Phonetics.
- **Communicative language ability:** This part was to seek information about the teachers' understanding of communicative language ability on the one hand and their opinion about the impact of pronunciation proficiency on learners' communicative language ability on the other hand. We have also meant to learn whether teachers noticed any improvement in their learners' communicative language ability and what caused that improvement.
- **Coordination:** Two aspects of coordination were underlined. The first stressed intra-coordination between specialist teachers of Oral

Expression together and those of Phonetics, each within their own area of specialisation. The second aspect focused on inter-coordination, bringing together teachers of Oral Expression and teachers of Phonetics.

- Material: The interview was also an opportunity to collect information about the material teachers use in Oral Expression and Phonetics. We wanted to know whether teachers wrote their own material or relied on external sources or both.

### 3.1 Sampling of Informants

There is no need to say that the sample of informants has to be truly representative of the teaching population. We tried therefore to reach at least one fifth of the overall population. To that end, we identified the teachers who were teaching or had taught Oral Expression and those who were teaching or had taught Phonetics.

The sample for this phase of the research is believed to be representative in terms of number. It represents over 26% of the teaching population at the Department of English at the University of Mostaganem<sup>12</sup>. We tried to expand our sample to teachers of English at the tertiary level in Oran and in spite of all our efforts, we managed to get four informants only<sup>13</sup>.

Consequently, the sample population comprises thirteen (13) teachers from Abdelhamid Ibn Badis of Mostaganem, three (03) teachers from 'ENS'<sup>14</sup> of Oran and one teacher from the Department of English in Oran. At least for the University of Mostaganem, a sample of this size gives a fairly representative picture of the teaching population, not only in terms of size, but also in terms of gender, seniority, subject matter, and credentials.

- gender: we have three (03) male and fourteen (14) female teachers as informants,

---

<sup>12</sup> According to the Head of the English Department, there are 48 permanent teachers for the Academic year 2020-2021.

<sup>13</sup> We tried to administer the interview to a larger number of teachers, but some of them declined the invitation while others promised to participate but unexpected events decided otherwise.

<sup>14</sup> ENSO: Ecole Normale Supérieure d'Oran was created in 2014 in accordance with Executive Decree No 14-230 issue on August 25<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

- seniority: we have five (05) junior<sup>15</sup> teachers and twelve (12) experienced teachers in terms of years of teaching regardless of the teaching level<sup>16</sup>,
- subject matter: we have ten (10) teachers who have taught Oral Expression, four (04) teachers who have taught Phonetics, and three (03) teachers who have taught both Phonetics and Oral Expression,
- credentials: we have fourteen teachers who hold a Magister Degree and three teachers who hold a Doctoral Degree.

#### **4. Results and Discussion**

The processing of the data obtained will be presented below under eight headings: Syllabus, objectives, speaking, listening, pronunciation and its treatment, communicative language ability, coordination, and material.

##### **4.1 The syllabus**

In spite of the importance of a syllabus, the majority of the informants (Teachers of Oral Expression) confess the absence of a written document that indicates the content and aims set for Oral Expression to freshmen. They deplore such a situation and show different reactions. Some of the informants state they designed their own syllabus which they implemented in their respective classes. It is not a syllabus agreed on and validated for the whole cohort. Informant #2 states that there was agreement among colleagues but acknowledges the fact that the syllabus had not been respected due to lack of coordination. A summary of the informants' responses to my questions concerning the syllabus for the freshmen Oral Expression is listed below.

- A colleague suggested a syllabus but I could not see it.
- At the beginning, no syllabus. Later there was agreement with colleagues.
- I was trying to find something interesting all the time.

---

<sup>15</sup> We arbitrary divided the teaching population into two classes. 'Junior' teachers have less than ten years' seniority. 'Experienced' teachers have more than ten years' seniority.

<sup>16</sup> We took into consideration the years of teaching at university and previous experience elsewhere.

- Each teacher is teaching their way.
- As long as learners are talking, it is alright.
- I needed help from colleagues, and I did not have any.
- I had to decide myself what to do with the students.
- I tried to do my best to meet learners' needs.
- I designed my own syllabus.
- It is a module where you have to leave the students free to talk.
- The first time I was asked to teach OE, I did not ask for a syllabus. I knew it did not exist.
- We have to manage our own syllabus and teach. There are no guidelines.
- I designed my own syllabus based on the diagnostic assessment.
- Each year, the syllabus changes depending on the students.

We can note that the main target for teachers is to have their learners talk. There is no written syllabus, which may indicate that there is lack of a thoughtful and structured approach to achieving such objectives. Most teachers decide what to do in isolation. In the case of Phonetics, however, the informants explain that they have followed a syllabus that has been designed by phoneticians. The next point deals with the objectives set for the Oral Expression and Phonetics courses.

#### **4.2 Objectives**

The teachers of OE under study have given us information about the objectives set for their students. Although these objectives are different and varied, there is convergence to some extent. The objective that has showed the highest score is 'pronunciation' with six (06) teachers. Five (05) teachers set 'developing self-confidence' as an objective. 'Enhancing accuracy' and 'enriching vocabulary have been highlighted by four (04) teachers. 'Targeting fluency' has been mentioned by two (02) teachers. The other objectives are randomly listed below:

- Transfer of competences (Reinvest what has been learnt in other subjects)
- Integrating skills
- Promote public speaking

- Encourage interaction among students
- Communicative competence
- Oral skills
- Listening

As for the subject of Phonetics, One shared objective among the informants (five out of seven) has to do with the improvement of learners' pronunciation. Five (5) teachers state that they target the recognition of sounds (consonants and vowels) and their characteristics. Three (3) informants declare that they aim at developing their learners' skills in producing sounds correctly. Two objectives have received one answer each: defining Phonetics and its branches and transcribing R.P. phonemes. After the objectives, we will deal with the subsection about speaking and the types of activities implemented to achieve the aforementioned objectives.

### **4.3 Speaking**

The informants' answers allowed us to make an inventory of the teaching practices put into operation in their OE classes. 'Free topics', 'role plays', and 'songs' were mentioned five (05) times each and top the list. 'Debates' was identified four (04) times. Each of 'dialogues', 'discussion', and 'plays' appeared three (3) times. 'Games' and 'presentations' were mentioned twice (02) each. The other teaching practices, mentioned once only by the informants, are listed in a random order as follows:

- Pattern drills
- Interviews
- Story completion
- Jigsaw techniques
- Story telling

According to the answers we received from the informants, the best way to help their learners improve on their speaking skills is to actually have them speak. The more learners speak, the more competent they will become.

Most of our informants seem to favour the implementation of fluency-based practice. They encourage their learners to feel comfortable, speak

freely and develop self-confidence, which will have a positive impact on their speaking proficiency. Some informants (4 out of 13) believe accuracy is very important and devise activities accordingly. This part covered speaking, and the following will present listening.

#### 4.4 Listening

The listening skills do not represent a priority for the population under study. An overwhelming majority of the interviewed teachers (ten out of thirteen) state they do not focus on the listening skills. No time is devoted to the teaching of listening in the classroom. The graph below shows the number of teachers dealing with listening skills instruction.

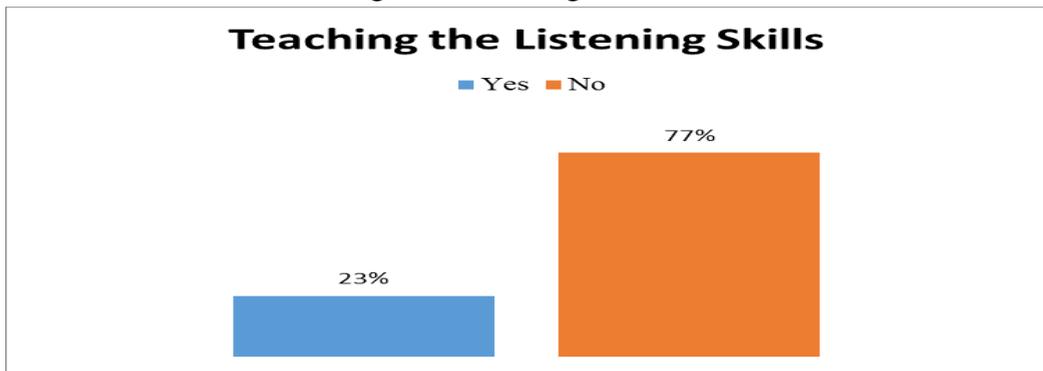


Figure 1: The instruction of the listening skills

Informants give different reasons to explain the reasons behind the absence of listening skills instruction. Reason number one refers to the scarcity of audio equipment. Teachers complain that they do not have access to adequate equipment to train their students on listening at the university.

One informant states they do not feel the need to focus on teaching the listening skills. This teacher explains the motives for such a position by the fact that students are exposed to English outside the classroom context. Another informant explains that they do not pay attention to listening because their main aim is to have learners speak and speak only. After having presented results linked to listening, we will deal with pronunciation and its instruction.

#### 4.5 Pronunciation and its Treatment

In this section, we will present the results obtained under two headings. The first relates to the data we have received from the teachers of

Oral Expression, and the second one deals with the information registered with the teachers of Phonetics. We will start with Oral Expression.

#### **4.5.1 Oral Expression**

According to the informants we interviewed, there is no formal teaching of the features of pronunciation. Almost all the informants who teach OE (12 of 13) declare they do not plan activities a priori to have learners practise pronunciation. These informants state that their main concern is to intervene to correct pronunciation mistakes if and when they occur. The features of pronunciation they target when correcting their learners' pronunciation mistakes are listed as follows:

- Sounds (consonants and vowels) with ten informants
- Syllables and word stress with seven informants
- Intonation with three informants
- Rhythm with three informants

The pie chart below gives a clear picture of the mistakes targeted and amount of importance attached to them.

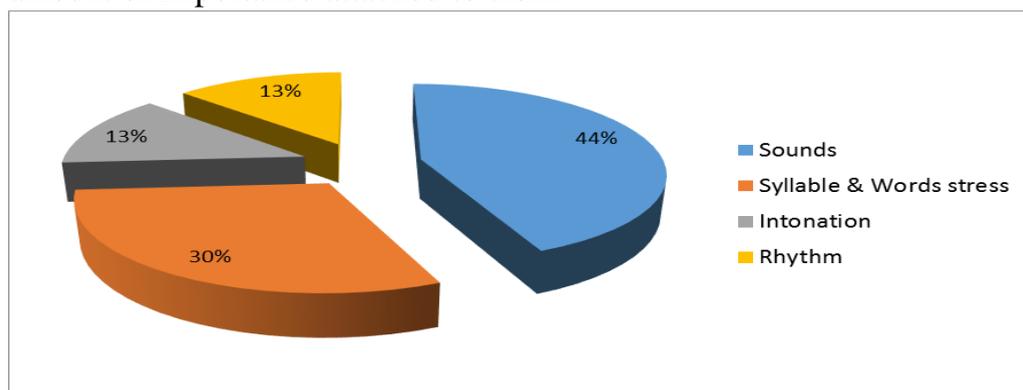


Figure 2: Features of pronunciation corrected

One of the twelve informants concerned says that no room is devoted to pronunciation practice. Moreover, that informant claims that pronunciation mistakes are tolerated since first year students are fresh and teachers are not native speakers.

The one informant who asserts they teach pronunciation formally in the form of planned practice explains that the main aim is to raise learners' awareness. That interviewed teacher says that they give special attention to

stress and intonation.

#### **4.5.2 Phonetics**

Concerning the module of Phonetics, the seven teachers (100% of the informants who have taught Phonetics) agree on the inclusion of some necessary points in their lessons. They first focus on the definition of Phonetics. Then, they move to the identification of organs of speech (Articulatory Phonetics). After that, they devote considerable time to study consonants, vowels, and their characteristics.

Relying on the two syllabi we have, in addition to the segmental features, some of the suprasegments are included. Syllables and word stress are included in the two syllabi plus the features of sentence stress and intonation in one syllabus (University of Oran). However, all but two informants have mentioned the features of syllables and word stress as elements of pronunciation taught in their Phonetics classes. In the following lines, we will deal with the informants' answers on communicative language ability and its components.

#### **4.6 Communicative Language Ability**

For the majority of the informants, communicative language ability can be understood as the learners' competence to express their ideas fluently and accurately. Their main aim is to have learners enrich their vocabulary stock and work on their syntactic errors. In addition, some teachers who rightly consider, as psycholinguists claim, that self-confidence is a legitimate target, do their utmost to raise motivation and decrease anxiety in their learners.

It is noteworthy that all our informants agree on the importance of pronunciation in the development of the oral-aural process. They are aware of its communicative value and the role suprasegments play in effective communication. Two Oral Expression informants claim that they want their learners to 'sound correct' when they speak. The overwhelming majority of Phonetics informants herald the curative role of Phonetics in helping improve learners' pronunciation and the way they speak English. Only one Phonetics informant advocates, as we do, that due to their importance, suprasegments should be introduced from the very beginning.

On their part, the Oral Expression informants' assumptions about

pronunciation do not seem to be consistent with their actual practices in the classroom context. Practically all the informants acknowledge that the role pronunciation plays in communication is unquestionable. Yet, as seen in Section 4.5.1, little room is devoted to the treatment of pronunciation during their contact hours. Some teachers explain that they consider the course to have fulfilled its duty successfully once the learners have become intelligible. Again, here, the notion of intelligibility is not clarified, and the required pronunciation competence is not well defined.

Most informants declare that learners do improve, to some extent, in comparison with their level at the beginning of the academic year. The informants view this improvement from different angles. Four informants link this improvement to learners' increased self-confidence. Three informants explain that students' communicative language ability improved at the same time as their pronunciation of words progressed. Two informants link their learners' betterment to the latter's vocabulary stock expansion. Two other informants noted that their learners had gained a lot in both fluency and accuracy. One teacher highlights the improvement of some learners in the suprasegments. This informant explains this betterment was due to the fact that these students watched videos on YouTube and acted in several plays.

#### **4.7 Coordination**

We present the processed data concerning coordination in relation first to the Oral Expression course, second the Phonetics course, and third to the two courses combined.

According to the thirteen teachers of Oral Expression we interviewed, two teachers only state they have attended coordination sessions. For the overwhelming majority, there has never been a formal session of coordination scheduled nor held. In other words, the informants have never been invited to a coordination meeting nor have they initiated one. They have taught their classes each on their own with very little information about what was happening in their colleagues' Oral expression classes.

Four teachers, however, declare they have exchanged some information informally with other colleagues. One informant explains they

have discussed pedagogic aspects through the Internet, and two others state that they have tackled some issues in the hall on their way to their classroom.

As far as the subject of Phonetics is concerned, the aspect of ‘coordination’ has received mixed results. Four informants out of seven say they have never taken part in a formal coordination session. Two explain that they have organised several coordination meetings, including via e-mailing. Two insist on having coordination meetings in order to prepare for the exams.

As regards coordination between the Phonetics and Oral expression teachers, a unanimous answer has been given by the informants. A total absence of coordination in this area sadly denotes that teachers in one subject are only incidentally aware of what is going on in the other. Ironically enough, they all agree that both subjects deal with oral-aural aspects of the language and therefore share a lot in terms of objectives and methodology and content.

The graph below illustrates the extent to which coordination does – or does not – take place in Oral Expression and Phonetics separately, and in the two subjects taken together.

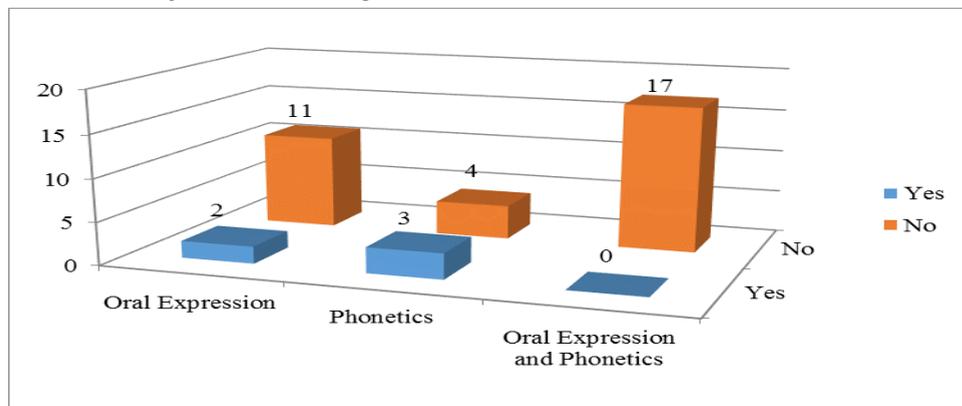


Figure 3: Coordination

#### 4.8 Material

In this section, we will summarise the informants’ answers regarding the equipment used in the classroom. Then, we shall focus on material writing and list some of the sources teachers rely on for their teaching.

Amongst the population of seventeen teachers, only six mention that

they have used ICTs and recorded material in their classrooms. They explain that they have connected their personal lap-tops and amplifiers to the projector provided by the Department. Other teachers, while claiming their familiarity with this technology, justify the absence of its use in their teaching by the unavailability of audio equipment in their respective departments. Nevertheless, all of them agree on the huge impact of audio material and ICTs on the teaching/learning of oral-aural skills.

Except for one teacher who states they have written their own material, the remaining informants declare they have relied on a variety of sources to write material for their classes. They depended mainly on elements taken from the Internet and textbooks.

Six out of thirteen teachers of Oral Expression claim that they have used textbooks to adopt or adapt material for their lessons. As for Phonetics, four out of seven teachers say that they have had recourse to textbooks and books of Phonetics and Phonology. The table below presents an inventory of the textbooks and books used by Oral Expression and Phonetics teachers. In Oral Expression, the four textbooks used are listed in alphabetical order. For the Phonetics module, textbooks and books are presented from the most used to the least.

Oral Expression	Phonetics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Headway</i> by J. Soars and L. Soars</li> <li>• <i>Interchange</i> by J. C. Richards</li> <li>• <i>Keep talking</i> by F. Klippel</li> <li>• <i>Market Leader</i> by D. Cotton</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>English Pronunciation in Use</i> by M. Hancock</li> <li>• <i>An Introduction to the Pronunciation of English</i> by A. C. Gimson</li> <li>• <i>English Phonetics and Phonology</i> by P. Roach</li> <li>• <i>English Intonation</i> by J. C. Wells</li> </ul>

Table 1: Textbooks and books used in Oral Expression and Phonetics courses

## 5.4 CONCLUSION

The informants in the interview provided us with valuable information. They shed light on the practices applied in the subjects of Pronunciation and Oral Expression at the tertiary level. The main observation is related to the solitary behaviour of Oral Expression teachers.

They have chosen to manage their course in isolation devoid of any form of collaboration or agreement on what to teach and how to teach it. Moreover, pronunciation is not given the share it deserves. Some teachers have simply opted for its exclusion. Some other teachers have given some emphasis to pronunciation through error correction or remedial work mainly. It is undeniable that the segments take the lead over the suprasegments. The informants do not seem to be aware of the complexity of the speaking and listening skills and they are merely left to be worked on by the learners on their own or to soak in with time.

We cannot deny the fact that learning and teaching oral-aural skills is demanding and challenging. Yet, an important number of university teachers express their wish to teach the subject of Oral Expression believing it is an easy matter to deal with. In fact, most of the lessons are designed around topics discussed by the students. This kind of exposure is believed to help learners improve on their speaking skills.

Listening is also an important skill in oral communication. It is the natural precursor to speaking and decisive in the development of linguistic communication. Most teachers neglect the active aspect of listening. Students are, generally, exposed to one source of English: the teacher's. Raising learners' awareness about the listening process and the skills involved is minimal.

As for pronunciation, we find among practitioners divergent assumptions, not only about the teachability of pronunciation, but also about the features of pronunciation to be taught. This is similar to what takes place amongst teachers of English in the Algerian educational system in general and at the tertiary level in particular. We have noticed that when it comes to teaching pronunciation, teachers are guided by intuition rather than research and science. They either teach it as articulatory phonetics or not at all.

## **Bibliography List:**

### **Books:**

1. Brown, H. D. (2001). *Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.). White Plains: NY: Longman.
2. Luoma, S. (2004). *Assessing Speaking*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
3. Nation, I. S. P. (2011). Second language speaking. In E. Hinkel (Eds.), *Handbook of Research in Second Language Teaching and Learning* (Volume 2) (444-454). New York, NY: Routledge 444-454.
4. Pawlak, M. (2015). Advanced learners' use of communication strategies in spontaneous language performance. In M. Pawlak & E. Waniek-Klimczak (Eds.), *Issues in teaching, learning and testing speaking in a second language* (pp. 121-141). Heidelberg – New York: Springer.
5. Pawlak, M. (2018). The use of pronunciation learning strategies in form-focused and meaning-focused activities: The impact of contextual and individual difference variables. In R. L. Oxford & C. M. Amerstorfer (Eds.), *Language learning strategies and individual learner characteristics situating strategy use in diverse contexts* (pp. 187-206). London: Bloomsbury
6. Nunan, D. (1989). *Designing Tasks for the Communicative Classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
7. Rost, M. (2005). L2 Listening. In E. Hinkel (Eds.), *Handbook of Research in Second Language Teaching and Learning* (pp. 503–527). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
8. Vandergrift, L. (2010). Researching listening in applied linguistics. In B. Paltridge and A. Phakiti (Eds.), *Companion to research methods in applied linguistics* (pp. 160–173). London: Continuum.
9. Vandergrift, L. (2011). Second language listening: Presage, product, and pedagogy. In E. Hinkel (Eds.), *Handbook of Research in Second Language Teaching and Learning* (Volume 2). (455-4). New York, NY: Routeledge.

10. Field, J. (2008). *Listening in the Language Classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

**Appendices**

**Appendix 1: Interview guide**

How old are you?

What credentials / Degree do you have?

How long have you been teaching English for?

What subject matters have you taught?

<b>Phonetics</b>	<b>Oral Expression</b>
Do you follow a syllabus?	Do you follow a syllabus?
	Is pronunciation instruction included in OE?
What are the objectives set for teaching Phonetics?	What are the objectives set for teaching OE?
What features of pronunciation are included	What features of pronunciation are included
What features do you start with?	What features do you start with?
Do you cover Suprasegments?	Do you cover Suprasegments?
Why have you adopted this approach?	Why have you adopted this approach?
Which aspects are developed? Segmental? Suprasegmental?	Which aspects are developed? Segmental? Suprasegmental
Is there any improvement in learners' pronunciation?	Is there any improvement in learners' communicative ability (Beginning and end of the course)? What about pronunciation?
	Which competences have you targeted (Communicative ability)?
	Speaking strategies?
	Types of speaking activities
	If not
	Why do you not teach

*Teaching EFL speaking skills: What status to grant to pronunciation and listening instruction*

	pronunciation?
	What share do you give to pronunciation?
Do you have coordination sessions? How often?	Do you have coordination sessions? How often?
Do you have coordination sessions with teachers of OE?	Do you have coordination sessions with teachers of Phonetics?
What type of activities do you implement?	What type of activities do you implement?
	Do you work on improving learners' listening skills?
	If yes, how?
	Which listening competences?
Do you use any textbooks/Course books? Which? On what basis have you selected them	Do you use any textbooks/Course books? Which? On what basis have you selected them