

# Fostering Oral Communication in English as a Foreign Language in Beninese Secondary Schools: The Case of Some Couffo Schools

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**Abstract.** This study aims at drawing up an inventory of factors that prevent students from speaking English fluently, proposing adequate solutions to these problems, and revealing the impacts that English speaking mastery can have on learners' future professional, economic and social lives. As such, it intends to verify the problems that English speaking can have despite its importance and propose solutions to create more interaction through communicative language teaching and some teaching strategies. To reach our objective, we have used a mixed research methodology made of questionnaires and interviews. Questionnaires of six questions were addressed to twenty (20) EFL teachers whereas two hundred and fifty (250) questionnaires of seven questions were addressed to EFL students. These two types of respondents were selected from six JHS of Couffo Regions. As for interviewees, they were ten, selected from the same schools. The data collected through the main instruments were discussed based on the research questions. The results, from answers to question N°1 (why foster oral communication), show that 68% of the respondent teachers say that English offers job opportunities and 30% declare that it helps to communicate with the rest of the world. Next, from answers to research question N° 2 (what prevents EFL students from being fluent), it can be retained that 85% of the students addressed anxiety as their main threat (question N°5); 62% say that they feel at ease to speak English only in small groups (question N°3). From teachers, many other reasons were also evoked. 90% of the interviewees declare that students ignore the importance of English in the world and 85% think that negligence and laziness reduce learners' interest in English. About the last research question, interviewees proposed six solutions. Here, teachers in their answers to questions N°5 reveal that they based the teaching in their interest (55%) and in N°6, 55% say they use Jigsaw to create interaction. In the end, the study draws the conclusion that knowing the "how" is not enough, but both teachers and learners should apply what is required for sound results.

**Keywords:** Fostering, oral communication, interaction, EFL.

## INTRODUCTION

Human beings need to communicate everyday with different people, at different times, and in different ways. There are different ways of communicating: verbal or non-verbal communication. Verbal communication, focused on language use, can be oral or written. Our concern here is oral communication in EFL: its

importance, problems its teaching and learning encounter, and ways through which it can be attained by learners.

Our purpose in carrying out this research work on oral communication is threefold: firstly, it draws up an inventory of factors that prevent students from speaking

English fluently. Secondly, it proposes adequate solutions to these problems. Finally, it reveals the impact English speaking attainment can have on learners' future professional, economic and social lives. Our decision to undertake this study comes from the fact that after years of English study in the High Schools and even at the end of their studies at the English Department, many Beninese students are incapable of holding a few minutes conversation. Moreover, despite the different strategies used to make learners acquire fluency, oral communication remains a great problem. To find solutions to these problems, this research intends to answer the following questions: 1. Why foster oral communication? 2. How can speaking be fostered in Beninese EFL students?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

As social creatures, human beings have to communicate among themselves. Language is the most used means of communication. Particularly, English has become a very important language all over the world. Today, English has become the main means of communication in fields such as education, medicine and business and cinema, etc. Thus, students who study English as a Foreign Language (EFL) need to improve their proficiency in the language to be able to communicate with other people living in different cultures and speaking different languages. Moreover, a good command of the language can help EFL students improve their professional development, academic performance and personal and social effectiveness (CheeKeong *et al.*, 2014). Being able to communicate in English is a great asset. More than written communication, oral communication has a greater communication in that it helps to communicate with the rest of the world (Masturaoum, 2011). Despite the importance of oral communication, some problems surround it.

### Problems of oral communication

Many factors make oral communication difficult. The first one concerns what Lokossou and Tomassihoué (2007:33) call "The lack of understanding of the target culture, the lack of conversational competence", which is a threat to oral communication attainment. In reality, as said in "Research Starter Paper" (1997), "Culture and language are integrally related. Language represents one system of culture, and culture is transmitted via language." As such, students have to struggle to acquire both conversational skills and the target culture.

Another problem is the plethoric numbers in classrooms. As mentioned by Snow and Don (2006, cited in Lokossou and Tomassihoué, 2007:6).

EFL classes in many countries have 30, 40, 50, or even

60 students per class, especially in state schools and in poorer countries. Classroom management also becomes a challenge with large classes. Activities that work with a few students may not work so well with many students unless they are divided up into groups.

About plethoric numbers in our classrooms, there is a limitation in Snow and Don's solution. Placing students of about 60 into groups is not easy. Besides, it is not easy for the teacher to manage them for he has to go from group to group to see what is going on. Moreover, students' chance to express themselves in class can occur only once in a while. No matter how threatening speaking in front of the teacher may appear, it is however, important because it allows teachers to discover learners' limitations and needs to provide.

Besides the plethoric numbers, other researchers mention anxiety which is a pervasive cognitive dysfunction with a focus on threats and risks. It goes with tension, worry, muscle pain, disturbed sleep, and irritability (Elsevier, 2017). In EFL context, it is the fear, uneasiness or worry students experience about speaking English. Since anxiety is one of the most highly examined variables in all psychology and education, it negatively influences language learning (Horwitz, 2001; cited in Tanveer, 2007:4). The learning environment, the learning conditions as well as the teacher's speaking capacity are others threats to oral communication. All the same, solutions exist to oral communication problems.

### Solutions to oral communication problems

Many researchers proposed solutions to oral communication problems, the first of which is interaction. For Pisca *et al.* (1993:10), "Language is best learned and taught through interaction." Interaction can be either teacher-student or student-student. Student-student interaction is the better because it firstly reduces language anxiety; next, it allows learners to communicate among themselves. In the same vein, cooperative learning is one of the best strategies that yield interaction because "reports on studies comparing the achievement of higher, middle and low achieving students in competitive, individualistic and cooperative learning situations show that cooperative learning experiences tend to produce higher results" (Mohammed, 2012:35). Like cooperative learning, communicative language teaching also produces interaction (Bruner *et al.*, 2014).

## METHODOLOGY

This study, started from 2015 through 2016, was conducted according to a mixed methods approach, a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches. The mixed approach was used to allow me to add to statistically reliable information obtained from numerical measurement-quantitative approach to information provided

by the research participants in their own terms- the qualitative approach (Bastounis *et al.*, 2003). Besides, as Iwikotan (2013:61) declares, “both methods collect and analyse data as well as interpret the findings revealed by the collected data.” Questionnaires and interviews were the instruments we used to collect my data.

Questionnaires: our decision to administrate questionnaires as research instrument depends on the fact that they can be used for a large number of people at the same time. In this research work, I have designed two types of questionnaires: one for students and the other for teachers to get the opinions of both. EFL teachers' questionnaire included six (6) questions whereas their students' one consisted of seven (7) questions. Both of them aimed at knowing the problems related to oral communication and looking for adequate solutions to them

The semi-structured interviews were the other strategy that we used to collect data from ten EFL teachers. Indeed, the semi-structured interview is the type of interview during which the interviewer has a pre-established set of topics that should be covered (Bastounis *et al.*, 2003). We have preferred it to avoid the rigidity concerning structured interviews and the difficulties encountered during unstructured interviews data analysis (Iwikotan, 2013). Here, after convincing the respondent people to accept our interview because their answers would help me to contribute to the development of EFL teaching/ learning in general, and to facilitate the learning of speaking skill in particular, we asked teachers the following questions: 1. What problems affect the teaching/learning of oral communication in EFL classes? 2. How can these problems be solved? 3. How can the solutions have impacts on EFL learners and their environment?

Our research population includes two hundred and fifty (250) Junior High School (JHS) students and twenty (20) of their English teachers chosen in CEG1 Azovè (Azo1), College Catholique d'Azovè (CCA), CEG1 Aplahoué (Apla1), CEG1 Djakotomey (Djak1), CSP “La Gazelle” (La Gaz), CEG1 Klouékanmey (Kl1).

## RESULTS

The current findings were obtained after collecting and analysing data from our three sources that are the research instruments we used. Indeed, after collecting the sheets of the two different questionnaires, and transcribing the recorded data provided by interviewees, we classified information according to their sources/instruments: questionnaire for students, questionnaire for teachers and interviews. Analyses were done per question whatever the instrument. The qualitative analysis considered the content or meaning of data provided by respondents but the quantitative analysis resulted from the number of people adopting a

given position. On the quantitative field, data were rated through statistical means. In short, the analyses were done based on the aforementioned research questions. Thus, the findings were in two sections: section 1 deals with why foster oral communication while section 2 concerns how speaking can be fostered in Beninese EFL students.

Concerning the first section, results came from answers to interviewees' questions N° 1 as well as from answers teachers provided to their questions N° 1, 3 and 4 and from those students supplied to their questions N° 1 and 2. To EFL teachers, the reasons for fostering oral communication are threefold: firstly, their position referred to the importance of English expressed through answers to question N° 1: “Why is English oral communication important” Three possibilities were proposed, the most important of which were: it offers job opportunities (60%); it helps communicate with the rest of the world (30%). As a matter of fact, to get well-paid jobs and communicate with the whole world because of a single language, anyone should do their best to master English. Secondly, they showed that English oral communication encountered some problems in Benin; the first of these problems is fluency; shown through the question “Are your students fluent in English” To it, 60% said “few of them are” compared to 15% who said that “most of them are.”

Students' answers to their questions N° 1, 2 and 5 showed other problems related to oral communication which confirm the reasons why we should foster oral communication. To question N°1: “What is English according to you”, only 26% provided satisfactory answer as they said it was “A school subject and one of the most spread languages in the world” whereas 58% of them considered English as “a foreign language imposed for study.” Unfortunately, 85% of them declared to like English while replying to question N° 2. We wonder how they presume to like English which they considered as a foreign language imposed for study and just a school subject. Concerning question N° 5, “How do you feel when the teacher questions you in class”, 85% of learners felt anxious.

The third reason why it requires to foster oral communication has to do with the answers teachers provided to question N° 4 “What often causes their failure in oral communication?” Of the four answers they gave, “lack of interest” rated 50% and “laziness” rated 30%, which means that 80% of them did not lack fluency because they lost focus. In parallel with the findings from questionnaires, other causes of oral communication problems are expressed through answers provided by interviewees.

To the question why foster oral communication in Beninese EFL Junior High School classes, interviewees judged that it was because of the problems affecting oral communication. They segmented these problems into four main categories. Firstly, they considered the learning

**Table 1.** Problems affecting oral communication attainment.

<b>Answers</b>	<b>Results (%)</b>
The socio-cultural learning environment affects English speaking	89
Students' ignorance of English's importance in the world is a problem too	90
Negligence and laziness reduce learners' interest in English	85
The low teaching hours and the low average coefficient do not incite them	95

**Table 2.** Suggested solutions.

<b>Answers</b>	<b>Results (%)</b>
The socio-cultural learning environment affects English speaking	89
Students' ignorance of English's importance in the world is a problem too	90
Negligence and laziness reduce learners' interest in English	85
The low teaching hours and the low average coefficient do not incite them	95

environment as an obstacle to English speaking. As an example, 89% of them opined that “the socio-cultural environment affects English speaking.” Secondly, they declared that students most of the time ignore the importance of English worldwide. Indeed, 90% of them attributed the problem to “students' ignorance of English's importance in the world.” Thirdly, by pointing out learners' laziness and negligence, 85% of the interviewees said that “Negligence and laziness reduce learners' interest in English.” Finally, their concern was that “The low teaching hours and the low average coefficient do not incite students to learn English.” In short, the need to foster oral communication comes from the fact that the socio-cultural learning environment, students' ignorance of the importance of English and negligence and laziness as well as the low teaching hours and the low average coefficient threatened English learning in students. In other words, fostering oral communication means finding solutions to these problems. Table 1 presents the reason for interviewees to foster speaking.

All in all, the need of fostering oral communication comes from the importance of English in many domains of life in spite of students' lack of fluency caused by laziness, negligence, anxiety and lack of interest. Now, what about research question N°2 (How can speaking be fostered in Beninese EFL students)

Results concerning how to foster speaking also come from information gathered from interviews and both questionnaires. Interviewees suggested six different solutions. While 96% of the respondents considered “Creating English clubs in schools” as a sound solution, 75% suggested “Using visual aids and games to teach English.” Besides, “watching English TV channels and listening to English speaking radios” also came from 88%

of them. Still about how to foster speaking, 86% suggested the idea of “organising at least one annual trip to English speaking countries.” At the same time, for 79% of them, “promoting communicative language in student-student interaction contexts” was also expressed. Finally, from 97% of the interviewees, “education authorities should increase teaching hours and coefficients.” Interviewees' answers are summarised in Table 2.

Beside the suggestions made by interviewees come answers EFL teachers and students gave to questions on questionnaires also contributed to how to foster speaking. Concerning how teachers improve their personal English, 50% of them declared it was “by reviewing phonetic notions frequently and debating with colleagues” and 40% “by listening to BBC and watching English programmes.” Thanks to God, teachers do not only improve their personal English; about how they help their students (question N°5), they reported to grade attendance (40%) and base the teaching content on learners' interest (55%). The last strategy teachers used to foster speaking in their learners was interaction. In this regard, they (55%) proposed to make students contribute to group work through strategies like Jigsaw and mostly propose topics that fit their interests (30%).

From students' answers to questions 3, 4, 5 and 6, it can also be perceived how to foster speaking as shown from the other instruments. As far as question N°3 that inquires where students feel free to speak is concerned, 62% shared with us that their confidence to speak English mainly occurred in small groups. That is why 85% declared to feel anxious when the teacher questioned them in class (question N°5), which means teachers should frequently put students in small groups to favour speaking. Yet, teachers should do all their best to

promote interaction in these groups. As for question 4 (What language does your teacher use in class?), 66% declared that lessons occurred “mostly in English.” Finally, concerning question N° 6, “What does your teacher say when your answer is wrong?” 63% of learners said their teachers used to say: “Ok; who can give a better answer?”

The findings referring to how to foster oral communication resulted from the three different instruments that we used can be summarised as follows: how teachers can improve their fluency, how they can help learners acquire fluency (speaking mostly English during their classes, creating conditions for students to acquire fluency, etc) and the six suggestions made by interviewees. The continuation of the findings includes summarised answers from both questionnaires addressed to EFL students and students (Tables 3 and 4).

In case school actors succeed in applying the measured mentioned above, English language attainment will impact learners’ future lives in the professional, economic and social domains. Data concerning the outcomes of English mastering are summarized in the table below. These findings refer to answers interviewees provided to their question N°3 (3-How can the solutions have impacts on EFL learners and their environment) (Table 5).

## DISCUSSION

To draw up an inventory of the findings of the study, it can be said that the need to foster oral communication comes from the fact that despite the importance of English oral communication in many domains of life, EFL students lack fluency due to many problems. These problems are classified in three categories: (1) those related to students (laziness, ignorance, and disinterest); (2) or to the learning environment and those concerning the academic problems (insufficient teaching hours and low coefficient). Therefore, three solutions are proposed: (1) how teachers can improve their fluency, (2) how they can help learners acquire fluency and (3) organisational factors expressed as suggestions. These are the elements to take into account during the discussion in light of the aforementioned research questions as the theoretical implications of the findings. Thereafter, we check whether the findings confirm or refute the research hypotheses and finish by practical implications of the study.

The first aspect of the findings concerns the importance of English. Respondent teachers find it important to foster English oral communication because of the importance of English. According to respondents, English’s importance lies in both professional and social contexts. Indeed, in the recent years, educational policy-makers internationally have placed greater focus on spoken

language skills, which has made teaching speaking an increasingly important issue (Tomlinson, 2012:231). School teachers, students and governments should find ways and means to foster oral communication in English.

Unfortunately, the findings also show that many Beninese EFL students are not fluent in English. With regret, we notice that, as Jamshidnejad (2011:3) opines, “despite years spent to develop their knowledge of vocabulary and structure, learners often experience frustration at not being able to participate effectively in second language (L2) communication.” L2, here, referring to both second language and foreign language, encounters problems that are classified into three groups. As previously mentioned at the beginning of this discussion of the findings, these problems are (1) the problems related to students (laziness, ignorance, and disinterest, anxiety), (2) the learning environment and (3) the academic problems (the curricula, insufficient teaching hours and low coefficient, etc).

It is clear that when the problem depends on the learners themselves, it is hard to find easy solutions. However, by motivating students and sensitising them about the importance of English, teachers can help learners acquire English oral communication. In the same vein, solving the academic and learning context situations will be quite a good solution to learners’ problems.

Concerning the academic domain, the problem can be linked to the learning curricula and, the low teaching hours and coefficient allotted to English. As an example, we can consider Nunan’s (2003, cited in Ogasawara, 2008: 2) opinion as he declares that “although the government theoretically stresses on the development of practical communicative skills, at the classroom level, the emphasis is on the development of reading and writing skills for the purpose of passing entrance examinations.” Anxious about how to help students succeed in their final examinations, teachers sometimes fail to convey oral communication to learners. The same way, Taguchi (2005, cited in Ogasawara, 2008:2) says that “teachers are caught between the objectives of the national curriculum and the local constraints, namely their lack of expertise and experience in designing communicative activities and the wash back effect of examinations.” The deepest aspect of the problem lies in that the teachers, having been trained in a context where their personal speech is problematic, they hardly succeed in teaching oral communication to learners. Even worse, in some EFL contexts, language teachers do not always ask students to speak in the target language (Abu-Ghararah, 1990). Thus, the learning environment problem deserves to be solved because Social and cultural values and beliefs in the EFL context can prevent communicators from interacting in L2 (Jamshidnejad, 2011).

Referring to the learning environment problem, Snow and Don (2006; cited in Tchagnonhou, 2011: 6) point out the plethoric number that exists in classes of poor countries. Still for them, “Activities that work with a few

**Table 3.** Answers from questionnaires addressed to EFL students.

Questions	Answers	Azo1	CCA	Apla1	Djak1	La Gaz	KI1	Numbers (ni)	Percentage
VAR1	JSS	10	8	2	2	5	10	37	0.14
	LIFS	30	15	33	34	15	20	147	0.58
	SSLW	10	9	15	14	8	10	66	0.26
TOTAL1		50	32	50	50	28	40	250	1
VAR2	YES	40	28	45	46	20	35	214	0.85
	NO	10	4	5	4	8	5	36	0.14
TOTAL 2		50	32	50	50	28	40	250	1
VAR3	OSJ	30	20	35	36	15	20	156	0.62
	IAT	10	10	11	9	9	10	59	0.23
	A	5	1	2	3	2	5	18	0.07
	N	5	1	2	2	2	5	17	0.06
TOTAL 3		50	32	50	50	28	40	250	1
VAR 4	OE	5	2	5	5	2	8	27	0.1
	ME	30	25	35	36	19	20	165	0.66
	FPE	15	5	10	9	7	12	58	0.23
TOTAL 4		50	32	50	50	28	40	250	1
VAR 5	LFEL	4	2	3	2	4	2	17	0.06
	A	40	25	45	46	20	37	213	0.85
	HWKA	6	5	2	2	4	1	20	0.08
TOTAL 5		50	32	50	50	28	40	250	1
VAR 6	SDSS	10	10	9	8	8	14	59	0.23
	OWBA	31	20	35	37	15	20	158	0.63
	UTA	9	2	6	5	5	6	33	0.13
TOTAL 6		50	32	50	50	28	40	250	1
VAR 7	BTOC	23	15	34	36	15	30	162	0.64
	BAGL	15	10	10	8	10	6	59	0.23
	BWEP	2	4	3	4	1	2	16	0.6
	NT	1	3	3	2	2	2	13	0.05
TOTAL 7		50	32	50	50	28	40	250	1

**Table 4.** Answers from questionnaires addressed to EFL teachers.

Questions	Answers	Azo1	CCA	Apla1	Djak1	La Gaz	KI1	Numbers (ni)	Percentage
VA1	IOJO	2	1	3	2	1	3	12	0.6
	IUB	1	0	0	0	0	1	2	0.1
	IHW	1	1	1	2	1	0	6	0.3
TOTAL1		4	2	2	4	2	4	20	1
VA2	RFWF	3	1	2	1	1	2	10	0.5
	LAWV	0	0	0	1	0	1	2	0.1
	LBEP	1	1	2	2	1	1	8	0.4
TOTAL 2		4	2	4	4	2	4	20	1
VA3	FT	4	1	2	1	2	2	12	0.6
	ST	0	1	1	2	0	1	5	0.25
	MT	0	0	1	1	0	1	3	0.15
TOTAL 3		4	2	4	4	2	4	20	1
VA4	L	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	0.3
	LI	3	1	1	2	1	2	10	0.5
	A	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	0.1
	N	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	0.1
TOTAL 4		4	2	4	4	2	4	20	1
VA5	GA	1	1	2	1	1	2	8	0.4
	BTCTI	3	1	2	2	1	2	11	0.55
	MT	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0.05
TOTAL 5		4	2	4	4	2	4	20	1
VA6	PTG	1	0	1	0	0	1	3	0.15
	MTLJ	2	2	2	3	1	1	11	0.55
	BMTI	1	0	1	1	1	2	6	0.3
TOTAL 6		4	2	4	4	2	4	20	1

students may not work so well with many students unless they are divided up into groups.” Moreover, forming groups in such classes is not easy. Ignorance of the culture of the target language is another problem. Most of learners give up working hard to improve their level by saying: “English is not my father’s language; I do my best

but I cannot succeed; I had better neglect it” (Tchagnonhou, 2011:21). Now, it requires to deal with the solutions respondents find to these problems.

As seen earlier, three types of solutions were proposed; the first of which concerns how teachers proposed to improve their personal English level. It can

**Table 5.** The impacts of oral communication attainment.

Answers	Results (%)
Students can be fluent in English	91
Easiness to communicate with a large amount of people	88
Easy access to the world knowledge	94
Local and international job opportunities	100

be inferred that being a teacher is not enough. It requires to be a good teacher and being a good can be built on the Japanese CAN I strategy, that is, Consistently and Never-ended Improvement. It appears that this way is a true one to force learners to get involved. Seeing that their teachers continually work on their English is a real appeal for students. In reality, achieving fluency in oral communication (that is, speaking) is the main dream and the main motivation which a large percentage of learners bring to language classes (Richards and Renandya, 2002). What can be considered as motivation in the current situation is the teacher's being an example. The other thing teachers used to motivate more students to speak is their frequent use of English in the classroom. If the socio-cultural context of learning is already a threat, the teacher who is almost the only source of English is bound to use mostly English during the lessons. The findings show what teachers should do to improve their English as well as how they help their learners to acquire speaking.

In fact, what think teachers should do to help students acquire fluency includes: grading attendance, creating interaction contexts in small groups, not insulting those who give wrong answers. To really help students acquire fluency, teachers should create favourable learning conditions by using cooperative learning in their classes. It is because "cooperative language learning is gaining broad acceptance in a multitude of language learning classrooms; besides, it is a powerful educational approach principally because of its contributions in enhancing and improving students' productivity and achievement and providing more opportunities for communication" (Sarah, 2013:30). Since cooperative learning occurs in small teams, reduces language anxiety and promotes classroom interaction. As Gutiérrez (2005:2) states, "it is important to create a positive environment to encourage the learners' interaction. As such, they can express their ideas, feelings and opinions without feeling afraid of making mistakes." Not only does it create interaction; it also motivates students to get engaged. In the same vein, teachers should also be aware that for language acquisition to occur, students must (1) receive understandable and meaningful messages that are a little beyond their comprehension level; and (2) learn in an environment where there is little

or no anxiety (*The Virginia Department of Education, 2006*). Besides what respondents suggest should also be applied for successful results. These suggestions basically refer to creating English clubs, using games and visual aids, watching and/or listening to English speaking TV or radios, travelling to neighbouring English speaking countries and promoting communicative language.

## Conclusion

In a nutshell, this research paper-intended to draw an inventory of EFL problems, find solutions to them and look for the influences of speaking attainment-has been conducted through two main questions: (1) why foster oral communication and (2) how to foster speaking. Through the two research instruments we used for a mixed methodology, the findings showed that English is very important and needs to be learned. However, its learning encounters three main problems: 1. from learners, 2. from the environment and 3. from the academic level. Respondents thought that for solving the problems, (1) teachers should improve their accents and (2) try to help students improve theirs. Thirdly, some recommendations were made to provide learners with good learning conditions. Next, the discussion of the findings reveals that an ever-increasing need and use of English in international communications makes it necessary to learn how to use the language effectively (Jamshidnejad, 2011). This becomes possible by motivating, creating working conditions where learners can feel like being in real life so as to learn academic and social skills.

Implicitly, the research shows that for EFL learning to take place, three factors are required: the learner's being, the learning environment and the goal. A learner's being concerns their background and current inner life including: self-awareness, self-worth and self-esteem. The environment includes school as a working place and an institution, the socio-cultural context embedding the learning, the curricula and the teacher. The goal has to do with the reasons for the lesson, for the student's learning in general and for the community or institution engaged in the training. These three factors will be dealt with in a future article.



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**APPENDIX 1**

Table: Students' questionnaires and abbreviations.

<b>Abbreviations</b>	<b>Questions</b>
	1. What is English according to you?
JSS	Just a school subject.
LIFS	A foreign language imposed for study.
SSLW	A school subject and one of the most spread languages in the world
	2. Do you like speaking English?
YES	Yes
NO	No
	3. Where do you feel at ease to speak English?
OSG	Only in small groups
IAT	In absence of the teacher
A	Anywhere
N	Nowhere
	4. What language does your teacher use in class?
OE	Only English
ME	Mostly English
FPE	Fifty percent of English
	5. How do you feel when the teacher questions you in class?
LFEL	Lost at first, but at ease later
A	Anxious
HWKA	Happy when I know the answer
	6. What does your teacher say when your answer is wrong?
SDSS	Sit down stupid student!
OWBA	Ok; who can give a better answer?
UTA	Uhhh! Try again
	7. How do you personally try to improve your English?
BTOC	By trying to speak English inside and outside the classroom
BAGL	By attending English clubs and going to library
BWEP	By watching and listening to English programmes
NT	None of them

**APPENDIX 2**

Table: Teachers' questionnaires and abbreviations

<b>Abbreviations</b>	<b>Questions</b>
	1. Why is oral communication important?
IOJO	It offers job opportunities
IUB	It is useful in business
IHWW	It helps communicate with the whole world
	2. How do you personally improve your English?
RFWF	By reviewing frequently phonetic notions and debating with colleagues
LAWV	By listening audio documents and watching videos
LBEP	By listening to BBC and watching English programmes
	3. Are your students fluent at English?
FT	A few of them
ST	Some of them
MT	Most of them
	4. What often causes their failure in oral communication?
L	Laziness
LI	Lack of interest
A	Anxiety
N	Negligence
	5. How do you help less proficient students?
GA	Grading attendance
BTCTI	Basing the teaching context on their interest
MT	Motivating them
	6. How do you create interaction among learners?
PTG	By putting them in groups
MTLJ	By making them contribute to group work through strategies like Jigsaw
BMTI	By mostly proposing topics that fit their interests