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## PRAGMATICS VERSUS AFFECT IN EFL LEARNING CONTEXT

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*DEDICATIONS*

*To my dear parents*

*To my beloved wife*

*To my lovely children*

*Alaû Lina and Mohamed El Amine*

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***LIST OF ACCRONYMS***

- BC:** Brown Corpus
- BNC:** British National Corpus
- CA:** Corpus Approach
- CC:** Collins Corpus
- CCP:** Cross-Cultural Pragmatics
- CEFRL:** Common European Framework of Reference for Languages
- CF:** Corrective Feedback
- CIC:** Cambridge International Corpus
- CLT:** Communicative Language Teaching
- C-MELT:** Corpus of the Meetings of English Language Teachers
- CNP:** Communication Needs Processor
- COBUILD:** Collins and Birmingham University International Language Database
- CP:** Cooperative Principle
- DCT:** Discourse Completion Tasks
- DRPT:** Discourse Role-Play Tasks
- DSAT:** Discourse Self-Assessment Tasks
- EFL:** English as a Foreign Language
- EM:** Extrinsic Motivation
- ESL:** English as a Second Language
- ESP:** English for Specific Purposes
- FTA:** Face Threatening Acts
- HCC:** High-Context Culture
- HLT:** Humanistic Language Teaching
- IC:** Intercultural Competence
- IM:** Intrinsic Motivation
- IP:** Interlanguage Pragmatics
- ITE:** Institut Technique d'Enseignement
- JTS:** Jefferson Transcription System

**LCC:** Low-Context Culture  
**LCIE:** Limerick Corpus of Irish English  
**LCN:** Longman Corpus Network  
**LL:** Language Laboratory  
**LLCSE:** London-Lund Corpus of Spoken English  
**LOBC:** Lancaster-Oslo/ Bergen Corpus  
**MDCT:** Multiple-choice Discourse Completion Tasks  
**MI:** Multiple Intelligences  
**NLP:** Neuro-Linguistic Programming  
**OCE:** Oral Comprehension and Expression  
**ODCT:** Oral Discourse Completion Tasks  
**OEC:** Oxford English Corpus  
**RPSA:** Role-Play Self-Assessments  
**SAT:** Speech Act Theory  
**SETT:** Self- Evaluation of Teacher Talk  
**SE:** Self Esteem  
**ST:** Small Talk  
**SYSE:** Second Year Students of English  
**TBLT:** Task Based Language Teaching  
**TTA:** Teacher Turn Allocation  
**WDCT:** Written Discourse Completion Tasks

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### *ABSTRACT*

Quite fundamental to learning a foreign language is attaining appropriate aptitude to use it adequately for meaningful communicative ends. In this respect, the mastery of the oral skills is, for many learners, a prime objective to meet. As far as English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context is concerned, teaching oral communication has traditionally been a relatively challenging activity. This is because of the various individual differences and learning styles students represent on the one hand, and the complexity of the target language itself on the other hand.

The present doctoral thesis sheds lights on the dimension of pragmatics in EFL oral skills learning and teaching. The study undertaken with regard to this concern aims to analyse 2<sup>nd</sup> year students of English, University of Saida, pragmatic competence in oral comprehension and expression classes. It also attempts to explore the effects of the integration of pragmatic instructions in the oral class in relation to affective considerations. Another research issue is cast upon the very teaching practices that can enhance adequate pragmatic skills among students.

In order to address the practical issues mentioned above, the present study depends on a research methodology that stresses the deployment of observation, Discourse Completion Tasks (DCTs), audio recorded role playing and a questionnaire as main data collection instruments. Within the course of the investigating process, the researcher uses two speech acts realisation models highlighted by **Azis** (2012) following Blum-Kulka & Olsain (1989) and Grice's (1975) cooperative principle in an attempt to give some relevant scaffolding to the analysis and interpretation of the findings.

The obtained results show that 2<sup>nd</sup> year students of English exhibit a relatively inappropriate pragmatic competence with regard to speech acts formulation and conversational maxims. From another angle, the introduction of pragmatic instructions in the oral class, for a limited period, proved to foster students' interest and involvement but was not quite sufficient to develop their pragmatic skills. The suggestions provided in relation to these findings stress the need for integrating pragmatics teaching within the EFL curriculum in general and the oral comprehension and expression syllabus in particular. Therefore, more pertinent practices are called for especially devising classroom assignments that hinge upon the linguistic, communicative and cultural features of the target language. Yet, such pedagogical orientation emphasises sufficient exposure to the subject matter so as to help students attain optimum oral proficiency, to some extent.

## **GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

## ***GENERAL INTRODUCTION***

Commonly thought of as an essential means of communication, language is widely portrayed as a vital tool by which people ensure and maintain social relationships within their communities whether at local level or international one. The growth of globalization then with its multifaceted features, mainly economic ones, has made the need for foreign languages learning, and in particular English, a major issue. As far as the Algerian context is concerned, English as the second foreign language (for French is the *first* foreign language) is taught within the national educational system through middle school and high school levels; and at the university level where both forms: General English and English for Specific Purposes (ESP) are dealt with. However, because of its growing significance in both instructive and professional areas, English has turned to become the foreign language people want to learn the most in Algeria.

Yet, one may recall the very controversial question, which has always been reiterated in relation to different pedagogical contexts, as whether or not the adopted methods and approaches to teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) can meet the desired learning outcomes. Teaching the oral skills then at university level, for instance, makes no exception from the very fact that strategies and techniques need to be attentively reconsidered. While the primary objective of oral language instructions is to make students able to use the target language adequately in different communicative settings, students tend to consistently exhibit limited speaking abilities even at relatively advanced stages of studies (Third Year, Master1 and Master 2). This is in spite of the fact that Oral Comprehension and Expression (OCE) unit is taught through a communicative approach which, according to many experts and practitioners, is believed to be the most adequate approach to foster students' skills in using the target language for conversational ends.

Undoubtedly, the notion of students' affectivity in EFL contexts has been given undivided attention particularly when it comes to OCE teaching. However, still deficiencies are noticed at the level of students' spoken discourse which tends to be relatively dysfunctional in terms of both fluency and accuracy. Yet, the mentioned communicative issues are patently noticeable in contexts where students are to use the target language in real-life like situations that require some control of social

conversational skills. Such a concern may raise the very question of pragmatics and EFL teaching at university level. Worth to note in this respect that English language teaching (ELT) in Algeria has traditionally been dealt with in relation to linguistic criteria relating to grammar and lexicon, and communicative ones stressing the very construct of communicative competence. Yet, little or almost no interest was cast upon the exploration of the target language pragmatic features; which can serve as a practical illustration to teach the different communicative functions of the target language in a variety of situations; and which may eventually raise students' awareness of how language actually operates within the three-facet dimension of speaker, interlocutor and context.

The aim of the present research paper is threefold. Firstly, it tries to investigate students' pragmatic competence when using the target language in OCE classes at the department of English – University of Dr. Moulay Tahar - Saida. Secondly, it attempts to discern the effects of pragmatics instructions on students' affect related conditions and their pragmatic skills as well. Thirdly, it seeks to pinpoint some practical OCE teaching strategies that may help develop students' pragmatic competence.

In essence, and being guided by the above concerns the researcher asks the following questions to orient the present research work:

- 1- Do 2<sup>nd</sup> year students of English have appropriate pragmatic competence when using the target language orally?
- 2- What would the introduction of pragmatics instructions bring to classroom interaction in OCE classes?
- 3- Which pedagogical practices can OCE teachers focus on so as to develop their students' pragmatic skills in the target language?

Within the very same flow of thoughts, the investigation and analysis process covered through the present study aims at supplying some arguments to support the following research hypotheses:

- 1- 2<sup>nd</sup> year students may exhibit a relatively low pragmatic competence when using the target language orally.
- 2- Introducing instructions in pragmatics within the OCE class may produce positive affect among students leading eventually to optimum pragmatic competence.

- 3- OCE teachers may focus on the use of authentic English language materials that stress the functional aspects of the target language in order to help students develop their pragmatic competence.

A sample of 95 students was targeted to carry out the present research work. The researcher has opted for the second year level, because at this stage students are supposed to have acquired the basic communicative skills necessary for undertaking meaningful conversational activities.

Yet, it is important to note that, within the context of the present study, investigating the sample's pragmatic competence is delimited to the analysis of speech acts realization and conversational maxims with reference to Austin's (1962) Speech Act Theory and Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle respectively. The motivation behind such a delimitation orientation lies on the fact that, for the researcher, the criteria described above are not only salient elements in pragmatics studies, but also quite relevant to students' communicative needs in EFL instruction situations.

Therefore, and with the very purpose of collecting data as to the strategies students use to realize particular speech acts; the researcher has utilized two Discourse Completion Tasks (DCT). Yet, audio recorded role plays have served as a basic support for getting data about the same sample's conversational skills in relation to Grice's (1975) analysis model. From another parameter, an observational practice has allowed the researcher to procure more information on students' pragmatic skills and also their affective predispositions in particular oral assignments. OCE teachers' perspectives on appropriate pedagogical practices that may foster students' communicative, and mainly pragmatic, abilities in using the target language along with other relevant teaching concerns have been explored through a semi structured questionnaire used, as a final research tool, at the concluding phase of the investigation process.

On a more basic level, this thesis addresses the very issue of integrating specific instructions in pragmatics when teaching the oral skills. Yet, suspecting that attributing task-based speaking activities revolving around actual language use in relation to some strictly delineated contexts may trigger students' attitudes either positively or negatively; the researcher has devoted some room for the observation and analysis of students' affective behaviours mainly motivation and language anxiety. Therefore, one may say that the present thesis may reflect some degree of importance for it attempts to explore the



very notion of pragmatics in oral language use, on the one hand, and the relative role of students' psychological factors in conditioning their learning behaviour, on the other hand. The researcher expects that the present research work will offer some new practical insights into teaching the oral skills at university level in general, and help students become pragmatically competent speakers of the target language in particular. For this purpose, the present thesis is structured into five chapters the contents of which revolve around the very key-concerns of the research problematic.

Chapter One gives, through its first section, a brief overview of EFL teaching and learning in Algeria before describing the pedagogical context of OCE unit at Dr. Moulay Tahar University of Saida. In this respect, an important section covers the actual oral skills situation focussing on the subject matter within the LMD system, its time allowance, content issues, the language laboratory and students' needs and expectations. Another part of the chapter delineates the key characteristics of the two intertwined skills of listening and speaking and some corresponding concerns as to the teaching of the skills in question. A final section then gives room to methodological issues where a description of some related elements, like the population of the study and the various research tools, is provided.

Chapter Two encompasses a number of some relevant theoretical matters linked to the notion of pragmatics and foreign language teaching. It provides a range of definitions associated to the concept in question and delineates its related fields mainly speech acts, implicature, presupposition, reference and deixis. The chapter gives some attention to the role of language corpora in the study of pragmatics. Yet, it illustrates what a corpus is about and provides a description of the different existing types of corpora. Emphasis in this chapter is also cast upon pragmatics and foreign language teaching with reference to students' pragmatic competence and its two facets being pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic competencies. Accordingly, the importance of implementing specific pragmatic instructions in the EFL class is stressed so as to reason the fact that developing students' communicative skills cannot be achieved through mere exposure to the target language, or sole grammatical drills which in their turn cannot lead to effective oral communication. Another section then explores some relevant practices as to testing and evaluating learners' pragmatic skills before describing the *inextricable* link between pragmatics and culture. Some details then about pragmatic competence and cultural

variation along with the pragmatics of cross-cultural communication are provided so as to *better* understand the different criteria and principles involved in natural language use. This theoretical chapter concludes with illustrating the relevance of politeness norms to pragmatics and language use in particular conversational contexts.

Being concerned with redressing the balance between the chapters of the present thesis, the researcher has designed a second theoretical part to cover the notion of students' affect in foreign language learning. Chapter three then consists of a review of the literature exploring classroom interaction and the dimension of affect in EFL teaching and learning. It highlights the very psychological aspects of the individual learner which may subsume a cluster of some *relevant* factors such as motivation, attitudes, anxiety, culture shock... The latter traits are believed to be reliable indicators of language learning success or failure. On a more basic level, the chapter provides, in a pedagogical context, a theoretical analysis of the triangulation between classroom interaction, learners' affective variables and affective teaching strategies of the oral skills.

Chapter Four, which represents the empirical part of the present study, subsumes the analytical procedures followed throughout this work to support the research problematic within this thesis. It describes a two-phase investigative process encompassing the pre-pragmatic instruction stage and the post-pragmatic instruction one. Each experimental practice is described in some details with regard to the research tools, procedure and main results. With the aim of measuring 2<sup>nd</sup> year students' pragmatic competence, an observational practice has been undertaken within OCE classes. In the same respect, two DCTs concerned with the acts of apologizing and requesting have been administered to the same sample. The results are presented and discussed before dealing with the second experimental phase in which a second observational study has been undertaken to measure students' motivation and other affective agents related to speech production. Yet, and most importantly this phase tries to investigate the effects of pragmatic instruction on the sample communicative competence development. Therefore, an extra research instrument being audio recorded role-playing has been utilized to collect more relevant data as to the same concern. The chapter covers also the teachers' perspectives on effective practices related to fostering EFL students' pragmatic abilities within the OCE context. A semi-structured questionnaire then has been used and the main results shown and discussed.

On the basis of the main findings explored in Chapter Four and the theoretical supports covered in Chapters Two and Three, and with regard to the research questions and hypotheses, the final chapter deals with a range of some remedial practices related to teaching the oral skills at university level. The recommendations and suggestions that this chapter provides are concerned with six main dimensions that have fundamental implications for the context of the present study. These subsume linguistic competence development, students' psychological conditions and affective teaching strategies, the role of L1 and pragmatic competence development, cultural awareness raising instructions, OCE syllabus design within ICTs (Information and Communication Technologies) perspectives and sequencing within the oral skills instruction process.

As far as developing students' linguistic competence is concerned, the researcher offers some practical strategies like '*small talk*' and Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT) that may help improve students' speech accuracy level. Affective modelling and strategies dealing with learners' motivation and classroom environment, for instance, are illustrated and given some attention with the very purpose of reasoning the fact that affect is an important element which needs to be given full consideration in the practice of foreign language teaching and learning. Enhancing OCE students' pragmatic skills, being the core matter of the present research work, is extensively explored through reconsidering the use of L1 in the foreign language classroom. Yet, more emphasis is put on other practical strategies, as covering the teachability of pragmatics and in particular the SURE (*See, Use, Review and Experience*) steps in developing students' pragmatic awareness. Considerable room, however, is given to teaching culture in the EFL class as part of the pragmatic instructing process. Some speaking assignments then related to issues like high/low context culture and intercultural understanding and communication are *clearly* delineated. Finally, Chapter Five points to the importance of carefully respecting some norms and criteria, notably while designing an OCE syllabus. Students' needs analysis, content specification and organization then are stressed in this respect. Last, but not least, the advantages of integrating ICT and specific electronic corpora in syllabus design are illustrated before explaining why it would be a *good* teaching orientation to delay the practice of speaking at early stages and encourage in lieu of it more listening assignment. The conclusion tries to open new avenues of research as this theme has nurtured debateful issues on language learning and teaching.

***CHAPTER ONE:***  
***DESCRIPTION OF THE LEARNING/TEACHING SITUATION***  
***OF THE ORAL SKILLS AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY***

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**CHAPTER ONE**  
**DESCRIPTION OF THE LEARNING/TEACHING SITUATION**  
**OF THE ORAL SKILLS AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

**1.1 Introduction:**

EFL teaching and learning perspectives within the newly introduced LMD system constitute some of the raising controversies as far as curricula and teaching objectives are concerned. Oral Comprehension and Expression (OCE) unit, which is the core of this section, is an important field of study where many pedagogical practices and facts are to be reconsidered. The present chapter then analyses the general situation of the oral skills giving attention to both teachers' and learners' roles in a time of widespread renewal and change of approaches, objectives and teaching/ learning materials.

The researcher provides first a brief review of the teaching and learning of EFL in Algeria before tackling a second point which explores a descriptive account of the present situation of the oral skills at Saida University – Department of English. As for the OCE, being part of the Fundamental Unit in the third and fourth semester of second year English curriculum, a description of the speaking and listening skills is provided in a third section focussing on their different facets within the EFL learning and teaching process. Definitions and delineations then of main terms and concepts as to both listening and speaking are explored in relation to pedagogical dimensions. The final part of the chapter is devoted to describing some methodological concerns related to the present research work. It covers the main aim of the study, the sample and the research instruments along with other related issues.

**1.2 Learning and Teaching EFL in Algeria:**

Undoubtedly English language has gained recently undivided attention and prolific interest among people in the whole world. Some want to learn the language to speak it and so communicate effectively within the target language community. Others want to learn it because of professional ends especially when working in a multilingual and multicultural business environment. Some other individuals are attracted by the language and desire to study it just because they enjoy speaking and understanding it.



As far as Algeria is concerned, the introduction of English language dates to the 1960s where it was first included in middle school educational curricula. Miscellaneous approaches then and techniques have been used with the very aim of reaching optimum educational results. More attention then was given to English teacher training programmes starting from the ITE (Institut Technique d'Enseignement) where focus was on middle and secondary school teaching practices.

Yet, the ITE did not last for a long time and teacher training has become one of the major issues and objectives of the Algerian university. Within both the recently faded classical system and the newly introduced LMD system teacher training has always witnessed entirely challenging concerns as to pedagogical practices and students' learning outcome.

Worth to mention however, that students may exhibit different learning objectives that are determined by what they want to achieve once they master the language. Many students then want to study English for a Specific Purpose (ESP) where the focus of study is on medical or business English or any other technical language register. ESP is taught at different university levels as part of a given discipline's curriculum as it is the case with law, medicine, electronics, mechanics, business...etc.

English for Academic Purposes (EAP) is another field of interest that attracts students who want to study the language in order to register in an English speaking university or college or to deal with English-language academic texts as suggested by Harmer (2010). Yet, EAP in Algeria is not as highly demanded and focused on as ESP or General English because of the escalating growth of globalisation which is making of the world a huge open stock market of job opportunities. In this respect, the mastery of technical English is thought to be one of the most effective intellectual keys for success.

Worth to note, however, that EFL is not taught and learned only in state schools and universities. Starting from 2001 private language schools (1) in Algeria have become an important setting where many people register for classes of general English and mainly business or technical English. Yet, what is important to be observed is that the private language schools in question are better equipped than state ones and even some universities. In addition to the reduced number of learners per class and the use of highly sophisticated materials, some of these private schools offer native English speaking

teachers-tuition whether be it for small group learning or one-to-one sessions; and this is for many learners considered to be sufficiently motivating.

Yet, private schools delineation is not the core matter in this chapter. Focus is rather on EFL teaching and learning at university level and in particular the teaching of the oral skills which is indeed one of the facets of the research problematic of the present study. The next section then offers a review of some relevant issues related to teaching the listening and speaking skills along with some considerations as to their implementation and role in the learning teaching process.

### **1.3 Present Oral Skills Situation at University Level:**

It has become an axiomatic fact that almost all foreign language learners tend to be interested in learning the oral skills. This is because they believe that the mastery of any language lays first on the mastery of the oral abilities of both reception and production being listening and speaking respectively. As far as university context is concerned, curricula designers seem to pay undivided attention to the skills in question. Yet, deficiencies as to time allowance and content issues are quite noticeable to language teaching practitioners especially within the newly introduced LMD era.

#### **1.3.1 The Oral Skills within LMD System:**

With the progressive fade of the classical system, EFL curricula have witnessed considerable changes in terms of syllabi design and objectives. Credits, pedagogical units and continuous evaluation along with other new concerns have built up the different facets of the LMD system. Some skills which used to be taught in separate syllabi, like those of listening and speaking, are being now dealt with in one distinct unit, as it is the case of OCE.

As far as the mentioned subject matter is concerned, students are supposed to practise listening in S1 then speaking in S2; then again in S3, S4, S5 and S6 in the same alternate process.

### 1.3.2 OCE Unit Time Allowance:

As mentioned previously above, the OCE as part of the Fundamental Unit (2) is designed for the learning of the oral skills of listening and speaking. Such practical matter is dealt with starting from the first year, which covers S1 and S2, and concluded in the third year covering S5 and S6. As for the OCE time allowance for each semester, a slight difference is to be observed as shown on the table below:

	<i>First Year</i>		<i>Second Year</i>		<i>Third Year</i>	
	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6
<i>Time Allotted for each Session per Week</i>	1h 30	1h 30	1h 30	1h 30	1h 30	1h30
	1h 30	1h 30 1h 30	1h 30	1h 30		
<i>Total per Week</i>	3 hours	4h 30	3 hours	3 hours	1h 30	1h 30

**Table 1.1: Time Allowance for OCE within the License Curricula**

❖ *The table above demonstrates the allotted time to OCE during licence instruction phase.*

It is important to notice then the derisory time allotted to OCE which does not permit at all to reach the teaching objectives planned in the syllabi, nor does it help students meet their needs and expectations.

### 1.3.3 Content of OCE Classes:

Although no official common syllabi are designed to approach the teaching of the oral skills, most if not all teachers of OCE agree on some relevant common ground. Different techniques and methods then are used in classes to deal with different oral tasks the content of which varies from a level to another as displayed in the following table:

		<i>Contents of the OCE Subject Matter</i>
<i>First Year</i>	S1	<p><b><i>Listening:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Introducing people</li> <li>-Studying abroad (University setting)</li> <li>-Travelling abroad (Airport setting)</li> <li>-Natural catastrophes</li> <li>-Holidays</li> <li>-Western cultural aspects (Traditions, habits and Christmas Day)</li> </ul>
	S2	<p><b><i>Speaking:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Retelling jokes</li> <li>-Retelling personnel stories</li> <li>-Keyword dialogues</li> <li>-Showing directions</li> <li>-Card-swapping discussion</li> <li>-Guess the mime</li> <li>-Team guessing games</li> <li>-Dialogue role playing</li> </ul>
<i>Second Year</i>	S3	<p><b><i>Listening:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-News from the BBC (Video projection)</li> <li>-Documentaries from the BBC (Video projection)</li> <li>-Talk shows from the BBC (Video projection)</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Speaking:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Dialogue role playing</li> <li>- Debates</li> <li>-Topic discussion</li> <li>-Proverbs interpretation</li> <li>-For or against the motion debates</li> <li>-Presentations (Free topics )</li> </ul>
	S4	<p><b><i>Speaking:</i></b></p> <p>Performing plays</p>

**Table 1.2: OCE Syllabi as Designed by Teachers at the Department of English - University of Saida**

❖ *This table shows the unofficially designed OCE syllabi for 1<sup>st</sup> year and 2<sup>nd</sup> year levels.*

### **1.3.4 The Language Laboratory:**

An important teaching material designed for FL streams at the Faculty of Letters, Languages and Arts (University of Dr. Moulay Tahar- Saida) is the language laboratory (LL) The use of such technological teaching aid allows students to benefit from a native-speaking exposure to the target language, which in its turn contributes to enhance the development of students' both receptive and productive skills.

Students of English, starting from the first year, have the opportunity to study listening and phonetics modules in the LL, a requirement which offers them many advantages portrayed by Harmer (2001) through the following elements:

#### **1.3.4.1 Comparing:**

Using audio tracks and headphones helps students compare their utterances with the correct pronunciation provided in the audio passages. Such comparison can raise students' awareness of both the phonological and phonetic systems of the English language.

#### **1.3.4.2 Privacy:**

The LL can grant a kind of privacy to students since everyone is connected to their headphones, microphones and computers and can work without being distracted by what other students are doing.

#### **1.3.4.3 Individual Attention:**

Sometimes speaking individually to a particular student on the part of the teacher may create negative attitudes on other students. Yet, in a laboratory such problem can be avoided: the teacher can give individual instructions or attention using the computer console.

#### **1.3.4.4 Learner Training:**

The teacher can train their students notice the different features of spoken English through listening to native speaking audio passages. The teacher's role in this phase consists of helping and assisting students with low listening abilities. Such a practice may foster optimum listening and speaking abilities.

#### **1.3.4.5 Learner Motivation:**

As far as students' motivation and autonomy are concerned, the LL is reported to be a favourite environment for learners who prefer working on their own. The teacher's guidance and control are present, though (Harmer, 2001).

Yet, while the use of the LL at the Faculty of Letters, Languages and Arts has become the source of intrinsic motivation for most EFL students, the limited number of seats available opposed to the overcrowded classes may turn it to a source of demotivation and frustration. Thus, it seems to be quite necessary to reconsider both time allowance and grouping criteria when designing instructions for language classes.

### **1.3.5 Students' Expectations and Needs:**

Learners' needs and expectations are relevant elements that contribute, to a great extent, in the teaching/learning process. According to Chan (2001) learners often tend to be aware of their own abilities and weaknesses and know what language skills they need to learn the most.

A growing body of interest in studying EFL, on the part of Baccalaureate holders, has become widely felt during the last 15 years. What is attention-catching is the fact that many students studying for preparing a particular degree in specific streams like engineering, medicine, politics, history and so on tend to pursue, at the same time, studies for the preparation of a Licence of English degree.

Such a desire to study English is interpreted by students themselves as the necessity to master the language that without which diplomas cannot serve to achieve optimum objectives for the long term. As far as EFL students are concerned, the same motivation behind studying English is expressed, thing which can give us an idea about their actual needs and expectations which may be interpreted as an instrumental orientation, a type of motivation, in learning English.

As it will be mentioned in details later in Chapter 3, developing optimum proficiency level in speaking English is one of the most important needs pointed to by students. Besides, an awareness of the importance of technology in the learning/teaching process can be noticed among students who stress the necessity of implementing more technological means as main pedagogical supports.

### **1.4 Description of the Oral Skills:**

The present part of the chapter aims at describing some relevant aspects and characteristics of the oral skills which subsume the active process of oral production and, the conventionally supposed to be the passive process of listening.

## **1.4.1 Speaking:**

### **1.4.1.1 Speaking as a Skill:**

In FL learning context learners give more attention to the speaking skill, which they consider the gauge of their English proficiency level. Preparing foreign language learners to use the target language in an appropriate way is quite a difficult task. Knowledge about a language does not mean actual ability to use it. If our students learn some of the grammatical rules of English, or even a wide range of vocabulary, the task of oral production still remains challenging. Students need to know how to use that knowledge to produce sentences and adapt them to different speech situations and contexts. They need to learn the skills of oral expression.

As pointed to by Harmer (2001) the spoken production of language requires a number of elements. The most important ones are:

- *Connected Speech* which includes assimilation, elision, contraction and linking.
- *Expressive devices* which consist of the use of changing pitch and stress of utterances, modifying the speed and volume and employing some non-verbal means like body gestures and facial expressions to show how the speaker feels.
- *Negotiation Language* which subsumes a range of expression by which the individual speaker seeks for clarification while listening to someone talking. It also covers a number of phrases with which the speaker can structure their discourse in order to be understood by the listeners especially when giving a presentation.

We must point out to a relative difficulty of the speaking skill that we can attribute to the following characteristics of the spoken discourse:

#### **1.4.1.1.1 Clustering:**

Fluent speech production is done through phrasing and not by a word- by- word utterance.

#### **1.4.1.1.2 Redundancy:**

Learners tend to have recourse to the redundant aspect of language in an attempt to convey clearer messages.

#### **1.4.1.1.3 Reduced Forms:**

The teaching of some phonetic aspects of spoken English such as elisions, reduced vowels, contractions, etc...represents some difficulties to students. Students who are not acquainted with colloquial contractions are reported to develop a mediocre

quality of speaking mainly characterised by an unnatural and bookish style (Brown, 2000).

#### 1.4.1.1.4 Performance Variables:

An important aspect of the target language is hesitation phenomena. Speaking is often accompanied with the use of fillers like uh, um, well, you know, etc...

#### 1.4.1.1.5 Colloquial Language:

Students are also to practise and be aware of the different features of colloquial language mainly words, idioms and phrases.

#### 1.4.1.1.6 Rate of Delivery:

It is the speed with which the fluent speech is delivered.

#### 1.4.1.1.7 Stress, Rhythm and Intonation:

As far as the English pronunciation is concerned, stress; rhythm and intonation play an important role in conveying particular messages.

#### 1.4.1.1.8 Interaction:

The creativity of conversational negotiation can not take place without the element of interaction.

Teaching conversation, then, requires not only instructions in language knowledge but also instructions in skill development. It is worth noting, however, that knowledge and skill are two distinct elements of conversation. While knowledge can be learned through memorization, only a skill can be acquired through imitation and practice, Martin Bygate (1988).

#### 1.4.1.2 Functions of Speaking:

As an oral medium of communication, speaking subsumes a number of functions that cover different features and skills. Richards (2006) describes three main functions of speaking: *talk as interaction*, *talk as transaction* and *talk as performance* (3).

##### 1.4.1.2.1 Talk as interaction:

It refers to people's everyday conversations which serve social functions. Exchanging greetings, engaging in small talks, recounting personal recent experiences etc...are what individual speakers do with the main aim of being friendly and establishing "a comfortable zone of interaction with others" (Richards, 2006). What counts here is the way speakers wish to present themselves to each other and not the message they want to convey. Such social interactive activity can be casual or formal according to the pragmatic



contexts the individual speakers are in. Talk as interaction encompasses different features and skills illustrated in the following table:

<i><b>Talk as Interaction</b></i>	
<i><b>Features</b></i>	<i><b>Skills</b></i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Has a primarily social function</li> <li>- Reflects role relationships</li> <li>- Reflects the speaker’s identity</li> <li>- May be formal or casual</li> <li>- Uses conversational conventions</li> <li>- Reflects degrees of politeness</li> <li>- Employs many generic words</li> <li>- Uses conversational register</li> <li>- Is jointly constructed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Opening and closing conversations</li> <li>- Choosing topics</li> <li>- Making small-talk</li> <li>- Recounting personal incidents and experiences</li> <li>- Turn-taking</li> <li>- Using adjacency-pairs</li> <li>- Interrupting</li> <li>- Reacting to others</li> </ul>

**Table 1.3: Talk as Interaction: Features and Skills  
(Adapted from Richards: 2006)**

❖ *The table above displays the different features and skills of talk as interaction.*

1.4.1.2.2 Talk as transaction:

It stands for the content of the message the individual speakers convey to each other. The central focus here is the message of the speech and the extent to which the speaker is accurate and understood, and not the social interactive work of individuals. Talk as transactions encompasses two main types: one being contexts in which information are given and received without paying attention to accuracy as far as the content of what is said is understood (asking for directions in the street for instance). The second type

consists of talks through which individuals wish to obtain services or goods (exp: checking in a hotel). Talk as transaction covers different features and skills illustrated in the following table and it will be interesting to deal with these particularities to some extent in the chapter devoted to the analysis of the corpora.

<i><b>Talk as Transaction</b></i>	
<i><b>Features</b></i>	<i><b>Skills</b></i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It has a primarily information focus</li> <li>- The main focus is the message and not the participants</li> <li>- Participants employ communication strategies to make themselves understood</li> <li>- Possible use of frequent questions, repetitions and comprehension checks</li> <li>- There may be negotiation and digression</li> <li>- Linguistic accuracy is not always important</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explaining a need or intention</li> <li>- Describing something</li> <li>- Asking questions</li> <li>- Confirming information</li> <li>- Justifying an opinion</li> <li>- Making suggestions</li> <li>- Clarifying understanding</li> <li>- Making comparisons</li> <li>- Agreeing and disagreeing</li> </ul>

**Table 1.4: Talk as Transaction: Features and Skills**  
(Adapted from Richards: 2006)

❖ *The table above shows the different features and skills of talk as transaction.*

### 1.4.1.2.3 Talk as performance:

It consists of talk through which an individual speaker delivers information before a particular audience (speeches, presentations, giving a lecture, giving reports, conducting a class debate etc...). It is worth to mention, however, that a talk as a performance is closer to written language than conversational one, and is evaluated on the basis of its effectiveness and impact it leaves on the audience taking into account, in addition to meaning, both form and accuracy which are emphasised on more than in the case of talk as interaction or transaction (Jones, 1996 and Richards, 2006). The following table illustrates the different features and skills involved in talk as performance:

<i><b>Talk as Performance</b></i>	
<i><b>Features</b></i>	<i><b>Skills</b></i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Focus is on both message and audience</li> <li>- It reflects organisation and sequencing</li> <li>- Form and accuracy are important</li> <li>- Language is more like written language</li> <li>- It is often in the form of monologue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Using an appropriate format</li> <li>- Presenting information in an appropriate sequence</li> <li>- Maintaining audience engagement</li> <li>- Using correct pronunciation and grammar</li> <li>- Creating an effect on the audience</li> <li>- Using appropriate vocabulary</li> <li>- Using appropriate opening and closing</li> </ul>

**Table 1.5: Talk as Performance: Features and Skills  
(Adapted from Richards: 2006)**

❖ *This table demonstrates the different features and skills of talk as performance.*

What can be noticed is that the speaking skill requires much attention as it includes so many features acquired over time and with a lot of practice.

#### 1.4.1.3 Fluency and Accuracy in Speaking:

Fluency in English is fundamental as it is accuracy with good pronunciation. Fluency in speaking refers to those features marking a speaker's oral production. As suggested by Thornbury (2007), fluency in speaking covers pausing, placement of pauses and production strategies. When speaking, pausing from time to time is needed not only to draw breath, but also to allow the formulation of an utterance. Yet, pauses need to be placed in an appropriate way. A good use of pauses would occur between groups of words that form meaningful units.

On the other hand, pauses are to be filled also. A fluent speaker may have recourse to some production strategies. These are: pause fillers ( *uh, um...*), vagueness expressions ( *sort of, I mean...*) and repeats ( *a repetition of a given word in the sentence to allow the formulation of another expression* ).

Nation and Newton (2009) underline that in a language course developing fluency depends on establishing the following conditions:

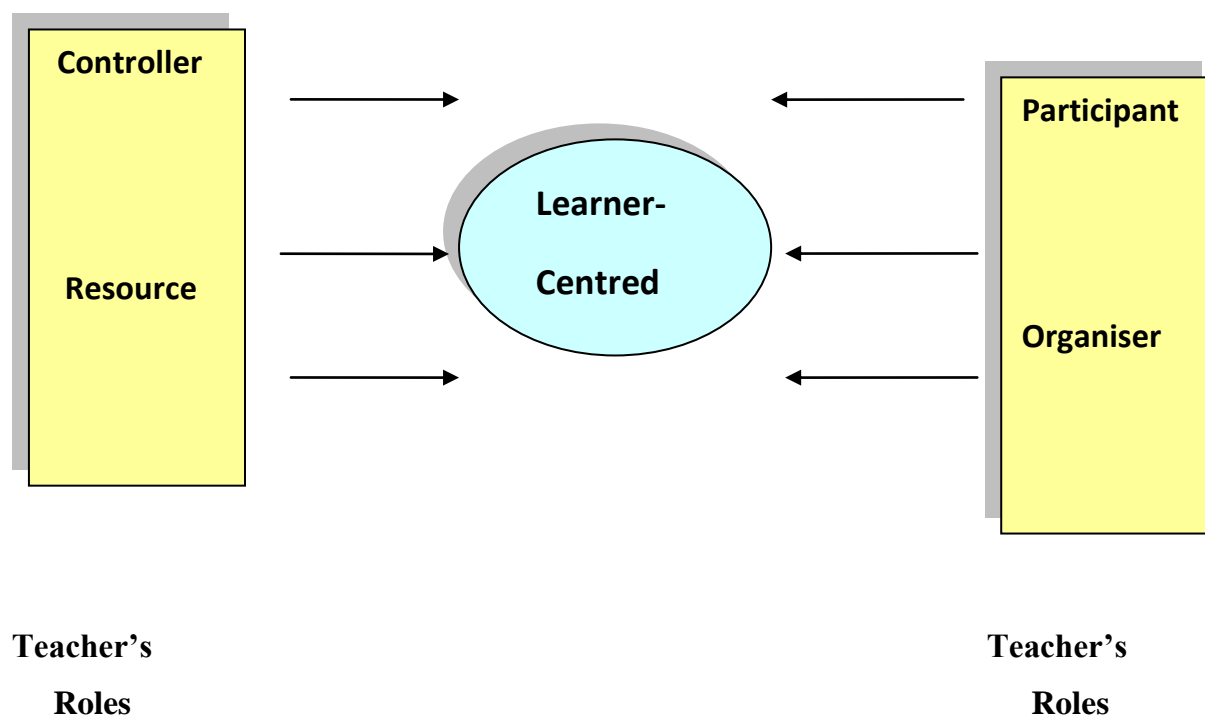
- 1- The activity is meaning-focussed: The learning objective of the activity is to make students concentrate on conveying their messages.
- 2- Learners are involved in "*experience tasks*": Learners are asked to do activities where the topics, types of discourse, vocabulary and structures are part of their previous learning experience. This implies that learners, in such kind of tasks, are familiar with the different elements needed to do the activity.
- 3- In an activity where developing students' fluency is the main aim a sense of support and encouragement can push the learners to higher performance level. This can be done by asking the learners to speak faster and hesitate less through the use of time pressure.

As for accuracy, Barnes (1976) introduces the concept of '*final draft*' learning. The latter refers to focussing on learners' perfect production of language, and avoiding any form of errors right from the early process of learning.

As far as teaching speaking is concerned, accuracy is not the focal point in conversation classes for first and second year English students. Teachers rather stress fluency in this early stage. Accuracy is then, what third year students are to develop in their speech production along with an optimum level of fluency.

#### 1.4.1.4 Teacher's Roles:

As far as the oral expression module is concerned, the teacher is attributed a number of delicate roles, from *controller* to *assessor*, to undertake the too demanding activity of conversation teaching. It is to be mentioned, however, that nowadays approaches to FL learning and teaching, mainly communicative and humanistic ones, stress the importance of learner-centred curricula so as to promote autonomous learning. Yet, still the teacher remains of a paramount support to effective learning achievement. The following diagram summarises the most significant roles of the teacher in the FL classroom:



**Figure 1.1: Teacher's Roles (Adapted from Harmer (2001))**

❖ *This figure reflects Harmer's vision as to the very teacher's roles.*

Thus, the roles of an EFL teacher are tremendous, in the context of our research study, to help students develop functional language; and promoting discussion in the target language is essential.

## **1.4.2 Listening:**

### **1.4.2.1 Listening as a Skill:**

It is widely believed that the listening skill is tightly linked to speaking. It is also argued that listening as a process of reception tends to be a passive activity although its importance in any communicative task is patently taken for granted.

Yet, when it comes to students' attitudes and stances as to oral communication, listening is often portrayed as relatively difficult task.

For a better understanding of how the skill in question operates within an EFL context, it is important to note that speaking is inextricably linked with listening. Furthermore, it constitutes the very basis for not only foreign language learning processing but also, and most importantly first language acquisition. As it is put forward by Nation & Newton (2009):

*Listening is the natural precursor to speaking; the early stages of language development in a person's first language (and in naturalistic acquisition of other languages) are dependent on listening.*

Nation & Newton (2009: 37)

Worth to mention, however, that according to Richards (2008) listening was first perceived to be the ability to recognize and understand, in a speech, linguistic units including reduced forms of words, cohesive devices etc... Yet, later the listening skill was seen as rather depending on elements linked with contextual or situational knowledge prior to a given speech production, i.e. comprehension or meaning inference relies on the listener's previous or background knowledge of the topic of the spoken discourse.

Another crucial issue related to listening covers the latter's roles that revolve around two main facets notably comprehension and acquisition:

#### **1.4.2.1.1 Listening as Comprehension:**

As far as comprehension is concerned, it is widely granted that listening has the vital function of *facilitating the understanding* of spoken discourse. It is believed to be a basic element in any oral communication. Yet, it is to be noted that in an EFL learning context for comprehension to take place it is important that the listening task offers some

*language instances* that are *sufficient* and that their meaning is inferable. However, a certain degree of paying attention by students, during the listening activity, is also required to ensure comprehension (Newmark, 1981).

#### 1.4.2.1.2 Listening as Acquisition:

As for the latter function, which is acquisition, listening is considered as a prerequisite medium of language input which in its turn constitutes a paramount source for linguistic processing and monitoring leading to target language development and proficiency. In clearer words, the listening skill is believed to facilitate foreign or second language acquisition since it is a direct shortcut for input. Yet, such a facilitating role of language input cannot take place without a certain degree of “*noticing*”. The idea is that we cannot take profit from the input listening provides if we are not able to notice a particular thing about that very input.

As part of consciousness in language learning (Schmidt: 1990), noticing is then thought to be the very first step of integrating new linguistic items into one’s language competence (Richards: 2008). Yet, it is to be noted that noticing alone does not suffice for optimum language development and proficiency to take place. Many empirical studies proved that if foreign language learners are to take maximum profit from noticing via language input, they have to put into practice the very features of language they have noticed. This can be done, in particular; through using those newly acquired linguistic items in oral production.

Yet, such incorporation of received information into the productive skill in question encompasses processes known as *restructuring*, *complexification* and producing *stretched output*. According to Van Patten (1993), restructuring is that set of processes that facilitate the *incorporation of intake into the developing system*. Complexification and stretching output, however, occur within that effort a foreign language learner makes when trying to produce output using an available interlanguage not sufficiently enough to handle that very output. The learner then does their best and pushes the interlanguage to its limits to manage to realize appropriate language production.

#### 1.4.2.2 Types of Listening:

As it is the case of reading, the listening skill covers two distinct facets: *extensive* listening and *intensive* listening. The former relates to that listening students do beyond formal learning situation, i.e. outside language classrooms. The very motivation behind

such practice is mere pleasure that can manifest itself in an intrinsic desire to listen to a variety of language items or texts. This is done through various ways and means from car CDs, MP3 players or DVDs to video programmes on TV or on the internet. It is to be noted, however, that when EFL students do some extensive listening they are totally exhibiting a certain degree of autonomy in their learning process since the activity is far from being assisted by the teacher.

As far as the sample of the present study is concerned (see chapter 4) the majority of students tend to be unconsciously exposed to extensive listening of English language. In separate interviews and casual conversations with them, they affirm that they spend considerable time watching movies on different English speaking channels. Others speak of hours of internet connexion, through different social media, consulting videos and shows and also some audio tracks all in English language.

As for the latter type, intensive listening is that assignment practised in language classrooms or language laboratories with the very objective of working on the listening skill itself. It also focuses on studying the way the target language is spoken (Harmer, 2010). Unlike the previous type, intensive listening requires the very presence of the teacher whose guide and intervention during the listening task are quite necessary for optimum assimilation on the part of students to take place.

Yet, it should be noted that the same participant students involved in the present study and who tend, as mentioned earlier in the present section, to be more likely doing sizeable extensive listening; do find intensive listening activities quite challenging. Having said that, one may question both the importance of extensive listening in developing a learner's intensive listening abilities; and the extent of comprehension and information students reach when doing extensive listening. This will be further discussed in chapter four.

#### 1.4.2.3 Listening Processes:

It is widely believed that the main function of listening is to understand spoken discourse which represents, as it is already mentioned earlier, a source of language input. Yet, the act of comprehension itself is done through two distinct processes conventionally referred to as *bottom-up* and *top-down* processes.



#### 1.4.2.3.1 Bottom-up Processing:

In a bottom-up processing of listening the received input constitutes the basic raw material to comprehend the conveyed message. The listener then tends to assemble information and analyze it part by part having recourse to their lexical and grammatical abilities of the target language (Richards, 2008). The analysis of data is done in respect of the succession of linguistic items it contains i.e. meaning is inferred starting from sounds, words to clauses and sentences then concluding with full texts. In other words, bottom-up listening relates to the comprehension process which in its turn is viewed as the process of *decoding* (Richards, 2008).

In a bottom-up listening process, then, meaning is extracted from the incoming input through the following steps:

1. [Listeners] take in raw speech and hold a phonological representation of it in working memory.
2. They immediately attempt to organize the phonological representation into constituents, identifying their content and function.
3. They identify each constituent and then construct underlying propositions, building continually onto a hierarchical representation of propositions.
4. Once they have identified the propositions for a constituent, they retain them in working memory and at some point purge memory of the phonological representation. In doing this, they forget the exact wording and retain the meaning.

Clark and Clark (1977:49) in Richards (2008: 04).

#### 1.4.2.3.2 Top-down Processing:

In a top-down processing of listening, however, extracting meaning from the conveyed message depends on the listener's prior knowledge and background information about the context or situation where the message is communicated. The listener then uses a comprehension process that goes from meaning to language (Richards, 2008) i.e. they predict the content of the message having recourse to what they already know about the topic or context of the discourse; and after they use some parts of the message to confirm understanding (Nation & Newton, 2009).

Such prior contextual knowledge being the basis for the top-down processing of listening may also be knowledge in the form of ‘schemata’ or ‘scripts’ which are: “*plans about the overall structure of events and the relationships between them.*” Richards (2008: 07). It is to be noted however that the key element in a top-down processing of listening is the idea of inferencing. The latter is in its turn an important element relevantly related with pragmatics and pragmatic competence in conversational situations: an issue which will be further discussed in chapter two.

## **1.5 Teaching the Oral Skills:**

In this section, the researcher tries to shed light on the learning and teaching context of the oral skills at university level. A review of some important issues related to both speaking and listening as subject matters to be taught to EFL students will be dealt with through the following sub sections:

### **1.5.1 Teaching Speaking:**

#### **1.5.1.1 Importance of Teaching Speaking:**

Although attaching a lot of importance to teaching speaking within an EFL context has become an issue widely taken for granted by many practitioners, one may recall why it does really matter to introduce the skill in question in EFL curricula. It goes without saying that most language learners are interested to learn speaking in the first place. Such desire seems to show a sort of relevant concordance between students’ aspirations and teaching objectives.

Harmer (2010) highlights three main big reasons behind the teaching of speaking. Firstly, conversation classes tend to offer a chance for learners to safely rehearse a variety of real life speaking situations. Secondly, when trying to orally produce language within some particular structured activities both students and teachers can get feedback. It is easy then to notice what goes well and what goes bad as far as students learning progress is concerned. Teachers can also reflect on their own practices and see which instruction or technique to be used so as to deal with their learners’ language problems made noticeable during the assigned speaking tasks. Thirdly, conversation classes foster the automaticity of use of the already acquired knowledge by students. Getting students to use the target language triggers the activation of various latent linguistic elements. This makes students gradually able to speak fluently without spending very much time thinking of and recalling appropriate words or expression to be used.

Yet, as far as the present research paper is concerned, while observing our oral comprehension and expression classes one may perceive some other more reasons for teaching speaking. It is true that conversation tasks allow students to activate their language system and help them become autonomous and fluent users of the target language, but most importantly practising speaking offers a huge opportunity to explore the very features of language; mainly pragmatic ones. Students should be aware of the various norms of language use in relation to not only grammatical considerations but also social and cultural ones.

#### 1.5.1.2 Teacher Turn Allocation Behaviour:

A growing body of evidence suggests that learners' participation in the interactional task can be influenced by the teacher turn allocation (TTA) behaviour. Allwright and Bailey (1991), in Tsui (1995), make a distinction between two types of TTA behaviour: "personal solicit" and "general solicit". The former consists of a direct nomination of a participant by pointing or gazing. The latter refers to an indirect nomination by just leaving the turn open to the whole class, or saying that anybody can answer or say something.

TTA behaviour is believed to have other important functions in the language classroom. It may serve, for instance, as a classroom management device: a teacher can drive a student's attention by directing a personal solicit at them and so focus their concentration on what is going on in class. It can also be used to introduce a topic or structure a lesson.

#### 1.5.1.3 Managing Classroom Life:

In a definition of classroom life, Wright (2006) says:

*Classroom life is what teachers and learners make it. At the same time, classroom life is what they make of it and what it makes them*

Wright (2006) in Gieve and Miller (2006: 64)

One important issue in classroom life may be the construct "*classroom management*". This latter has been considered as the process of ensuring total control of the classroom by the teacher, being the symbol of authority and order. Yet, the former conceptualisation of the construct is brought into reconsideration by Richards (2001), who believes that classroom management is the organisation and control of students' behaviour and interaction by the teacher so as to allow appropriate teaching to take place.

Classroom management is thus part of the teacher's practices revolving mainly around the creation of appropriate conditions that can allow the teacher to meet instructional and curriculum goals (Gieve & Miller, 2006).

#### 1.5.1.4 Evaluating Students' Speaking Performance:

Testing language learners' knowledge in a particular field is generally believed to be a difficult task. Yet, teachers often find it more and more complicated when it comes to evaluating their learners' speaking skills. Johnston (2003), echoing Bachman (2000), points out that due to the complexity of language it is quite challenging to determine appropriate ways of testing students' knowledge.

Such relative difficulty in evaluating a learner's spoken performance lays on the fact that the speaking skills subsume a number of elements that could be looked at carefully by the tester. Kaye (2008) describes the following aspects as main tools necessary for the production of effective communication:

- *Phonological features of speech* (individual sounds, stressed and weak sounds in words, stressed and weak words in speech, rhythm of speech, intonation patterns and connected speech).
- *Following the rules of language* (choosing the right vocabulary, using grammar structures to put clauses and sentences together, using features of discourse to give long and short turns cohesion and coherence).
- *Paralinguistic devices* (gestures and facial expressions, eye contact, posture, positioning and movement of the head, verbal tools such as changes in volume).
- *Understanding the communicative functions of grammar and vocabulary.*
- *Understanding and using the social meaning of speech* (formal and informal language, language connotations, conversational principals such as turn taking and exchanges; starting, maintaining, managing and closing conversations).

Kaye (2008) believes that an effective and accurate evaluation of speech production requires the tester to identify and isolate each of the mentioned aspects, and see which of them can be included in the evaluative process. Yet, the examiner also needs to go through more challenging steps subsuming the selection of appropriate testing format, using specific tasks and considering the speaker's emotional state.

Mead & Rubin (1985) mention that assessing students' oral performance can be done through the use of two different methods: *observational approach* and *structured approach*. In the former method the task of assessment is done in an unobtrusive way by the teacher who, having their students do some speaking activities, observes their performance with the aim of evaluation. As for the latter method, the teacher asks the students to perform a given task either in a one-on-one setting (tester and one student) or in a group or class setting. In this method students are to be aware of the fact that they have to engage in a meaningful communication with an actual audience.

As far as grading is concerned, test administrators can go through a holistic approach or an analytic one (Mead & Rubin, 1985). In a holistic rating students are graded on the basis of a general impression of their oral performance. On the other hand, in an analytic rating different aspects of the speaker's speech like range of language, pronunciation, accuracy, content etc... are taken into account by the tester.

One of the main reliable speaking test formats is that designed by Cambridge University (ESOL Examinations) (4). It covers a number of speech components with different proficiency levels that the examiner can identify. More details are displayed in the following table:

Language Solutions Placement Test

Speaking Test Band Descriptors (Analytic)

	Range of Language (Grammar & Vocabulary)	Accuracy	Discourse Management	Pronunciation	Interactive Communication
5	Wide range of language wholly appropriate to all the tasks	Inaccuracies and inappropriacies are rare	Produces extended discourse which is coherent and always easy to follow	Pronunciation is easily understood	Does not need interlocutor support; is able to initiate dialogue appropriately and develop interaction effectively in a range of situations
4	Range of language appropriate to the tasks	Occasional inaccuracies and inappropriacies in complex language	Produces discourse that is generally coherent; maintains a flow of language with only natural hesitation resulting from considerations of content or style	Pronunciation is easily understood; although L1 influence may be evident, it does not effect the clarity of the message	Is unlikely to need interlocutor support; is generally able to initiate and develop dialogue
3	Although range of language used is limited, it is adequate for the satisfactory completion of the tasks	Some inaccuracies and inappropriacies which do not impede understanding	Shows the ability to organise extended discourse but occasionally produces utterances that lack coherence; maintains the flow of language although hesitation may occur while searching for language resources	Pronunciation is easily understood; but L1 influence may be intrusive and cause the listener to have to concentrate in order to understand the message	May need a degree of interlocutor support in some situations; participates reasonably actively although may not initiate dialogue appropriately; makes use of compensation strategies
2	Range of language used is inadequate for all the tasks	Some basic inaccuracies which may sometimes impede communication	Shows the ability to construct longer utterances, although attempts at these may sometimes be abandoned; pauses and hesitations frequently disrupt the flow of language	Pronunciation is generally intelligible, but L1 features may put a strain on the listener; isolated words may cause difficulty	Needs interlocutor support in order to achieve tasks; may need redirection; use of compensation strategies is limited
1	Range of language used is wholly inadequate for the tasks	A number of basic inaccuracies which impede communication	Shows the ability to produce very short utterances (words or phrases) with frequent hesitations and pauses; attempts at longer utterances are frequently abandoned	Pronunciation is heavily influenced by L1 features and may at times be difficult to understand	Needs interlocutor support throughout the test; frequently misunderstands tasks; is unable to initiate dialogue appropriately
0	Insufficient language for assessment OR Language below Level 1				

Table 1.6: Speaking Test Format

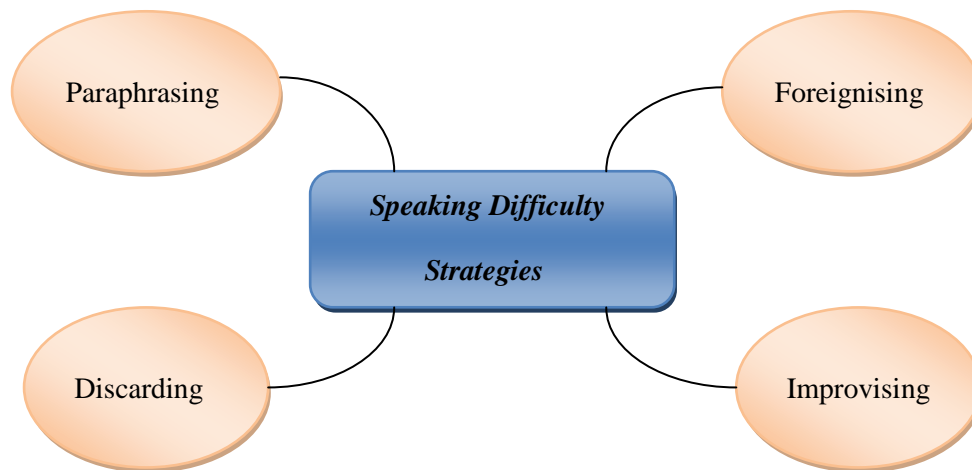
(Cambridge University ESOL Examinations: 2006)

❖ The table above shows the main testing criteria of speaking according to Cambridge University.

Taking into account that testing is part of teaching, the above Speaking Test Format can be adopted by conversation teachers in grading their students during oral expression exams. It may render the evaluative task easier and more efficient.

#### 1.5.1.5 Difficulty Strategies in Learning Speaking:

Speaking, as a productive skill, poses certain difficulties for EFL learners. The latter may have recourse to some, as Harmer (2001) names them, *difficulty strategies*.



**Figure 1.2: Difficulty strategies in Learning Speaking**

**Adapted from Harmer (2001)**

- ❖ *The figure above illustrates the main strategies learners use when meeting communicative difficulties.*

Speakers use improving when they cannot find the needed word. They use, then, another word or expression that they believe is appropriate to the speech situation. Yet, improvising is not always a reliable strategy, for it is believed to create certain ambiguities in meaning.

When speakers cannot put their idea into spoken words, they just abandon and get rid of it. Discarding often leads to communication breakdown especially when the speaker's vocabulary knowledge is limited.

Another difficulty strategy in speaking may be the use of a foreign word that the speaker borrows from their first or second language. Contrary to discarding, foreignising can help maintain the flow of communication.

When encountering difficulties in finding the appropriate word, speakers have recourse to some expressions or phrases to substitute it. Yet, paraphrasing is believed to make speech longer and more complex.

It is worth to mention however, that paraphrasing and improvising are thought to be useful strategies to overcome the difficulties a speaker meets in an overt performance. Yet, students at Saida University level (in order not to generalise) tend to use less effective strategies like foreignising and discarding. The latter strategy leads them most of the time to avoidance. A review of literature of classroom interaction and avoidance problem is dealt with in details in chapter three.

## **1.5.2 Teaching Listening:**

### **1.5.2.1 Importance of Teaching Listening:**

It seems that it is an axiomatic fact that the desire to be able to speak the target language, in an EFL learning context, is patently accompanied with a desire to be able to understand what is said in the very language in question. Most learners then are interested in trying to know and comprehend what people are saying in English whether be it in conversational situations or on TV, cinemas and theatres, internet chatting, CDs or any other recorded items. Furthermore, the teaching of listening is widely granted to be a necessary practice if students are to fully benefit from the learning/teaching process.

Yet, it is to be noted that many researchers in the early 1980s had given an escalating importance to the role of listening (Nation & Newton, 2009). Some practitioners, in fact, argued that learning and practicing listening takes priority over the speaking skill the practice of which, they believe, should be discouraged at early stages of the learning process. Such a stance is justified by the fact that it is through listening, which is a source of information, that language learners are going to be able to build up the necessary knowledge for using the language (Ibid). In this context, it worth to recall Nord (1980) who believes that:

*Some people now believe that learning a language is not just learning to talk, but rather that learning a language is building a map of meaning in the mind. These people believe that talking may indicate that the language was learned, but they do not believe that practice in talking is the best way to build up this “cognitive” map in the mind. To do this, they feel, the best method is to practice meaningful listening.*

Nord (1980: 17) in Nation & Newton (2009: 38)



Yet, there are so many other reasons why teaching the listening skill matters. Listening texts, for example, can serve as reliable models for students to learn pronunciation, intonation, stress...etc. In addition, listening is believed to be a short cut to knowledge i.e. a great deal of information and knowledge about the target language can be acquired just through focusing on listening and this guarantees a kind of speed of coverage since receptive skills are reported to grow faster than productive ones (Nation & Newton: 2009). From another parameter, students' success on any oral communication requires not only effective speaking strategies but also a certain degree of *effectiveness in the way they listen* (Harmer, 2010).

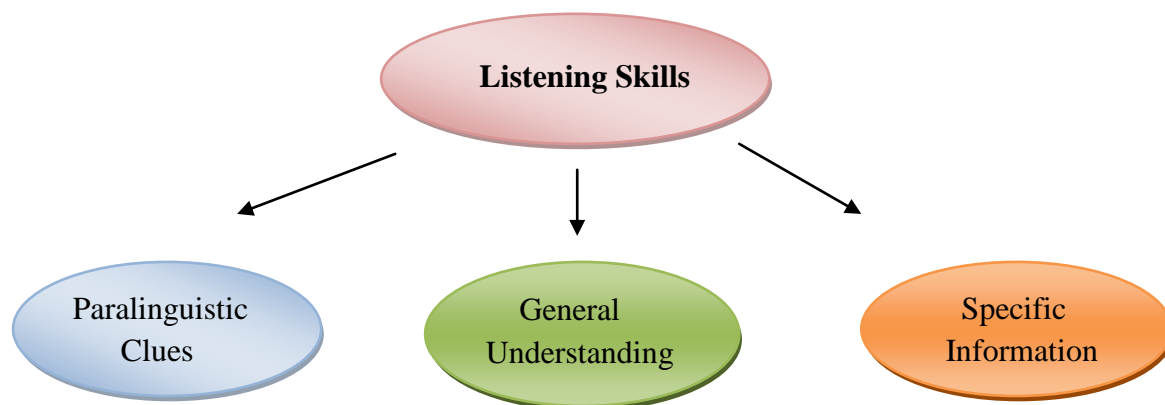
#### 1.5.2.2 Students' Levels and Listening:

An important issue relevantly linked to the teaching of listening is the very different levels students may show in the language classroom. A common practice on the part of teachers is to focus on a variety of genres when designing some listening materials. To do so they may have recourse to audio recorded conversations, news broadcast, interviews, phone conversation ...etc. Yet, the question, as raised by Harmer (2010), is whether the selected material should be *authentic English* or not, knowing that the latter is generally devoted not only for ordinary EFL learners but for native speakers or competent speakers. It seems quite obvious that implementing some authentic items within the listening tasks may be of a great benefit for students. But, if the latter's level is low or not yet enough developed; confusion and failure may be expected rather than improvement.

Therefore, the use of authentic listening tracks is to be accompanied by a thoughtful consideration of students' listening proficiency level. Yet, such careful practice remains always challenging especially in heterogeneous classes where students' diversity does not cover only their competencies and levels but also attitudes, learning styles and affective traits (further discussion on this issue is provided in chapter three). Harmer (2010) points out to an alternative means which consists of realistic language use that may resemble real-life language if well adjusted to meet students' lower levels. Yet, this does not mean total exclusion of authentic English. The latter is to be then implemented as soon as students reach the appropriate listening proficiency level.

### 1.5.2.3 Listening Skills and Principles:

In a listening activity students are generally asked to focus on a variety of features depending on the very nature or type of the language genre.



**Figure 1.3: Targeted Items during a Listening Task**

**Adapted from Harmer (2010)**

❖ *This diagram shows what students have to notice when doing listening.*

As displayed in Figure 1.2 above, during a listening activity students have to recognise some paralinguistic clues like intonation. The latter may help the listener get an idea about the speakers' emotional state or mood as well as understand meaning. Students should also achieve some general understanding like when they listen to a story or have some social conversation. In other activities, however, they need to pay attention to more specific information as people's names, time, etc.

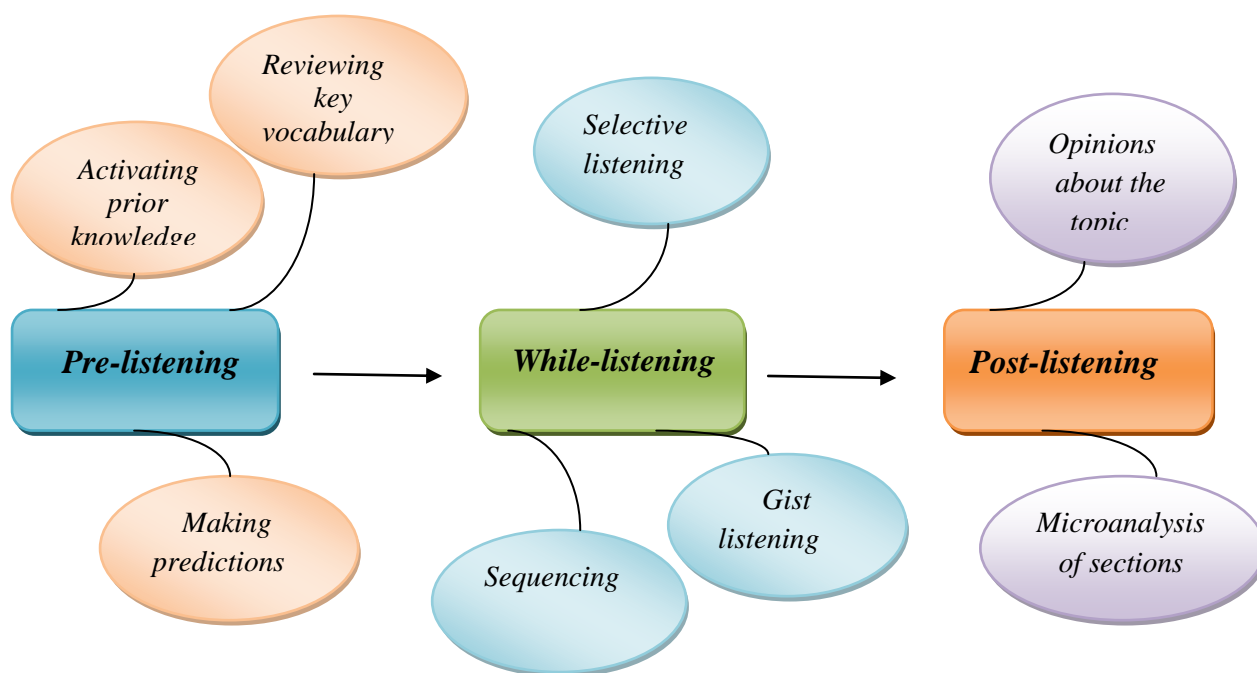
Yet, it is worth to mention that teaching listening is not limited to giving particular audio or video tracks to students with the very purpose of recognising and comprehending some given linguistic items. A set of practices and principles can build up the essence of a listening class and help students develop their skills in a more appropriate and efficient way. In this respect Harmer (2010) stresses the following points:

- Frequent practice makes students better at listening.
- Preparation is important before any listening activity. Students can be helped with some questions, discussion about the topic, clues or any other ways that may allow them to predict the main content or the subject matter of the listening task.
- Playing the audio track just once cannot suffice for students to do the activity more or less successfully. It is agreed that it is a normal behaviour that students ask the teacher to play the audio again so as to get or assimilate the things they missed

before. In addition, a first listening is generally meant to introduce students to the topic and so facilitate the subsequent listening phase.

- Focus is to be put on the content of the listening activity and not only on language. Students are to be encouraged to express their points of view as to the speakers' contributions or the activity as a whole.
- The listening activity is to be adapted according to the listening stage, i.e. first listenings need to be simple and general. This guarantees that students may do it successfully and so their self-confidence level may be fostered reducing then anxiety and fear that may accompany listening classes. Further tasks or subsequent tracks, then, may trigger more detailed information. At this level the teacher's help and guidance is quite prerequisite.

From another parameter, it is widely believed that a well structured and efficient listening activity is to cover a three-part sequence as displayed in the diagram below.



**Figure 1.4: Three-part Listening Sequence and Corresponding Required Skills**

**Adapted from Richards (2008)**

❖ *The figure above displays the different phases of listening and their related skills*

As shown in the diagram, a pre-listening phase is a kind of warming up intended to make students ready for the activity. They can make use of their prior knowledge to make some predictions about the topic. They can also review some key vocabulary during this phase. The while listening sequence, however, consists of a comprehension task where students

are to pay attention to the gist of what they are listening to and to other detailed information as to sequencing or selecting particular language items. The final phase which is post-listening is to trigger students' feedback where opinions about the topic can be expressed. Yet, in a post-listening sequence there is also room for more detailed analysis of particular features of spoken discourse especially those that students may miss or may not understand during the previous phase like blends, ellipsis, reduced forms etc.

## **1.6 Methodology and tools:**

In order to try to answer the research questions mentioned in the general introduction, the researcher goes through a methodology stressing the following points:

### **1.6.1 Aim of the study:**

The aim of the present study is three-fold. First, it tries to unearth some relative causes of second year students' low performance in conversation classes. Second, it attempts to assess the same sample's pragmatic skills in OCE classes and in particular in conversational tasks. Third, it tries to answer a central question in the study which is whether or not the introduction of pragmatic instruction in the OCE class can influence students' affectivity and correspondingly their speaking performances. Fourth, it tries to explore the idea of the teachability of pragmatics in EFL context as a means to foster students' oral communicative abilities.

Yet the very central aim in this research is to examine the impact of pragmatics on teaching and learning EFL oral communicative skills. More precisely the study attempts to shed light on the possible ways of interaction between students' three relevant dimensions: pragmatic awareness, affectivity and overt performance in the target language. It is worth noting, however, that the researcher focuses on students' pragmatic competence aspects in learning the oral skills not as an end but as a means to adopt some new trends in teaching perceptions and practices as far as the OCE unit is concerned.

## **1.6.2 Informants of the study:**

### **1.6.2.1 Students:**

The population targeted in this study consists of second year students of English (SYSE) studying English as a foreign language (EFL) at Moulay Tahar University of Saida. In addition to local students, living in Saida, students subscribed for the preparation of the degree of Licence of English (5) come from different Algerian western towns notably: Elbayadh, Tissemsilt and Mechria. The researcher uses a sample of 95 students belonging to three groups (A, B and C). The sample in question participated as data providers in different conversational activities and as informants in questionnaires, Discourse Completion Tasks (DCTs) and interviews.

It is worth to mention that the subjects of the study mentioned above, before their admission to the university, have been exposed to a seven-year exposure period to English through a national educational system implementing EFL teaching in the middle schools; starting from the first year, and in all secondary school levels (1AS, 2AS and 3AS)(6).

Yet among the very same sample in question some students already own a License degree in another discipline notably business, economics, biology and law. Their main argument when asked about the reasons behind choosing English as a second targeted degree is that the rapid changes that are occurring within the globalised world of now makes English language mastery a potential key required for any personal achievement.

As far as the sample's linguistic profile is concerned, it is to be noted that most informants share the same language variety which is Western Algerian Arabic. Their First Language, which is at the same time their National Language, is Modern Standard Arabic. The latter is learnt in the very early stages of the country educational system starting from the first primary schooling year. French is their First Foreign Language and is also learnt in primary schools starting from the third year. English then is the sample's Second Foreign Language which they have been learning at middle schools, as mentioned earlier, since the second year.

It is to be noted that all the informants of the study are baccalaureate degree holders. They have been oriented to study English language at the university on the basis of their baccalaureate results with reference to the general average and the obtained exam grade in the subject matter – English.

Once at university, students have started a more intensive and focussed learning process of English language where many disciplines are covered within the norms of the newly imposed LMD system. The tables below display the four semesters' subject matters students are required to study in the 1<sup>st</sup> year 2<sup>nd</sup> year:

	<i>Subject Matters</i>	<i>Allotted Time per Week</i>
<i>Semester One</i>	Written Comprehension and Expression	4 hours and a half
	Oral Comprehension and Expression	3 hours
	Grammar	3 hours
	Phonetics	1 hour and a half
	Initiation to Linguistics	1 hour and a half
	Initiation to Literary Texts	1 hour and a half
	Civilization	1 hour and a half
	University Study Skills	3 hours
	Human and Social Sciences	1 hour and a half
	French	1 hour and a half

<i>Semester Two</i>	Written Comprehension and Expression	3 hours
	Oral Comprehension and Expression	4 hours and a half
	Grammar	3 hours
	Phonetics	1 hour and a half
	Initiation to Linguistics	1 hour and a half
	Literature	1 hour and a half
	Civilization	1 hour and a half
	University Study Skills	3 hours
	Human and Social Sciences	1 hour and a half
	French	1 hour and a half

**Table 1.7: EFL First Year Curriculum Subject Matters**

❖ *This table shows the main subject matters taught within 1<sup>st</sup> year EFL curriculum*

As shown in table 1.7, the curriculum; which is designed by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research covers a number of different modules dealing with both technical and literary subjects. Yet, as it can be noticed, the four skills within their receptive and productive dimensions in addition to language functions and structure seem to be more or less a relative focus of the curriculum in question regarding the amount of time allotted to their corresponding modules.

	<i>Subject Matters</i>	<i>Allotted Time per Week</i>
<i>Semester Three</i>	Written Comprehension and Expression	4 hours and a half
	Oral Comprehension and Expression	3 hours
	Grammar	3 hours
	Phonetics	1 hour and a half
	Introduction to Linguistics	1 hour and a half
	Literature	1 hour and a half
	Civilization	1 hour and a half
	University Study Skills	1 hour and a half
	Initiation to Translation	3 hours
	French	1 hour and a half
<i>Semester Four</i>	Written Comprehension and Expression	4 hours and a half
	Oral Comprehension and Expression	3 hours
	Grammar	3 hours
	Phonetics	1 hour and a half
	Introduction to Linguistics	1 hour and a half
	Literature	1 hour and a half
	Civilization	1 hour and a half
	University Study Skills	1 hour and a half
	Initiation to Translation	3 hours
	French	1 hour and a half
	Information and Communication Technologies	1 hour and a half

**Table 1.8: EFL Second Year Curriculum Subject Matters**

❖ *This table displays the main subject matters taught within 2<sup>nd</sup> year EFL curriculum.*



### 1.6.2.2 Teachers:

In addition to (SYSE), 10 teachers of English at the Department of Letters and English - University of Saida contributed to the study as data providers. They are all Magister degree holders and their teaching experience at the department of English varies from 3 years to 11 years. Oral comprehension and expression is one among a number of other modules they teach mainly: linguistics, written production, morphosyntax, civilisation ...etc. Most of these teachers were practitioners at the level of different high schools in different towns notably Saida, Sidi Bel Abbès, Tlemcen and Mascara before being recruited at Saida University. Yet, it is to be noted that they did not receive any practical training in the subject matters they teach. A bit more complicated than this is the fact that sometimes teachers are asked to teach some disciplines which do not have any link with their specialism. An inconvenience that is patently reflected by the lack of teaching personnel.

As far as designing the OCE syllabus, whether be it for 1<sup>st</sup> year students or 2<sup>nd</sup> year ones, most teachers tend to do the job on their own. This is because there are no official ministerial instructions as to the content of each module, except for time allowance and evaluation criteria. This may explain why students, though belonging to the same promotion, tend to deal with topics and exercises that are different from those their friends in the other groups, taught by a different teacher, deal with. For some it is a positive situation, because students are exposed to a variety of communicative tasks. For others it is rather negative since it is difficult for some teachers to select the appropriate tasks for their students especially when there is a relative lack of coordination between teachers of the same discipline.

### **1.6.3 Research Instruments:**

For any research work to be relevantly and appropriately undertaken the use of some valid research tools is quite prerequisite. As far as the present study is concerned, a number of instruments are adopted in an attempt to collect data from the informants mentioned above.

#### 1.6.3.1 Observation:

As part of the research investigation conducted through the present study, the observational practice was one among other devices that were implemented to get information on students' oral communicative performance. According to Gebhard (1999)

classroom observation is: “nonjudgmental description of classroom events that can be analyzed and given interpretation” Gebhard (1999) in Gebhard & Oprandy (1999: 35). Such definition therefore stresses a three-part process including nonjudgment, where opinions are withheld and conclusions are postponed, description which may be a written or verbal account of classroom interaction; and interpretation which is the understanding of some classroom events that happened *in a particular way* and give meaning to the whole observed descriptions of classroom interaction (Gebhard,1999).

Observation then was set about in relation to the research problematic main concerns i.e. stress was put on monitoring the participants’ speaking performances according to pragmatic and affective considerations. Second year students of English were then the target sample for a ten-session observational practice. The latter looked at classroom interaction through a lens set on the following items:

- 1- Activity description and procedure
- 2- Observation on students’ behaviour and discourse (extent and quality of speech as far as the Target Language pragmatic norms are concerned)
- 3- General observations:
  - a- Classroom setting.
  - b- Activity preparation.

#### 1.6.3.2 Discourse Completion Task (DCT):

Another research instrument used in the present study is the Discourse Completion Task (DCT). The latter is thought to be a reliable tool that is utilized at a wild scale in language pragmatics research. It consists of kind of written questionnaire where different scenarios dealing with different contexts in different settings are described having as a major aim eliciting the informant’s expressions that they would produce when faced with those situations. In more technical terms Richards & Schmidt (2002) define the DCT as:

*A type of questionnaire that presents a sociolinguistic description of a situation followed by part of a discourse designed to elicit a specific speech act. The responses elicited can then be analyzed as speech act realizations of the desired type.*

Richards & Schmidt (2002)

Speaking of the effectiveness of DCT in collecting reliable data related to pragmatic issues, Aminudin (2012) echoing Beebe and Cummings (1985) points out to some advantages of the tool in question stressing that it an efficient way to:

- Collect a considerable amount of information in a short time.
- Create an initial classification of semantic formulas that will occur in natural speech.
- Study the stereotypical, perceived requirements for a socially appropriate response.
- Get a clear understanding of social and psychological factors that are likely to affect speech and performance.

As far as the present research work is concerned, it is to be noted that the very purpose of using the DCT is to try to assess the sample's pragmatic competence when using the target language orally. More precisely, it tries to get some data as to students' realization of the speech acts of apologizing and requesting.

#### 1.6.3.3 Audio Recorded Role Plays:

In an attempt to investigate students' communicative skills in a more appropriate way and in concordance with the research problematic set in the present study audio recorded role playing, as third research instrument, was used to collect additional data. Eliciting the participants' realization of particular speech acts, for the sake of further analysis, in real-life like conversational contexts constitutes the main target of the role playing activities assigned to the sample. Furthermore, the use of this extra research tool is an endeavour on the part of the researcher to reinforce the reliability of the collected data related to students' pragmatic competence.

It is worth to mention, however, that choosing role playing in particular as an additional data eliciting tool can be explained by the fact that:

*Role-plays are probably one of the best ways of practicing different constellations of register variables, such as the differences that social status makes.*

Thornbury (2007: 33)

Social status of the conversation participants in a given context, as delineated further in chapter two, is a potential relevant agent that influences and shapes the speech acts realization. Role playing tasks thus, were intended to explore students' communicative competence in simulating a number of social speaking situations.

Therefore and within the research procedure, different role play exercises were administered to the participant students who were to act out situations dealing with speech act production of complaints, refusals and compliments.

#### 1.6.3.4 Teacher Questionnaire:

The last research instrument used in this study is a semi structured questionnaire (7), entitled ‘Oral Comprehension and Expression and Teaching Practices’. The latter was handed out to teachers of English at the department of Letters and English who represent the second group of informants as far as the present research work is concerned. Its main objective is to know about the teaching and learning of the OCE within the newly introduced LMD system in general. Yet, most importantly, it attempts to explore the teachers’ concerns as to their teaching practices and their students’ oral communicative competence and performance in OCE classes in relation to pragmatic and psychological considerations (more details are provided in chapter four).

The questionnaire was also designed to try to find out about teachers’ stances and attitudes that may lend fresh perspectives to more efficient teaching of OCE.

#### **1.6.4 Difficulties Encountered in the Study:**

Proceeding with the very set plan of this research work has been subject to some impeding obstacles. One major difficulty, however, the researcher encountered while undertaking his investigations is the lack of up-to-date articles. The field of pragmatics in FL language teaching in general and in teaching the speaking skills in particular does not provide as rich literature as in other domains. Nevertheless, the researcher managed to cope with the problem through a humble collection of references that, the researcher expects, may serve to get a more or less clear idea about pragmatics concerns in teaching speaking.

From another parameter, the researcher has found some relative complications in collecting data from the participants and especially second year students. A few of the latter informants exhibited a non regular attendance at OCE classes where the present research practical side was conducted. This inconvenience was pervasively felt in group work activities administered to the sample for the sake of gathering data through observing or audio-recording students’ oral performances. When a student is absent then, their group-mates cannot do the speaking task. Therefore, the researcher was frequently

obliged to postpone the activity or assign another student to substitute the one who did not come. Such last-minute shortcomings troubled a lot the normal flow of the research work and made it take much more time than expected.

In addition to the mentioned hindrances, the transcription of the audio recorded plays proved to be a quite challenging task. This is because of its considerable length and the mediocre quality of sound in some recorded parts which made the recognition of spoken discourse a thorny step before proceeding with the time-consuming transcription job.

### **1.7 Conclusion:**

To conclude with, this chapter has provided a general review of the teaching/ learning situation of the oral skills along with methodological concerns of the present research paper. As a first section, an account of EFL teaching and learning in Algeria delineates the status of EFL in the educational system pointing to the governmental decision concerning the ITE which used to be an efficient organism that contributed to offering *reliable* and *relevant* teacher training programmes.

Definitions of the main terms related to both speaking and listening along with teaching and learning issues concerning the mentioned skills are also dealt with stressing the importance of more language exposure. The place of the oral skills in the curricula is dealt with and lights are shed on the language laboratory at Saida University underlying some *positive* relative features as well as *negative* ones and their implications for both teaching and learning.

It is to be noted however that the present chapter has also cast some attention to the role of sufficient exposure to listening in targeting effective learning of the speaking skills. As shown through the previous sections, listening as an active skill, may serve, if well explored as a short cut to optimum language learning. Yet, observing the present study corpus within OCE classes has given first impressions of some relative deficiencies as to students' ability to use the target language *appropriately*, notably in terms of its communicative functions.

The final section has described the different methodological steps the researcher followed to undertake the present research work. It has tried to stand to reason that assessing students' pragmatic competence in a more *effective* and *reliable* way has required the use of multiple research instruments notably DCTs, observation and audio

recorded role plays. Relying on only one tool cannot help the researcher collect more data on different speech acts realization and other pragmatic elements. As far as pragmatics and EFL learning/teaching are concerned, a detailed review of the literature tackling a number of related issues is explored through the next chapter.

## **Notes to Chapter One:**

- 1) - Private language schools in Algeria tend to proliferate during the last 15 years because of the increasing interest in learning foreign languages and in particular English. Language Solutions Algeria (LSA), Algerian Learning Centre (ALC) and Syken are the most influential schools where English is taught via different programmes and for different categories of learners in Algiers, Annaba, Oran and Hassi Messaoud. It is to be noted, however, that the three mentioned schools use wide range of courses and methods designed by Cambridge and Oxford universities.
- 2) - The Fundamental Unit within the LMD system covers a number of essential subject matters notably oral comprehension and expression, written comprehension and expression, grammar, phonetics, introduction to linguistics, literature and civilization.
- 3) - More details of the different usages and functions of language are explored in the field of pragmatics (see chapter two).
- 4) - It is a branch of Cambridge University specialised in testing individuals' English proficiency at the level of the four skills. It follows some standard norms covering different areas from general to business English. Cambridge ESOL Examinations Centre offers opportunities to English teachers throughout the world to obtain an international ID Number as Cambridge Examiner after doing some Teaching Knowledge Test (TKT) training sessions and passing all the final tests. As far as Algeria is concerned, TKT training is available at Language Solutions Algeria (LSA), a certified British school by Cambridge University, Algiers- Hydra.
- 5) - In an Anglo-American context, Licence of English refers to Bachelor of Arts in English (BAE).
- 6) - 1, 2 and 3 AS are the three levels in the Secondary School.
- 7) - A semi structured questionnaire contains both guided questions, with different possible options, and open ended questions eliciting particular information.

***CHAPTER TWO: A REVIEW OF PRAGMATICS IN EFL LEARNING  
CONTEXT***



## **CHAPTER TWO: A REVIEW OF PRAGMATICS IN EFL LEARNING CONTEXT**

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## **CHAPTER TWO: A REVIEW OF PRAGMATICS IN EFL LEARNING CONTEXT**

### **2.1 Introduction**

In this chapter the researcher sets out to explore some of the most influential theoretical points that are essential for the understanding of how pragmatics operates within an EFL context. Within the first part, some review of the literature revolving around defining pragmatics is aimed at shedding light on the concept in question and its relationship with semantics. The notion of context then, constitutes the main foundations of some key research elements in pragmatics. Thus, an illustration of some relevant fields like *Speech Acts*, *Implicature*, *presupposition* and the like is provided with details and examples.

Another part of the present chapter discusses the relevance of computational studies in the exploration of pragmatics. The concept then, of corpora and how the latter tools can be used in the study of pragmatics are introduced with a delineation and illustration of some basic terms like *corpus* and *corpus linguistics*.

In addition to the exploration of the teaching and testing of pragmatic skills in an EFL context, the present theoretical section sheds light on how culture pervasively relates to pragmatics. Issues then, like pragmatic competence and cultural variation; along with cross-cultural communication are dealt with before discussing a final point as to the notion of politeness in pragmatics.

### **2.2 Defining Pragmatics:**

Pragmatics is a branch of linguistics which studies how speakers of a language produce and match linguistic acts with a given speech situation (Bardovi-Harlig & Mahan-Taylor, 2003). In Crystal's words, pragmatics is:

*The study of language from the point of view of users, especially of the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interaction and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communication.*

Crystal (1997: 301) in Rose & Kasper (2001: 02)

In the same line of thoughts, Thornbury (2007) states that:

*pragmatics describes the relation between language and its contexts of use, including the purposes for which language is being used.*

Thornbury (2007: 16)

Habermas (1979) introduced the concept Universal Pragmatics. He suggests that:

*The task of universal pragmatics is to identify and reconstruct universal conditions of possible mutual understanding (Verständigung).*

Habermas (1998: 21)

As for Kasper and Rose (2001) pragmatics can be defined as:

*The study of communicative action in its sociocultural context. Communicative action includes not only using speech acts (such as apologizing, complaining, complimenting, and requesting), but also engaging in different types of discourse and participating in speech events of varying length and complexity.*

Kasper and Rose (2001:02)

Other definitions of pragmatics cover the study of the intricate relationship between the interpretation of conversational participants' utterances meaning and their context of use. Fasold (1990) suggests that pragmatics is: "*the study of the use of context to make inferences about meaning*" Fasold (1990: 119) in O'Keeffe et al (2011: 01). By *inferences* Christie (2000) means *deductions* that participants make according to a given *evidence* which in its turn is provided by the context where the utterance is produced (O'Keeffe et al, 2011). In this respect, three types of spoken context are pointed to by O'Keeffe et al (2011) who, echoing Cutting (2008), elucidate the difference in the following words:

*Situational, what speakers know about what they can see around them; background knowledge, what they know about each other (interpersonal knowledge) and the world (cultural knowledge); and co-textual, what they know about what they have been saying.*

O'Keeffe et al (2011: 01)

In the same line of thoughts O'Keeffe et al (2011), through their extensive studies, introduced a set of relevant elements in defining pragmatics by saying that the latter offers:

*a theoretical framework that can account for the relationship between the cultural setting, the language user, the linguistic choices the user makes, and the factors that underlie those choices.*

Christie (2000:29) in O’Keeffe et al (2011: 01)

Therefore, pragmatics focuses mainly on the use of language in relation to particular circumstances, contexts and conditions as it is made in plain words by Richards and Schmidt (2002) who define it as:

*The study of the use of language in communication, particularly the relationships between sentences and the contexts and situations in which they are used.*

Richards and Schmidt (2002:412)

From another parameter, Long and Richards (2001) borrowed Hymes words to refer to pragmatics as: “*rules of use without which rules of grammar would be useless*”. Long and Richards (2001) in Kasper and Rose (2001: IX).

This definition brings into account the notion of language communicativeness. In other words, pragmatics sheds lights on the very aspects of using language for the ultimate end of conveying and understanding messages and meanings in appropriate ways. In this respect, Dale Koike (2010) suggests that:

*Pragmatics addresses expression at the level of utterances, which can range from one word (e.g., "Oh!" as a reaction of dismay or pleasant surprise) to a lengthy discourse (e.g., a heated political debate). What is important is the communicative function the utterance plays in interaction with others, so pragmatics operates at the level of meaning (and how others understand those meanings).*

Koike (2010:02)

Kasper’s and Rose’s (2001) perception of pragmatics is:

*The study of how people accomplish their goals and attend to interpersonal relationships while using language.*

Kasper and Rose (2001:02)

It is worth to mention, however, that such accomplishment of goals and attendance to interpersonal relationships through the very use of language depend substantially on a number of relevant elements which, as put forward by Kasper and Rose (2001), are classified under two components of pragmatics: *pragmalinguistics* and *sociopragmatics*. The former, according to Leech (1983) and Thomas (1983) in Kasper and Rose (2001), accounts for the *linguistic forms* that serve as the speaker's *resources* to convey “*communicative acts and relational or interpersonal meanings*” Kasper and Rose (2001:02). The latter refers to:

*the social perceptions underlying participants' interpretation and performance of communicative action.*

Kasper and Rose (2001:02).

An example that may illustrate what has been mentioned above is the use of the following gratitude expressions: “thank you” and “please do accept my heartfelt thanks”. Both expressions represent pragmalinguistic resources with the very same function of expressing gratitude. Yet, their sociopragmatic picture delineates quite distinct *attitudes and social relationships*.

Korta and Perry (2006) offered a more complicated definition by introducing the construct *near-side pragmatics/far-side pragmatics*. They state that:

*Near-side pragmatics is concerned with the nature of certain facts that are relevant to determining what is said. Far-side pragmatics is focused on what happens beyond saying: what speech acts are performed in or by saying what is said, or what implicatures are generated by saying what is said.*

Korta and Perry (2006:02)

According to Korta and Perry, near side pragmatics focuses on understanding what is said in relation to the speaker's utterances of indexical expressions like personal pronouns, demonstratives, and time and place adverbs via having recourse to the very context they are produced in. Whereas far side pragmatics is concerned with the hidden meanings of what one says far from what is literally said. For instance, the expression “it is dark in here” may serve as a request to light the place.

## 2.3 Fields of Pragmatics:

It is an axiomatic fact that the definitions provided above could be reinforced if we just explore the very domains where pragmatics operates. Horn and Ward (2007) offer a range of relevant elements that constitute the core matter in the study of pragmatics. These include *speech acts, implicature, presupposition, reference, deixis and definiteness and indefiniteness*.

### 2.3.1 Speech Acts:

According to O’Keeffe et al (2011), speech acts are concerned with the very different actions utterances may perform. They also deal with the discrepancies between what an utterance literally means and what its user intends to mean according to a particular context (Richards and Schmidt, 2002). From Austin (1962) to O’Keeffe et al (2011) Speech Act Theory (SAT) has gained paramount attention in the field of linguistics and philosophy in general and in the study of pragmatics in particular. In fact SAT:

*emerged in the 1960s against the backdrop of theories focused on language structure and individual sentences which were mainly analysed according to their descriptive qualities. Such ‘sentences’ were seen to have a truth value, i.e. they could be either true or false, and were also referred to as ‘constatives’. Examples of constatives are sentences like ‘The sky is blue’ or ‘The cat is in the house’.*

O’Keeffe et al (2011:84)

Yet, as a very first step in SAT, Austin (1962); as pointed to by O’Keeffe et al (2011), added the reference ‘performatives’ to sentences which:

*could be described in terms of the act that they perform when uttered in a given context.*

Ibid

In the same line of thought, performatives seem well delineated through Sadock’s (2005) words who states that:

*When we speak we can do all sorts of things, from aspirating a consonant, to constructing a relative clause, to insulting a guest, to starting a war. These are all, pre-theoretically, speech acts - acts done in the process of speaking.*

Sadock (2005:01)

It is worth to mention, however, that Austin went further and made a clear division between *explicit performatives* and *implicit performatives* (Richards and Schmidt, 2002). The former contain a *performative verb* that refers to a particular act like an apology (I apologise for being late), a job appointment (I appoint Mr. X as director of the sales department), a promise (I promise to be more careful), etc. Whereas the latter do not contain any performative verb but the act is indirectly inferred, e.g. “*There is a vicious dog behind you (an implied warning)*” Richards and Schmidt (2002: 393).

Important to state, within SAT, is Austin’s three-part distinction covering locutionary act, illocutionary act and perlocutionary act. A locutionary act is the production of an uttered sentence the meaning of which is clearly understood through the literal interpretation of every single component of the utterance, e.g. “close the door”. An illocutionary act is the use of a sentence with the very aim of performing a function, e.g. “call your partner” can be meant to serve as an order or a piece of advice (Richards and Schmidt, 2002). As for perlocutionary act, it is the effects or results an utterance may produce on the interlocutor, for instance calling one’s partner is the perlocutionary act of the utterance “call your partner”.

Utterance meaning, thus, is a basic element in the SAT; and as pointed to by Richards and Schmidt (2002) two types of meaning can be distinguished. A *propositional meaning* which is the *basic literal* sense inferred through the set of words forming that utterance, and *illocutionary meaning* or *illocutionary force* which consists of the effect an uttered or written sentence has on the interlocutor or the reader. For instance, in the utterance “*it is too expensive*”; the propositional meaning is what the set of words say as far as the price of something is concerned. The illocutionary meaning, then, is the effect the user of that utterance wants to have on the interlocutor. In this example, the illocutionary meaning may be a piece of advice addressed to the listener urging them not to buy something.

It is worth to mention that speech acts have been classified according to the nature of the very function they perform, and as put forward by Richards and Schmidt (2002); echoing Searle classification, a speaker’s utterance may contain speech acts that are:

2.3.1.1 Commissive: showing a commitment on the part of the speaker who is understood to be doing something in the future. Promises or threats are, then, examples of commissive speech acts.



2.3.1.2 Declarative: transforming conditions and situations like when announcing the beginning or the end of a special event, such as the Olympic Games.

2.3.1.3 Directive: having a certain effect on the interlocutor who is solicited to do something. Requesting, ordering, suggesting and demanding are examples of directive speech acts.

2.3.1.4 Representative: describing circumstances or events like when reporting, asserting or claiming.

2.3.1.5 Expressive: showing the speaker's feelings, attitudes or thoughts about something. Expressive speech acts include expressions of complaint, apology, thanking, congratulation, gratitude, etc.

### **2.3.2 Implicature:**

Implicature or conversational implicatures as part of pragmatics refers to that implicit message the speaker conveys in a conversational situation. According to Horn (2005):

*Implicature is a component of speaker meaning that constitutes an aspect of what is meant in a speaker's utterance without being part of what is said. What a speaker intends to communicate is characteristically far richer than what she directly expresses; linguistic meaning radically underdetermines the message conveyed and understood. Speaker S tacitly exploits pragmatic principles to bridge this gap and counts on hearer H to invoke the same principles for the purposes of utterance interpretation.*

Horn (2005:01)

The interpretation of an utterance meaning thus, according to the definition above, does not rely on the understanding of its literal meaning; but rather on the knowledge of some '*unwritten rules about conversation*' (Richards and Schmidt, 2002) that Horn (2005) calls '*pragmatic principles*'. For example, if a speaker (S) asks an interlocutor (I) to go out for a walk, and (I) replies "I have a terrible headache", (I) then; intends to say that they cannot accept (S)'s invitation. Therefore, although (I) does not literally say that they cannot go out for a walk, their reply implicates a refusal since they refer to an inconvenient state of health which is the reason why they decline the invitation.

Implicature covers the bridge from what is literally said to what is implicitly communicated (1). According to Richards and Schmidt (2002) implicature is the speakers' reference to conversational maxims in order to infer meaning. A conversational maxim is:

*an unwritten rule about conversation which people know and which influences the form of conversational exchanges.*

Richards and Schmidt (2002: 122)

In the example given above, (I) has recourse to a conversation maxim which is conventionally relevant to (S)'s question and which serves as an excuse for not being able to do something. In the same line of thoughts, (S) also refers to the same conversation maxim to infer that (I)'s reply is but a refusal of their invitation.

Grice (1975) in his theory of conversation calls such involvement of different speakers in meaning inference and conveying the *Cooperative Principle*. In this respect, Korta and Perry (2011) echoing Grice suggest that:

*The 'calculation' of conversational implicatures is grounded on common knowledge of what the speaker has said (or better, the fact that he has said it), the linguistic and extra linguistic context of the utterance, general background information, and the consideration of what Grice dubs the 'Cooperative Principle (CP).*

Korta and Perry (2011: 06)

It is worth to mention that conversational maxims have four distinct facets (Korta and Perry, 2011):

2.3.2.1 Quantity: Speakers are required to convey the appropriate amount of information needed in the conversational exchange, nor more neither less than is required.

2.3.2.2 Quality: It stresses the truthfulness of the speakers' contribution, false or non evident speeches are to be avoided.

2.3.2.3 Relevance: Speakers have to say things that are relevant.

2.3.2.4 Manner: This facet of conversational maxim requires speakers to be perspicuous, orderly and concise avoiding both ambiguity and verbosity.

### 2.3.3 Presupposition:

Relevant to the study of pragmatics is the notion of presupposition. The latter is believed to be the common knowledge of a particular thing that both a speaker and hearer share and take for granted in a given conversational situation, and that enhances the understanding of the conveyed message. According to Richards and Schmidt (2002) presupposition is:

*what a speaker or writer assumes that the receiver of the message already knows. For example: speaker A: What about inviting Simon tonight? speaker B: What a good idea; then he can give Monica a lift. Here, the presuppositions are, among others, that speakers A and B know who Simon and Monica are, that Simon has a vehicle, most probably a car, and that Monica has no vehicle at the moment.*

Richards and Schmidt (2002: 416)

It is worth to mention, however, that there is a relative difficulty in defining presupposition, for it has been subject of both semantic and pragmatic nuance. Katz and Langendoen (1976) speak of *contextual presupposition* and *semantic presupposition*. They point out that in the former construct the sentence meaning depends on the very context or occasion where it is produced. As for the latter construct, meaning extraction depends on *the grammatical structure of a sentence type*. Semantic presupposition, then, is more likely to relate to sentences unlike contextual presupposition which relates to utterances (Katz and Langendoen, 1976).

In the same line of thoughts and according to Beaver (1996), presupposition in a semantic theory refers to that binary relation linking sentences on basis of *semantic valuation* which means, in Beaver's words:

*..one sentence (semantically) presupposes another if the truth of the second is a condition for the semantic value of the first to be true or false.*

Beaver (1996: 02)

Yet, from an extremely pragmatic parameter, presupposition in Stalnaker's theory concerns those "*propositions which are taken for granted by a speaker on a given occasion*" Beaver (1996: 02). Thus, presupposition here refers to *the attitudes and knowledge of language users* rather than to the sentence meaning and its linguistic form;

excluding then, the very notion of semantic valuation (Beaver, 1996). More precisely, Stalnaker (1972) suggests that:

*To presuppose a proposition in the pragmatic sense is to take its truth for granted, and to presume that others involved in the context do the same. This does not imply that the person need have any particular mental attitude toward the proposition, or that he needs assume anything about the mental attitudes of others in the context. Presuppositions are probably best viewed as complex dispositions which are manifested in linguistic behavior. One has presuppositions in virtue of the statements he makes, the questions he asks, the commands he issues. Presuppositions are propositions implicitly supposed before the relevant linguistic business is transacted.*

Stalnaker (1972: 387–8) in Atlas (2005: 04)

### **2.3.4 Reference:**

Research on pragmatics has given undivided attention to the notion of reference. The latter is, according to Richards and Schmidt (2002), the relationship between words and the different objects, people, actions and phenomena they denote. Yet, as it is the case with presupposition; understanding how reference operates within natural language is relatively linked to both semantic and pragmatic considerations. Carlson (2005), after Frege's (1879) elaborate studies provides the following definition of semantic reference:

*Reference, then, is a kind of verbal "pointing to" or "picking out" of a certain object or individual that one wishes to say something about.*

Carlson (2005:02)

As for pragmatic reference, the representation of the referent does not rely on the semantic meaning of the sentence but on its utterance or use in a given occasion. For instance, using names to refer to particular individuals depends substantially on the notion of 'communal knowledge' which in its turn is linked to *social practice*. In Carlson's words: "reference is achieved via the mechanism of social practice" Carlson (2005:10). Thus, there is no room to speak about a semantic notion of reference, in this case, but "a function of human action and interaction" Ibid.

### 2.3.5 Deixis:

It is agreed that the study of pragmatics intricately depends on the exploration of a number of relative notions and concepts. Among them is the phenomenon of deixis. The latter with its Greek-origin term *deiktikos* meaning pointing or indicating, is defined as:

*The way in which speakers orientate both themselves and their listeners in relation to the context of a conversation. Deixis enables interlocutors to refer to entities in context, thereby allowing them to identify people and things in relation to the space they are operating in at the moment at which they are speaking.*

O’Keeffe et al (2011:36)

Deixis according to Moore (2001) is:

*best described as “verbal pointing”, that is to say pointing by means of language. The linguistic forms of this pointing are called deictic expressions, deictic markers or deictic words; they are also sometimes called indexicals.*

Moore (2001: 01)

Deixis is encoded by a set of grammatical features mainly: demonstratives, personal pronouns, adverbs of time, adverbs of space, motion verbs like *go* and *come*, tense markers...etc.

In his definition, Levinson (2000) refers to deixis as relevantly revolving around the context of utterances which is a basic element in the interpretation of speech. Deixis, then, doesn’t concern the description of the external world, via the use of language, in an objective way. It rather:

*introduces subjective, attentional, intentional and, of course, context-dependent properties into natural languages.*

Levinson (2005: 01)

Levinson’s ideas seem to be reinforced by O’Keeffe et al (2011) who point out that a word is considered as deictic because part of the utterance’s or the expression’s meaning

is taken from the context. Therefore, a distinction is to be made between deictic and non-deictic expressions.

In the example below O’Keeffe et al (2011: 37) demonstrate that the personal pronoun *you* can have both deictic and non-deictic usage.

**1** - *I owe **you** a fiver.*

**2** - *There’s a school that’s out there that*

***you** book in for a week and **you** can learn how to hang-glide.*

In the first sentence the word *you* has a deictic usage. It is the addressee that the speaker is referring to and the use of some gestures like eye contact is quite probable to take place at the very moment of the utterance production. As for the second sentence, the use of *you* is non-deictic. It refers not to a particular addressee but to people in a general way and here one doesn’t need to refer to the situation where the utterance is produced since meaning inference does not rely on context. *You* in this case is sometimes called *generic you* (O’Keeffe et al, 2011).

## **2.4 Pragmatics of Language Performance:**

Researchers, from Austin (1962) and Searle (1969) to Grice (1989), focused on the study of pragmatics having recourse to samples of pre-planned and non interactive language. In other words and as it is put forward by Clark (2005), pragmatics has initially tackled orderly linguistic forms illustrated from novels, plays, news broadcast, etc.

The exclusion of spontaneous use of language like in contexts of restaurants, classrooms, shopping centres, offices, parties and the like makes pragmatics seem to be incomplete and thus need to reconsider other principles else than those used in orderly and non interactive language. This is because actual use of language does not emanate first from TV programmes, newspapers or novels but rather from face-to-face conversation. In Clark’s words:

*Spontaneous, interactive language has its origins in joint activities. When people do things together in cafés, classrooms, and offices, they need to coordinate their individual actions, and they use a variety of communicative*

*acts to achieve that coordination. These constitute the PRIMARY SYSTEM of communication – the official business of their discourse.*

Clark (2005:01)

So when people orally communicate, they use signals (2) which are actually double-faced. This is because when they transmit messages, they tend to take into account both what to say and how to say it, i.e. their contribution is made of *content*, which represents the first face, and *performance*; which represents the second face. Consider the following exchange for example:

(A): *I got some good news yesterday; did I tell you about that?*

(B): *No.*

(A) chooses to use a question as a signal to ask (B)'s permission to tell them a story. So seeking the listener's consent to say something is the content of (A)'s signal. As for the other face, which is performance, (A) has recourse to directing their voice, face and gestures at (B) to be designated as "*speaker*" and (B) as "*interlocutor*" or "*addressee*". Moreover, (A)'s signal is realized by starting the utterance at that precise time, place and manner. Therefore, according to Clark (2005), speakers:

*display their signals to others in order to designate such things as the speaker, addressee, time, place, and content of their signals. What speakers mean by a signal, then, is determined by their choice of both content and display.*

Clark (2005:02)

Displays are, then, in this case reported to be considered as *communicative acts of indicating*. (A)'s display of "did I tell you about that?" encompasses *intrinsic connections* (3) to a set of situation individuals allowing (A) to make use of their display with the very aim of indicating or pointing to these individuals.

Thus, when (A) realizes their display, they create a number of performance indexes illustrated in the following table:

Performance Indexes	
Producer (p)	(A) Uses index (p) to designate themselves as producer of the signal. (p) Is created through the source and quality of (A)'s voice.
Recipient (r)	(A) Uses index (r) to designate (B) as the recipient of the signal by gazing at and directing their voice in (B)'s direction at an appropriate amplitude.
Time (t)	(A) Uses index (t) to designate the current instant as the now of the signal by producing their utterance at that precise time.
Location (l)	(A) Uses index (l) to designate the current location as where they are asking the question. (l) Is created by the placement of (A)'s body and the source of their voice and gestures.
Content (c)	(A) Uses index (c) to designate what they are realizing as the content of their signal to (B).

**Table 2.1: Display and Performance Indexes  
Adapted from Clark (2005:2-3)**

❖ *The above table illustrates performance indexes that (A) creates when realizes their display.*

As far as index (c) (content) is concerned, pioneers of pragmatics like Austin (1962), Searle (1969) and Bach & Harnish (1979) assume that (A)'s production of the signal "did I tell you about that?" engenders the performance of:

- a phonetic act (production of some speech sounds)
- an illocutionary act (asking a question)
- a perlocutionary act (getting (B)'s consent to answer it)

These researchers assert that speakers act independently of their addressees, and vice versa. An assumption completely rejected by Clark (1996) who points out that both speakers and addressees engage in *joint actions* running over four distinct levels, as it is shown in the following table:



Level	Speaker A's action	Addressee B's action
1.	A makes sounds, gestures for B	B attends to A's sounds, gestures
2.	A presents a signal for B	B identifies what A's signal is
3.	A means something for B	B understands what A means
4.	A proposes a joint project to B	B considers A's proposal

**Table2.2: Four levels of joint action in communicative acts  
Clark (2005:03)**

❖ *This table shows speakers' and addressees' joint actions running over four levels.*

So according to Clark (2005), at least four levels of content are indexed by (A)'s display of "did I tell you about that?". These are:

- (A)'s sounds and movements
- (A)'s phrases and gestures
- What (A) means
- (A)'s proposal

In Clark's words:

*...speakers use the display of a signal – the time, place, and manner of its performance – to indicate situational individuals that are essential to the interpretation of the signal. It is as if the producer were saying to the recipient, "In displaying this signal to you, I hereby indicate myself as producer, you as recipient, now as the time of the signal, here as my location, and this sentence, among other things, as the content of the signal."*

Clark (2005:03)

## **2.5 Pragmatics and Corpora:**

As it is mentioned in the former point above, the traditional and early studies in pragmatics have overseen the naturally-occurring aspects of the linguistic data used as samples when constructing major theories. Yet, there has been a revolutionary progress in pragmatics due to the introduction of language corpora. These are computer-saved real-life linguistic data including both the oral and the written form, to be used as reference databases for empirical study in the field of language in general and pragmatics in particular. In Richards' and Schmidt's words a corpus is:

*a collection of naturally occurring samples of language which have been collected and collated for easy access by researchers and materials developers who want to know how words and other linguistic items are actually used. A corpus may vary from a few sentences to a set of written texts or recordings. In language analysis corpuses usually consist of a relatively large, planned collection of texts or parts of texts, stored and accessed by computer.*

Richards and Schmidt (2002:126)

According to Lüdeling and Kytö (2008):

*In the first instance, a “corpus” is simply any collection of written or spoken texts. However, when the term is employed with reference to modern linguistics, it tends to bear a number of connotations, among them machine-readable form, sampling and representativeness, finite size, and the idea that a corpus constitutes a standard reference for the language variety it represents.*

Lüdeling and Kytö (2008: V)

### **2.5.1 Types and Examples of Corpora:**

Worth to mention, however, that one can distinguish two different types of language corpora: *specialised* and *general* corpora. The former covers a particular category of texts like medical or engineering ones, while the latter type encompasses a wide range of many different categories of texts.

The early corpora are those developed starting from the 1950s till the 1970s. They include the London-Lund Corpus of Spoken English (LLCSE), the Brown Corpus (BC) with its American English written version and the Lancaster-Oslo/ Bergen Corpus (LOBC) with its British English written version. The latter two corpora are designed with the very aim of facilitating a corpus-based comparison between British and American English.

The Collins and Birmingham University International Language Database (COBUILD) and the British National Corpus (BNC) are among the most prominent corpus projects developed in the 1980s and 1990s. A common characteristic of these two corpora is that they provide the researcher with a substantially valuable resource for investigating everyday spoken and written English.

The COBUILD, which was developed as a monitor corpus (new texts being constantly added to it), has as one of the major aims the provision of a textual database for the compilation of dictionaries and lexicography research. It includes samples of mainly British written language, transcribed speech from interviews, conversation and broadcast.

As for the BNC, which was designed in the late 1980s and early 1990s:

*is a 100 million word corpus of modern British English, consisting of 90 per cent written and 10 per cent spoken texts (including speeches, meetings, lectures and some casual conversation).*

O’Keeffe et al (2011: 7)

The Cambridge International Corpus (CIC), the Longman Corpus Network (LCN), the Oxford English Corpus (OEC) and the Collins Corpus (CC) are examples of corpora developed by some publishing houses as their own related corpora devoted for authors, especially in the lexicography field.

### **2.5.2 Corpus Linguistics:**

Tightly linked to the notion of corpora is the concept *corpus linguistics*. The latter has gained paramount attention in the study of language in general and language in use in particular. *Corpus linguistics* is the field of research where linguistics focuses on the study of language on the basis of its different uses in real life situations using electronic corpora as primary tools of research. In Lüdeling’s and Kytö’s (2008) words:

*Corpus linguistics today is often understood as being a relatively new approach in linguistics that has to do with the empirical study of “real life” language use with the help of computers and electronic corpora*

Lüdeling and Kytö (2008: V)

A detailed definition is given by Richards and Schmidt (2002) who state that corpus linguistics is:

*an approach to investigating language structure and use through the analysis of large databases of real language examples stored on computer. Issues amenable to corpus linguistics include the meanings of words across registers, the distribution and function of grammatical forms and categories, the investigation of lexico-grammatical*

*associations (associations of specific words with particular grammatical constructions), the study of discourse characteristics, register variation, and (when learner corpora are available) issues in language acquisition and development.*

Richards and Schmidt (2002:127)

In the same respect, O’Keeffe et al (2011) point out to the relative link between computational domain, linguistics and real life uses of language to define corpus linguistics which, according to them:

*most commonly refers to the study of machine-readable spoken and written language samples that have been assembled in a principled way for the purpose of linguistic research. At the heart of empirically- based linguistics and data-driven description of language, it is concerned with language use in real contexts.*

O’Keeffe et al (2011: 6)

### **2.5.3 Corpus Linguistics and the Study of Pragmatics:**

So what can a corpus linguistics approach bring to the study of pragmatics? A question dealt with and answered by Lüdeling and Kytö (2008) who assert that three distinct types of data can be provided by corpora:

a) - empirical support: a corpus may serve in many occasions as a valid source for plenty of examples, mainly those of real life uses, in shaping hypotheses or even in constructing theories about language and language use. In addition:

*Corpus evidence can be found for verifying hypotheses on each linguistic level from speech sounds to entire conversations or texts. Within the framework, it is possible to replicate the analysis and thus reproduce the results, something which is not possible (and not even intended to be possible) in introspection.*

Lüdeling and Kytö (2008: IX)

b) - frequency information: in some quantitative studies on language, a corpus can be very useful in providing information about the frequency of use of words, phrases or constructions. This can help making comparisons between groups of speakers for example, or different types of texts.

c) - meta-information: in addition to a) and b), a corpus can also provide extralinguistic data like temporal and spatial information concerning the origin of the text, the gender or the age of the speaker or writer, text genre, etc.

In the same respect, Bennett (2010) points out to the role of corpus linguistics in investigating patterns associated with lexical and grammatical features. She backed her ideas by McCarthy's (2004) assumption that corpora can help answering questions like:

- *What are the most frequent words and phrases in English?*
- *What are the differences between spoken and written English?*
- *What tenses do people use most frequently?*
- *What prepositions follow particular verbs?*
- *How do people use words like can, may and might?*
- *Which words are used in more formal situations and which are used in more informal ones?*
- *How often do people use idiomatic expressions?*
- *How many words must a learner know to participate in everyday conversation?*
- *How many different words do native speakers generally use in conversation?*

McCarthy (2004:1-2) in Bennett (2010: 04)

Corpus linguistics then does not only contribute in and facilitate the study of pragmatics, but it is also considered to be a vital tool that teachers can use in the language classroom. In Bennett words:

*corpus linguistics allows us to see how language is used today and how that language is used in different contexts, enabling us to teach language more effectively.*

Bennett (2010: 07)

#### **2.5.4 The Corpus Approach:**

It is not easy to say whether corpus linguistics is a methodology or a theory since many corpus linguists:

*are not willing to answer that question in such terms, but when analyzing language using corpora, there is a "method" to employ.*

(ibid.)

According to Biber et al (1998) the Corpus Approach (CA) encompasses the following features:

- It is practical since it analyses actual samples of language use in natural texts. The authenticity of the linguistic data gathered is a key element in this characteristic. A corpus then is formed of any communication acts taking place in any real life situation be it from telephone conversation at home or at work, TV shows, radio broadcast, business meetings, class lectures; in addition to academic papers, textbooks, newspapers and the like (Bennett, 2010).
- It uses a wide and principled collection of naturally occurring texts. One then can utilize, in their research, different types of data as the basis for analysis by working with a written corpus, a spoken corpus, an academic spoken corpus, etc (ibid).
- In the CA, the process of data analysis depends substantially on the extensive use of computers. The latter tools allow not only the storage of different corpora, but also help investigate various aspects of the language contained in a particular corpus. This can be done through the use of *concordancing programme* or *frequency lists* that are examples of some functions and applications of electronic corpora (ibid).
- The analytical techniques adopted by The CA are both quantitative and qualitative. If computers, for example, help us get accurate results about the frequency of use of a particular linguistic item in a corpus, it is the researcher's or the expert's role then to find significance and interpretations for those very results:

*it is important to note that corpus-based analyses must go beyond simple counts of linguistic features. That is, it is essential to include qualitative, functional interpretations of quantitative patterns...The goal of corpus-based investigations is not simply to report quantitative findings, but to explore the importance of these findings for learning about the patterns of language use.*

Biber et al (1998: 05)

### **2.5.5 Studying Pragmatics through Corpus Linguistics:**

The nature of data corpus linguistics contains makes it quite possible and easy to undertake reliable research and deep investigations in the field of pragmatics. This is because of the huge amounts of real life – occurring linguistic samples that corpora offer.

Yet, as pointed to by Orpin (2005) in O’Keeffe et al (2011) one has to note that the overwhelming quantity of language in use provided in a corpus may make the researcher feel encumbered with too much information.

Therefore, to facilitate the study of pragmatics when using a corpus a number of tools can be used mainly: word frequency lists, keyword lists and concordance lines.

2.5.5.1 Word Frequency Lists: As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the role of context is quite vital to investigating pragmatics, and so is the case when it comes to sentence description and profile. In other words, the frequency of occurrence of a given word or phrase in different contexts is a relevant element of its description (O’Keeffe et al, 2011). In this respect, Tognini-Bonelli (2001) states that:

*frequency of occurrence is indicative of frequency of use and this gives a good basis for evaluating the profile of a specific word, structure or expression in relation to a norm.*

Tognini-Bonelli (2001: 4) in O’Keeffe et al (2011: 9)

In the same line of thoughts, Baker (2006) maintains that: “*used sensitively, [frequency lists], can illuminate a variety of interesting phenomena*” Baker (2006: 47) in O’Keeffe et al (2011: 9).

It is worth to mention that the presence or absence of some very particular linguistic elements which may represent some features of the pragmatic system of a given language variety can be identified via a corpus frequency list (O’Keeffe et al, 2011).

An example of a corpus word frequency list is illustrated in table 2.3 which shows the top 25 most frequent words of the spoken component of the BNC and the Limerick Corpus of Irish English (LCIE).

	<i>BNC</i>	<i>LCIE</i>
1	<i>the</i>	<i>the</i>
2	<i>I</i>	<i>I</i>
3	<i>you</i>	<i>and</i>
4	<i>and</i>	<i>you</i>
5	<i>it</i>	<i>to</i>
6	<i>that</i>	<i>it</i>
7	<i>a</i>	<i>a</i>
8	<i>'s</i>	<i>that</i>
9	<i>to</i>	<i>of</i>
10	<i>of</i>	<i>yeah</i>
11	<i>n't</i>	<i>in</i>
12	<i>in</i>	<i>was</i>
13	<i>we</i>	<i>is</i>
14	<i>is</i>	<i>like</i>
15	<i>do</i>	<i>know</i>
16	<i>they</i>	<i>he</i>
17	<i>er</i>	<i>on</i>
18	<i>was</i>	<i>they</i>
19	<i>yeah</i>	<i>have</i>
20	<i>have</i>	<i>there</i>
21	<i>what</i>	<i>no</i>
22	<i>he</i>	<i>but</i>
23	<i>to</i>	<i>for</i>
24	<i>but</i>	<i>be</i>
25	<i>for</i>	<i>what</i>

**Table 2.3: Top 25 Most Frequent Words in the BNC and LCIE  
O'Keeffe et al (2011: 10)**

Corpus word frequency lists can be also used to explore sequences or expressions like those made of 2-word units up to 4-word units for example. Linguistic items typical of relational language (4) can be then studied, in this respect, allowing possible interpretations and deductions as far as the pragmatic system of a language is concerned.



The following table displays the 10 most frequent 2-word, 3-word and 4-word units in the LCIE:

Frequency rank	2-word units	3-word units	4-word units
1	you know 4406	I don't know 1212	you know what I 230
2	in the 3435	do you know 769	know what I mean 215
3	of the 2354	a lot of 522	do you know what 208
4	do you 2332	you know what 379	I don't know what 134
5	I don't 2200	do you want 373	do you want to 121
6	I think 2003	I don't think 338	are you going to 103
7	it was 1939	you know the 323	you know the way 103
8	I was 1891	you have to 308	I don't know I 91
9	going to 1849	going to be 307	thank you very much 91
10	on the 1801	yeah yeah yeah 297	the end of the 85

**Table 2.4: Ten Most Frequent 2-word, 3-word and 4-word Units in LCIE  
Results per million Words  
O'Keeffe et al (2011: 11)**

Yet, it is argued that for a better study of pragmatics, the use of a frequency list of recurrent expressions alone is not sufficient. Computational linguists, therefore, have recently offered more reliable techniques for extracting significant units from corpora paving the way, thus, for a more explanatory power of the corpus linguistics approach to the study of pragmatics (O'Keeffe et al, 2011).

#### 2.5.5.2 Keyword Lists:

In a corpus linguistics context, keywords:

*are those whose frequency is unusually high in comparison with some norm. Key words are not usually the most frequent words in a text (or collection of texts), rather they are the more 'unusually frequent'.*

O'Keeffe et al (2007: 12)

It should be mentioned, however, that there exist two types of keywords: positive and negative keywords. A clear description of the latter types is given by O'Keeffe et al (2011) who state that:

*A word or cluster of words may be found to occur much more frequently than would otherwise be expected (a positive keyword) or much less frequently (a negative keyword).*

O'Keeffe et al (2011: 11)

The identification of keywords, then, depends substantially on the statistical comparisons of word frequency lists that are extracted from the target corpus and the reference corpus. For instance, one can generate keywords of one particular article (target corpus) from a given newspaper by comparing it with all the other articles (reference corpus) belonging to that very same newspaper and edited in the same year. In this example the target corpus is included in the reference corpus (O’Keeffe et al, 2011).

Table 2.5 below illustrates the top ten positive and negative keywords lists issued from the comparison of the Corpus of the Meetings of English Language Teachers (C-MELT) with the LCIE.

<i>Positive keywords</i>	<i>Negative keywords</i>
KET	ah
PET	he
students	was
semester	now
class	am
exam	like
we	you
English	on
classes	she
think	there

**Table 2.5: Top Ten Positive and Negative Keywords when Comparing C-MELT and LCIE O’Keeffe et al (2011: 12)**

The table above displays a list of positive keywords with a plain dominance of words that are typical of the context of language teaching such as *KET*, *PET* (both are names of Cambridge ESOL exams) and *English*. In addition to other words that characterise teaching in general such as *students*, *class* and *exam*. As for the words *we* and *think*, O’Keeffe et al (2011) make the following comment:

*In terms of pragmatics, the words we and think are notable in the positive keyword list....we can be used by speakers to create inclusivity and solidarity or to create an out-group*

*consisting of the speaker and others that are not present in the conversation.*

O’Keeffe et al (2011: 12)

As for the negative keywords, the list shows a number of elements that are typical of the deictic system in everyday conversation such as *you, he, she* and *now* (O’Keeffe et al, 2011).

## **2.6 Foreign Language Teaching and Pragmatics:**

On the basis of numerous cross-cultural researches related to the study of pragmatics, many practitioners agree that teaching pragmatics in the EFL classroom is quite necessary. This is because learning a foreign language does not imply the sole knowledge of vocabulary and grammatical rules, but it also equates to the appropriate use of language by speakers or writers in relation to different contexts.

Yet, when it comes to speaking of language use the question of pragmatic competence, then, is of a primordial relevance. According to Leech (1983) and Thomas (1983) pragmatic competence encompasses two elements. The first is pragmalinguistics which is defined as:

*the interface between linguistics and pragmatics, focusing on the linguistic means used to accomplish pragmatic ends. For example, when a learner asks “How do I make a compliment (or a request, or a warning) in this language?”, this is a question of pragmalinguistics knowledge.*

Richards and Schmidt (2002:411)

The second element is sociopragmatics, and it covers:

*the relationship between social factors and pragmatics. For example, a learner might need to know in what circumstances it is appropriate to make a compliment in the target language and which form would be most appropriate given the social relationship between speaker and hearer.*

Ibid

Bardovi-Harlig (2001) states that the absence of pragmatic instruction in the EFL classroom may lead to differences in pragmatics that one, especially a native speaker, can notice in learners’ both oral and written production. Since actual language use engenders the consideration of many cultural and social concerns, non-native speakers may appear

“*rude or insincere*” to native ones when making pragmatic mistakes (O’Keeffe et al, 2011). As contended by Bardovi-Harlig and Mahan-Taylor (2003) it is difficult for native speakers to remain objective about non-native speakers’ pragmatic failure since the latter is “*often interpreted on a social or personal level*” Bardovi-Harlig and Mahan-Taylor (2003a:38) in O’Keeffe et al (2011: 138).

Worth to mention, however, that developing foreign language learners’ pragmatic competence cannot be realised by developing their grammatical competence neither through prolonged exposure to the target language (O’Keeffe et al, 2011). This is because, as put forward by Schmidt (1993) and Kasper and Rose (2002), foreign language pragmatic functions cannot be clearly noticed because they *are often not salient* to students despite long exposure. An argument supported by Bardovi-Harlig and Mahan-Taylor (2003a) who claim that learners might not immediately notice the disparity between speaker-oriented requests (*Can I?*) and hearer-oriented requests (*Can you?*).

It is argued that in an EFL context, learners find it quite difficult when their pragmatic competence is to operate, and particularly within the two areas of pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics. Such deficiency has instigated the interest of many researchers to investigate in this field like for example Rose (2001), Alcón Soler (2005), Takimoto (2009) and others (O’Keeffe et al, 2011).

One significant claim may be that made by Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1998) who maintain that in the EFL classroom, focus is on grammatical accuracy rather than on pragmatic appropriateness. In other words, EFL teachers see that students’ grammatical errors are more serious than their pragmatic errors. As for the reason behind such conception O’Keeffe et al (2011) explain:

*The preference for grammatical competence amongst the EFL cohort is, they claim, due to the prevalence of examinations as indicators of success in this context. One could also add that the pragmatic errors may not be seen as a priority also because of the EFL context (that is where all of the learners are living where their L1 is the first language). In this case, the classroom context may be the only place in which they use the target language and hence their opportunity for ‘pragmatic conflict’ is low.*

O’Keeffe et al (2011: 139)

From another parameter, and as put forward by O’Keeffe et al (2011), analysing EFL and ESL textbooks urges for a reconsideration of the teaching practices in relation to pragmatics. More consistent approaches, then, are called for. This is because:

*in general, textbooks cannot be counted on as a reliable source of pragmatic input for classroom language learners.*

Bardovi-Harlig (2001: 25) in O’Keeffe et al (2011: 139)

The unreliability in question of textbooks is due to the fact that they do not provide sufficient specific input neither do they contain sufficient ‘*interpretation of language use*’ (O’Keeffe et al, 2011).

Vellenga (2004) points out that textbooks should be designed in a way that prompts EFL students’ understanding of the target language pragmatic functions by including pragmatic awareness-raising activities that provide learners with sufficient contextual and detailed cultural information. The latter may facilitate, to students, the choice of the appropriate pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic forms in a given context (ibid).

In the same respect, Brock and Nagasaka (2005) contend that in an EFL learning context focusing on grammatical accuracy alone cannot lead to effective communication, but rather to misunderstanding and miscommunication when it comes to actual use of the target language:

*... as many English teachers recognize, and as many language learners have experienced first-hand, speech acts that are grammatically and phonologically correct sometimes fail because the learner’s pragmatic competence—his or her ability to express or interpret communicative functions in particular communicative contexts—is undeveloped or faulty. Pragmatic incompetence in the L2, resulting in the use of inappropriate expressions or inaccurate interpretations resulting in unsuccessful communicative events, can lead to misunderstanding and miscommunication and can even leave the native-speaking interlocutor with the perception that the L2 speaker is either ignorant or impolite.*

Brock and Nagasaka (2005:17)

The importance of introducing instructions in pragmatics in the EFL classroom is also highlighted by Koike (2010) who states that it is quite necessary to teach pragmatics to EFL learners because of three main reasons. First, pragmatics as a discipline, and as its definition suggests, deals with the practical facets of language; that is language in use; and since the very main objective of learning any foreign language is to be able to express one's ideas and intentions and understand those of others in the target language, pragmatics then should be central to the foreign language teachers objectives.

Second, pragmatics covers the social and cultural features of language which are very crucial for successful communicative acts to take place. In Koike's words:

*Pragmatics encompasses language not only at the linguistic level but also at the social and cultural levels. I believe that if teachers approach language learning via pragmatics, they can transmit a broader view of language to their students. It also creates a focus on communication instead of only discrete items alone.*

Koike (2010: 1)

Third, pragmatics paves the way to EFL learners to reach one of the objectives of The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines (5) and the Standards for Foreign Language Learning in the 21st Century, since it stresses on the very language functions that are part of the two programmes mentioned above (Dale Koike, 2010).

## **2.7 Testing and Evaluating Pragmatic Skills:**

A great deal of research has focused on the very ways and approaches to testing EFL learners' pragmatic competence. So far the literature, according to Brown (2001), shows that at least six pragmatics tests have been used by practitioners. These are: written discourse completion tasks (WDCT), multiple-choice discourse completion tasks (MDCT), oral discourse completion tasks (ODCT), discourse role-play tasks (DRPT), discourse self-assessment tasks (DSAT), and role-play self-assessments (RPSA).

A WDCT consists of a structured questionnaire having as a primary objective eliciting what a speaker would say in a given conversational situation. The participants are, thus, requested to complete some parts of a selected scenario which may be dealing

with particular or different contexts like asking questions, apologising, inviting and accepting or declining invitations, congratulating, etc.

An MDCT is also the completion of a written description of some situations where the participants are required to mention what they would say in particular conversational contexts but by choosing from different options the appropriate one.

Unlike the WDCT and MDCT, an ODCT requires the participants to listen to a description of a given situation on a tape recorder and to say aloud what they would say if faced to that situation having their contribution recorded in another tape recorder.

In a DRPT, the participants are provided with a description of a situation then asked to play a particular role in that very situation.

In Brown's words a DSAT:

*is any pragmatics instrument that provides a written description of a situation and asks the students to rate their own ability to perform the pragmatics necessary in that situation.*

Brown (2001) in Kasper and Rose (2001: 302)

The RPSA is a combination of both DRPT and the DSAT. The participant students are asked to rate their own pragmatics performance by reviewing an already video recorded performed role-play.

## **2.8 Pragmatics and Culture:**

The study of pragmatics reveals to be tightly dependant on issues that go beyond linguistic or structural considerations. Language in use, then, does not mean mere manoeuvre of words and expressions following accurate grammatical paths and conventions. Cultural and social criteria of both the language user and the language used constitute a substantially sensitive and relevant ground in any communicative act.

### **2.8.1 Pragmatic Competence and Cultural Variation:**

Therefore, within an EFL context, a great deal of research has focused on the very effects cultural and social norms can have on foreign language learners' oral production, and in particular on native/ non-native speakers' conversations. In this respect, it is worth

to recall, then, the notion of pragmatic competence and its opposite facet pragmatic failure. While the former accounts for pragmatic proficiency including, as mentioned previously in this chapter, pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic competence, pragmatic failure can be defined as:

*a communicative failure that occurs when the pragmatic force of a message is misunderstood, for example, if an intended apology is interpreted as an excuse.*

Richards and Schmidt (2002:411)

Yet, the impact of a pragmatic failure is not confined only to a mere misinterpretation or confusion over speech acts and their intended meaning. As put forward by Thomas (1983):

*while grammatical errors may reveal a [non-native] speaker to be a less than proficient language user, pragmatic failure reflects badly on him/her as a person.*

Thomas (1983: 97) in O’Keeffe et al (2011: 100)

Such a bad reflection is due to the fact that in a multilingual context where the participants of a conversation belong to different cultural backgrounds and hold different values and beliefs, misperception or misinterpretation of intentions are quite inevitable. An expression that is considered as a compliment in a given language may be understood as a mockery or an insult in another language.

Yet, according to Cenoz (2007) differences in pragmatics are also noticeable within different speech communities belonging to the same society. For instance, speech acts produced in different varieties of English do not hold the same interpretations or meanings (Cenoz, 2007).

Cross-cultural pragmatics (CCP), then, analyses pragmatic competence by adopting a sociolinguistic perspective. The focus is on the comparison of speech acts produced by different speakers belonging to different social cultural milieus. Worth to recall, in this respect, Cenoz’s (2007) statement:

*Each speech community has some values and beliefs which are the basis of their own culture. The speech acts they produce reflect this culture and therefore different cultures do not produce or understand speech acts in the same way.*

Cenoz (2007) in Soler and Jordà (2007: 127)



Cross-cultural variations are reported to be an important area of study within the pragmatics field, because differences in producing and interpreting speech acts may create in many occasions misunderstandings and eventual pragmatic failure in interactional activities. As put forward by Bardovi-Harlig (2001) every practitioner in language teaching:

*knows a funny story about cross-cultural pragmatics...From the perspective of the speaker, they may be about feeling silly, helpless, or rude; from the perspective of the listener, they may be about feeling confused, insulted, or angry.*

Bardovi-Harlig (2001: 13) in O’Keeffe et al (2011: 100)

In the same line of thoughts, Cenoz (2007) states that:

*Differences in linguistic and cultural backgrounds can produce important misunderstandings because they imply different rules of interaction and the use of different linguistic terms to convey meaning.*

Cenoz (2007) in Soler and Jordà (2007: 126)

Closely linked to, but different from, cross-cultural pragmatics is the term *interlanguage pragmatics* (IP). The latter is believed to be a discipline that studies pragmatics through a second language perspective targeting second and foreign language learners’ pragmatic development (Cenoz, 2007). In other words:

*interlanguage pragmatics analyses the way language learners acquire and use pragmatic competence.*

Cenoz (2007) in Soler and Jordà (2007: 127)

It is interestingly important to mention, in this respect, that there is a blur of confusion at the terminological level as put forward by O’Keeffe et al (2011). Discrepancies between CCP and IP are delineated by Boxer (2002) as follows:

*Interlanguage pragmatics:*

- *Is an application of Second Language Acquisition;*
- *Sees the non-native speaker as progressing along an interlanguage continuum, ultimately leading to target language norms;*

- *Sees the language learner as the newcomer whose task it is to acquire the norms of the target language community. That is, they learn the target language (phonology, syntax, semantics) and the norms of its culture;*
- *Looks predominantly at how specific speech acts are realised using elicited data, usually in the form of role-plays and Discourse Completion Tasks (DCTs), as opposed to real spontaneous interactions.*

*Cross-cultural Pragmatics:*

- *Is an application of Sociolinguistics;*
- *Does not see the non-native speaker as progressing along a non-native speaker continuum to target language norms;*
- *Takes the view that individuals from different societies or communities interact according to their own pragmatic norms often resulting in a clash of expectations and ultimately misrepresentation;*
- *Predominantly employs an ethnographic approach or interactional sociolinguistic approach to empirical research, where recorded interactions are analysed in micro-detail. Interviews with participants and getting them to review and reflect on the miscommunications within the recorded interactions are often used as a means of triangulation.*

Boxer (2002: 151) in O’Keeffe et al (2011: 102-3)

Yet, Boxer’s nomenclature in question, which outlines the difference between IP and CCP on the basis of how they view cross-cultural communication, does not seem to gain the researchers’ adherence since:

*Many studies which fall under Boxer’s definition of ‘intercultural’ use DCTs, rather than recordings, as their methodology (a point which Boxer acknowledges).*

O’Keeffe et al (2011: 103)

Instead, a more plausible and easier distinction to be applied is that offered by Grundy (2008) who explains that:

*Cross-cultural communication occurs when a non-native member operates in someone else’s culture.  
Intercultural communication occurs when interactants communicate outside their own cultures, often using a lingua franca that isn’t the first language of either.*

Grundy (2008: 232) in O’Keeffe et al (2011: 103)

More definitions are given by Grundy (2008) to avoid any terminological confusion. A further distinction between *intracultural communication* and *trans-cultural communication* is delineated as follows:

*Intracultural communication occurs when interactants share a common culture and (first) language.*  
*Trans-cultural communication refers to any communication that is not intracultural. Hence it subsumes cross-cultural and intercultural communication.*

Grundy (2008: 232- 3) in O’Keeffe et al (2011: 104)

### **2.8.2 The Pragmatics of Cross-cultural Communication:**

It is worth to mention that the notion of culture appears to gain much more interest in the study of pragmatics. Tannen (1984), for instance, contests that all existing aspects of communication are culturally relative. That is, any process undertaken in any conversational activity is determined and influenced by culture. The study of cross-cultural communication, then, is quite relevant to the study of language itself. This is due to, as put forward by Tannen (1984):

*its applied significance, which is enormous, given the heterogeneity of societies affected by global migrations and the increasingly cross-cultural nature of commerce, diplomacy, and personal relationships throughout the world. And we also study cross-cultural communication because it provides a discourse analog to the starred sentence in linguistic argumentation. By examining interactions in which habits and expectations about how to show what is meant by what is said are not shared, we can see semantic processes-how language means-which are harder to observe in the seamless surface of successful communication.*

Tannen (1984: 1)

Features of communication subsuming the very manners speakers say things to convey meaning vary from culture to culture. Eight levels of differences, then, are highlighted by Tannen (1984) in the following way:

#### **2.8.2.1 When to Talk:**

While, in some circumstances, people expect their interactant partner to talk; they are just faced with complete silence. Such communication breakdown emanates not from a low

linguistic proficiency, but rather from a cultural principle, like that of Athabaskan Indians; that considers it inappropriate to talk to a stranger until you know them (Tannen, 1984). Hence, operating in an Athabaskan culture, for instance, a non-Athabaskan speaker may inevitably develop some negative cross-cultural stereotypes that portray Athabaskan people as *sullen*, *uncooperative*, and even *stupid*, because of their unwanted silence that replaces their expected talk. In the same context, an Athabaskan speaker also may develop negative cross-cultural stereotypes that consider a non-Athabaskan speaker as “*ridiculously garrulous* and also *hypocritical because they act as if they're your friend when they're not*” Tannen (1984: 190).

#### 2.8.2.2 What to Say:

Many researchers agree that the content of what is said and to whom it is said is very important in any conversational activity. Yet, in a cross-cultural context what to say to who seems to be a complicated issue. People differ in the way they speak about particular things or topics. Telling stories, for example, is reported to be culturally relative. In a study conducted by Tannen (1984) New Yorkers of Jewish origin are more likely to tell stories about their personal experience than their Californian friends who tend to talk about events that happened to them without describing their feelings about those events (Tannen, 1984). Two different ways in telling stories by two different groups having different cultural backgrounds eventually resulted in some impatience, ambiguities and incomprehension among members of the two groups. It is worth to recall, then, what Tannen says in this respect:

*Stories are just one of a range of conversational acts which seem obviously appropriate when they pop out of our mouths, but may not seem appropriate to those whose ears they pop into-especially if the speaker and hearer have different cultural backgrounds.*

(Ibid)

Exchanging compliments is another conversational act that requires consideration when it comes to a multicultural setting. According to Tannen (1984), and after elaborated studies, people from different cultural backgrounds differ in their views about which compliments should be accepted and which deflected and how.

In the Irish culture, greeting someone by asking the question *how are you?* does not necessarily imply that the greeted person has to provide an answer about their welfare. An

appropriate reply then, in this context, would be *how are you?* or *great see you around* (O’Keeffe et al, 2011).

Cross-cultural differences about what to say cover also the use of questions. According to Eades (1982) the question *why?* is never asked by Australian Aborigines. As for the Alaskan Athabaskans, they rarely ask questions as put forward by Scollon (1982). This is because:

*For these and other speakers, questions are regarded as too powerful to use, because they demand a response.*

Tannen (1984: 190).

### 2.8.2.3 Pacing and Pausing:

As two basic elements in the conversational control, pacing and pausing are also subject to cross-cultural variations. When two individuals are engaged in a conversation, both of them take into account how fast they speak and how long their interlocutor has to wait for them before concluding that their partner has nothing more to add and eventually take their turn to speak. Yet, differences in expectations about these issues, like how long to wait between turns, may lead a conversation to break. It is worth to recall, then, Tannen’s experience in this line of thoughts:

*I had a British friend who I thought never had anything to say (which was becoming rather annoying) until I learned that she was waiting for a pause to take her turn--a pause of a length that never occurred around me, because before it did, I perceived an uncomfortable silence which I kindly headed off by talking.*

Tannen (1984: 191)

Furthermore, pacing and pausing; as Tannen (1984) suggests, are subtle signs the interpretation of which and reactions towards them are made in an automatic way affecting, then, interpretations of intentions and personality. Hence, faster participants in a conversation may consider slower ones as ignoring them and not talking to them because of their silence. Slower ones, on the other hand, may consider their faster partners as monopolizing the conversation and not being interested in what they want to say (Tannen, 1984).

### 2.8.2.4 Listenership:

An important sign of attention to show listenership in a conversation is gazing at the speaker. Yet, such a way in signalling attention differs from culture to culture. Erickson

and Shultz (1982) state that white participants in a conversational activity maintain eye gaze at the speaker to show that they are attentively listening to them, but frequently break eye contact once they take turn and speak. A conversational behaviour that is totally different from that of black participants who tend to do the reverse. Thus, misinterpretations, in this context, are inevitable. That is, when a white person is talking to a black one; the former may accuse the latter of not paying attention and of being careless about what is said. On the other hand, when a black person is talking to a white one, they may appear overbearing because of the steady eye gaze they maintain while addressing their interlocutor (Tannen, 1984).

From another angle, and as put forward by Tannen (1984) in her Study, some people exhibit a more enthusiastic listening behaviour by showing an exaggerated sign of listenership, like a loud ‘*wow!*’ or ‘*no kidding!*’ as it is the case of New Yorkers. Such speaking habit is approved by individuals sharing the same style in question; because they think that it is a sign of attention and encouragement. Yet, others like Californians are reported to consider those noisy responses as *frightening* and *confusing* to a point of hesitating and eventually stopping talking (Tannen, 1984). Listenership, then, is a culturally relative behaviour that strongly determines the flow of any conversational activity. If differences are patent, misinterpretations; then, raise among the participants whose willingness to maintain the communicative task is more likely to fade away because of unrealistic judgements.

#### 2.8.2.5 Intonation:

The way people utter words and expressions varies from culture to another. Intonation represents another important facet of cross-cultural differences. In a study conducted by Gumperz (1982), according to Tannen (1984), Indian and Pakistani servers of the employees’ cafeteria in London’s Heathrow Airport were considered, by customers, to be rude. This is because when asking a client whether they want some gravy on their meat, they utter the word ‘*gravy*’ with a falling pitch which sounds like meaning ‘*This is gravy. Take it or leave it*’; instead of a rising pitch that indicates a question intonation that would obviously mean ‘*Would you like gravy?*’ (Tannen, 1984).

Another finding, by Gumperz (1982), shows that while British English speakers use loudness to show anger in particular situations, Indian English speakers use it to get the floor. Therefore, an interchange between a British speaker and an Indian one may

completely become acrimonious since both participants hold different interpretations as to loudness when speaking.

Intonational differences, then, influence deeply cross-cultural communication, and as Tannen (1984) points out:

*Tiny differences in intonation and prosody can throw an interaction completely off without the speakers knowing what caused the problem. Intonation "is made up of degrees and shifts in pitch, loudness, and rhythm which make up every utterance. There are cultural differences in how these little signals are used, both to do conversational business as usual, and also to express special meanings or emotions. When intonational business-as-usual is mistaken for emotional expression, the result is miscommunication.*

Tannen (1984: 192-3)

#### 2.8.2.6 Formulaicity:

What is formulaic (conventional) and what is novel in a language is another culturally related matter that has important considerations in cross-cultural communication. Expressions and truisms that are conventionally used in a particular language seem to be original and unconventional in another language. For example, according to Tannen's (1984) personal experience, Greek people tend to speak in a way that sounds original and poetic to a non-Greek speaker. Yet, such poetic use of language is but one among other facets of the Greek culture.

#### 2.8.2.7 Indirectness:

It is agreed that individual speakers may have recourse, in many occasions, to the use of indirect speech acts within which, as Richards and Schmidt point out:

*the communicative intention is not reflected in the linguistic form of the utterance. For example, "It is very hot in here" may be used to express a request to turn on the air conditioner.*

Richards and Schmidt (2002: 253)

Indirectness, then, in a conversational activity is conveying meaning without necessarily relying on the sentence structure as being a set of words from which one can understand a particular message. According to Tannen (1984, 1989) indirectness is a crucial element in any conversational interaction. She maintains that:

*A fundamental aspect of language is what literary analysts call ellipsis and analysts of conversation call indirectness (or, in formal pragmatics, implicature): conveying unstated meaning.*

Tannen (1989: 23) in Tsuda (1993: 66)

In an elaborated study of the literature, Tsuda (1993) refers to Tannen's (1989) analysis based on Lakoff's (1973, 1979) theory to highlight two main reasons why conversationalists use indirectness as a strategy when engaged in an interactive activity. In Deborah Tannen's words:

*Indirectness is preferred for two main reasons: to save face if a conversational contribution is not well received, and to achieve the sense of rapport that comes from being understood without saying what one means. In addition, by requiring the listener or reader to fill in unstated meaning, indirectness contributes to a sense of involvement through mutual participation in sensemaking.*

(Ibid)

Yet, it is important to note that indirectness, which is another culturally relative element in communication, is not always subject to appreciation. Americans for instance are reported to avoid and even denounce communicating through hints or assumptions. They believe, instead, that words should directly convey patent and clear-cut meaning far from guessing and referring to context (Deborah Tannen, 1984).

On the other hand, Japanese culture with one among its prominent characteristics which is politeness; tends to stand in favour of indirectness. In a business context, Americans report to have problems understanding their Japanese counterparts who, being too polite, never say 'no'. Thus, a non-Japanese interlocutor has to be attentive enough as to what a Japanese speaker meant when saying 'yes'.

#### 2.8.2.8 Cohesion and Coherence:

In a definition given by Richards and Schmidt (2002), cohesion is:

*the grammatical and/or lexical relationships between the different elements of a text. This may be the relationship between different sentences or between different parts of a sentence.*

Richards and Schmidt (2002: 86)

As for coherence, they state that it is:



*the relationships which link the meanings of utterances in a discourse or of the sentences in a text. These links may be based on the speakers' shared knowledge.*

Richards and Schmidt (2002: 85)

Yet, and in a cultural context, Tannen (1984) defines cohesion as:

*“surface level ties showing relationships among elements in discourse”* Deborah Tannen (1984: 194), and coherence as:

*organizing structure making the words and sentences into a unified discourse that has cultural significance. (Ibid).*

An example illustrating cultural differences as to cohesion is that highlighted by Deborah Tannen after Gumperz's (1982) work. British speakers are reported to emphasise the sentence or expression holding the main point in a conversation, unlike their Indian counterparts who tend to emphasise the sentence immediately preceding the main point which they utter after in a lower voice. The result, then, of an interaction between a British speaker and an Indian speaker is that the former may just miss the latter's main point because of diverging cohesion principles.

As for coherence, Koch (1983) points out to a cross-cultural difference covering Arabic versus English Argumentation. She states that Arab speakers when arguing they keep repeating the important point instead of building up to it. A strategy considered by American speakers as *“pointless and not like argumentation at all”* Tannen (1984: 194).

## **2.9 Pragmatics and the Notion of Politeness:**

A growing body of research in pragmatics has focused on the very notion of politeness in discourse. A landmark in the mentioned spot of study is undoubtedly that shaped by the two most prominent theoretical models of Brown and Levinson (1978) and Watts (2003).

### **2.9.1 Politeness in Brown's and Levinson's (1978) Model:**

The term politeness may be dealt with in a broader sense as being a *fixed concept* related, as put forward by Yule (1996), to the very idea of *polite social behaviour*; or as being determined by a set of some general principles, like being tactful, graceful, patient, generous, that account for being polite in a social interaction. Such wider sense of

politeness, then, is relative to both the cultural and social milieu where the interaction takes place.

Yet, the interactive work between participants in a particular situation or context encodes a *more narrowly specified* facet of politeness the understanding of which relies on the concept of *face* which was first developed by Goffman (1967) to become later an important material for Brown's and Levinson's (1978) model. As a highly relevant element to politeness research, face is defined as: "*the positive social value a person effectively claims for [him/herself]*" Goffman (1967: 5) in O'Keefe et al (2011: 63).

In another definition provided by George Yule (1996) face is portrayed as:

*the public self-image of a person. It refers to that emotional and social sense of self that everyone has and expects everyone else to recognize.*

Yule (1996: 60)

It is important to note, however, that in their theoretical model of politeness Brown and Levinson (1978) delineate two distinct types of face: positive face and negative face. The former accounts for that need for *enhancement of a positive self-image* (O'Keefe et al, 2011): a person wants to be liked and accepted by others as one belonging to their same group (Yule, 1996). The latter accounts for that need for being free of action and free from the other's imposition (O'Keefe et al, 2011).

While Yule (1996) considers that positive face and negative face represent two opposite poles the first being linked to the need to be *connected*, and the second to the need to be *independent*; O'Keefe et al (2011) believe that both of them share the same principle:

*For both of these aspects of face, our essential needs are the same – we want people to like us – and this impacts on our linguistic behavior. From the point of view of positive face, we want to receive acknowledgement from others that we are liked, accepted as part of a group and that our wants are understood by them. In the case of negative face, we want to be independent and not have our actions imposed on by others.*

O'Keefe et al (2011: 63-4)

Politeness, then, according to Brown and Levinson is the very tool to satisfy both face wants. Therefore, people when engaged in everyday- interactive activities with each other they expect their face needs to be respected by others. Yet, in some conversational occasions people get offended because they feel that their face needs are *threatened*. This

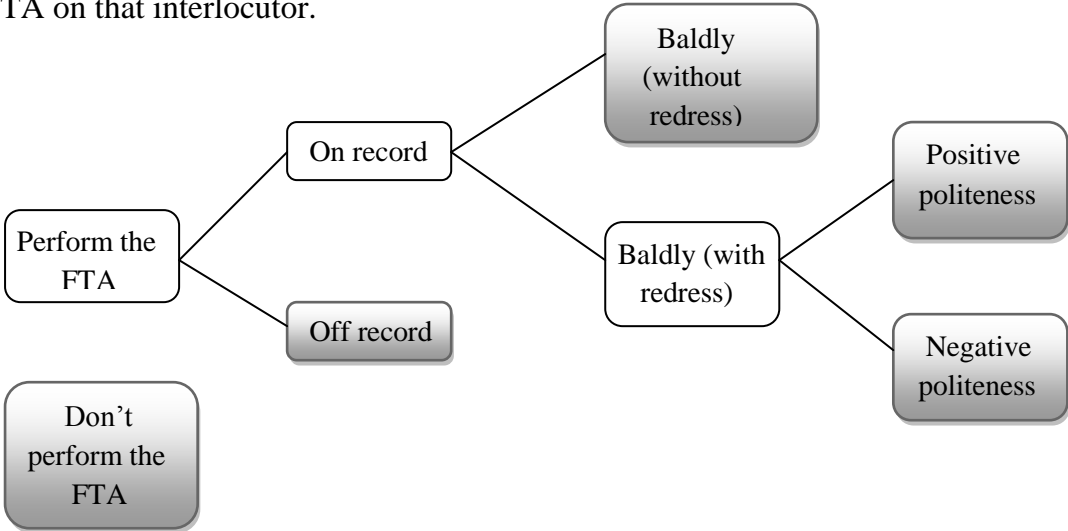
what Brown and Levinson (1978) refer to as *Face Threatening Acts* (FTAs). For a better understanding of FTAs, it is worth to recall O’Keeffe et al’s (2011) words:

*When politeness researchers refer to an FTA, they refer to a communicative act performed by the speaker that does not respect either the hearer’s need for space (negative face) or their desire for their self-image to be upheld (positive face) or both.*

O’Keeffe et al (2011: 64)

Therefore, politeness in interaction is the speaker’s attempt to consider the hearer’s face and eventually soften any FTA if the latter is to be performed in a way or another (O’Keeffe et al, (2011) after Brown an Levinson (1978)). Tightly linked to politeness is the notion of *respect* or *deference* which represents the fact of being aware of a socially distant person’s face (Yule: 1996).

According to Brown and Levinson (1978), when a speaker feels that their contribution is going to threaten their interlocutor’s face; they might then, choose one among five politeness strategies, illustrated on Figure 2.1, in an attempt to mitigate the FTA on that interlocutor.



**Figure 2.1: Brown and Levinson’s (1987) Strategies for Performing FTAs.**

O’Keeffe et al (2011: 65)

❖ *The Figure above shows the politeness strategies according to the Brown and Levinson Model.*

2.9.1.1 Say Nothing: do not Perform the FTA:

If a person in need for something does not want to take any risk by fear of provoking an FTA on another person, they prefer not to say anything but, show that they

need something. One may ask for a pen just by rummaging their bag or by looking into their pockets without uttering a single word. Such mute request may get results as it may not, but if it may, this is because something has been communicated without being said (Yule: 1996).

#### 2.9.1.2 Off Record:

If a person chooses to say something, an FTA then is to be performed. The speaker then, tries to mitigate the FTA by using strategies like metaphor, rhetorical questions or hints. '*It is cold in here*', for example, may be interpreted by the hearer as an indirect request to close the windows or to turn on the heater.

#### 2.9.1.3 Bald on Record:

In this strategy, the speaker does not make strong efforts to reduce risks of potential FTA and chooses to directly address their hearer to express their needs. This may involve the use of imperative forms followed by softening expressions, technically called *mitigating devices*, like '*please*' and '*would you?*' (Yule: 1996).

#### 2.9.1.4 Positive Politeness:

Using this strategy means that the speaker is quite aware and careful about their hearer's positive face. In other words, the requester tries to show their addressee that they pay attention to their desire to be respected and friendly treated. Thus, they express their needs in a way showing and appealing to common interests and actual will to establish a feeling of closeness, friendship and reciprocity (O'Keeffe et al, 2011). An illustration of positive politeness in asking for a pen is provided by Yule (1996: 64):

*Hi. How's it going? Ok if I sit here? We must be interested in the same crazy stuff. You take a lot of notes too, huh? Say, do me a big favor and let me use one of your pens.*

#### 2.9.1.5 Negative Politeness:

Contrary to the previous strategy, negative politeness aims to save the hearer's negative face by trying to show non-interference and non-imposition on them and thus maintaining social distance. Negative politeness in Brown's and Levinson's model, as put forward by O'Keeffe et al (2011: 69) is placed '*at the heart of external respect behaviour*'. It is worth to mention that negative politeness is the strategy the most commonly opted for in English-speaking contexts when trying to save face (Yule: 1996). In Brown's and Levinson's words:

*when we think of Western cultures, it is negative politeness that springs to mind...it is the stuff that fills the etiquette books.*

Brown and Levinson (1987: 129-30) in O’Keeffe et al (2011: 69) Speakers, then tend to save a person’s negative face by asking a question with a modal verb like ‘*could you lend me a pen?*’ (Yule: 1996).

### **2.9.2 Politeness in Watts’ (2003) Model:**

As mentioned by O’Keeffe et al (2011), Richard Watts’ (2003) theory of politeness excludes the relevance of the utterance linguistic structure in determining whether what is said is polite or not. Instead, the emphasis is put on how individuals interpret utterances within an interactive activity. They claim that:

*According to Watts, politeness is a dynamic process by which ‘being polite’ is not connected to the linguistic structures we use, but to the individual’s interpretation of these structures as polite or impolite in instances of ongoing verbal interaction.*

O’Keeffe et al (2011: 76)

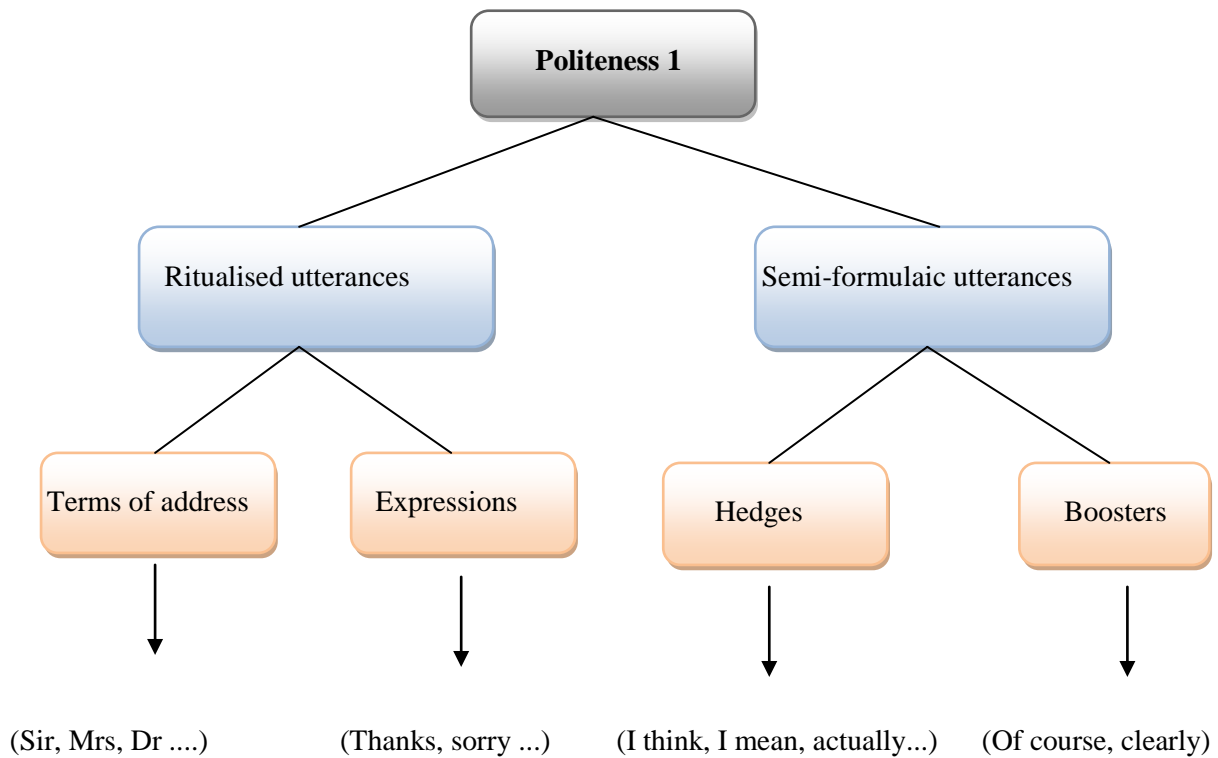
For a better understanding of Watts’ politeness theory a distinction then, is to be made between the two concepts: *politeness 1* and *politeness 2*. The former, according to Watts (2003) consists of people’s lay viewpoints and interpretations of what they consider to be polite. People when delineating the characteristics of polite language use tend to state expressions that they consider as ‘considerate’ or ‘respectful’; expressions like ‘*please*’, ‘*thank you*’ or ‘*sorry*’ (O’Keeffe et al, 2011). Yet, Watts points out that some people regard polite expressions as ‘hypocritical’ or ‘dishonest’ or ‘unfeeling’ (Watts (2003: 2) in O’Keeffe et al (2011: 76)). For instance, the expression ‘have a nice day’ which is believed to reflect polite behaviour in the USA is considered as ‘unfeeling’ in other countries (O’Keeffe et al, 2011).

As for *politeness 2*, the individual’s interpretation does not constitute a relevant element as to what makes a particular usage of language polite or not. It is the analysis of the linguistic structure then, of the speech or the written sequence which is taken into account. In this respect, O’Keeffe et al (2011) write:

*on the other hand, politeness 2 is concerned with ‘politeness’ as a technical term used in both the pragmatic and sociolinguistic study of spoken and written language, such as in Brown and Levinson’s model.*

O’Keeffe et al (2011: 76)

Therefore, Watts' (2003) theory is built on the distinction between *politeness 1* which is based on personal interpretations and *politeness 2* which is based on theoretical interpretations via the Brown and Levinson's model (O'Keeffe et al, 2011).



**Figure 2.2: Politeness 1 in Watts' (2003) Model**  
**(Adapted from O'Keeffe et al (2011))**

❖ *This figure illustrates how politeness is conceived in the Watt's Model.*

According to Watts (2003), particular linguistic structures shaped through expressions; like those shown in Figure 2.2, which are associated with politeness make the latter seem to be *argumentative* and *evaluative* in nature. This is because those expressions are:

*open to interpretation as polite in ongoing verbal interaction, therefore, no linguistic structure can be considered inherently polite.*

O'Keeffe et al (2011: 78 - 9)

Worth to mention, however, is the term '*politic*' behaviour that Watts links to a linguistic or non-linguistic comportment which individuals construct as being suitable for use in social interaction (O'Keeffe et al, 2011).

### **2.10 Conclusion:**

To conclude with, pragmatics constitutes a relevant field of research when it comes to EFL learning and teaching. This is because, as shown throughout the theoretical review in the present chapter, using language entails not only linguistic competence but also pragmatic competence. The latter, in its turn, involves the mastery of pragmalinguistic competence and sociopragmatic competence both of which are tightly linked to context.

Many researchers then, agree that utterances and speech acts that may be produced in different interactive situations may hold different meanings and interpretations that cannot be inferred from linguistic structures, but rather from contextual circumstances, as it is the case with implicature and presupposition.

Yet, context only does not constitute the sole basic element in the scope of pragmatics. Cultural and societal factors, as it is illustrated in this chapter through the works of Deborah Tannen (1984) and those of O'Keeffe et al (2011), determine to a larger extent the flow and continuity of any interaction. The issue of cultural norms then becomes more and more sensitive when it comes to using language in a multicultural milieu. A pragmatic failure leading to an eventual communication breakdown is delineated, by many researchers, notably Tannen (1984), as the inevitable result of the lack of cross-cultural pragmatic skills among participants in conversational activities.

Finally, pragmatics explores also the notion of politeness, in ongoing social interaction, which reveals to be subject to fine grained researches. What is constructed as being polite then, for people depends on both the linguistic structure of the expressions used and the individuals' personal interpretations and expectations as to appropriate linguistic and non linguistic behaviour.

## Notes to Chapter Two:

(1): The two rhetoricians Servius and Donatus were the first to introduce, in the fourth century, the distinction between the conventional literal meaning of an utterance and its intended meaning Horn (2005). They:

*characterized litotes - pragmatic understatement - as a figure in which we say less but mean more („minus dicimus et plus significamus” ; see Hoffmann 1987 and Horn 1991a).*

Horn (2005:01)

(2): According to Clark (2005) a signal is:

*any action by which one person means something for another person in the sense of Grice (1989).*

Clark (2005:02)

(3): An intrinsic connection, in the theory advanced by Peirce in Buchler (1940), is the causal or spatial link by means of which an index signifies its object and referent (Clark, 2005).

(4): it is “*the language we use to negotiate or build our relationships with others, in everyday casual conversation*” O’Keeffe et al (2011: 9)

(5): ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines consist of: “*proficiency descriptions developed under the auspices of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL). Since their latest revision in 1996, the guidelines consist of descriptions of ten proficiency levels: Novice Low, Novice Mid, Novice High, Intermediate Low, Intermediate Mid, Intermediate High, Advanced Low, Advanced Mid, Advanced High, and Superior*”

Richards and Schmidt (2002: 8)



***CHAPTER THREE:***

***AFFECTIVE CONSIDERATIONS IN EFL LEARNING AND TEACHING***

## *CHAPTER THREE*

### *AFFECTIVE CONSIDERATIONS IN EFL LEARNING AND TEACHING*

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## **CHAPTER THREE**

### ***AFFECTIVE CONSIDERATIONS IN EFL LEARNING AND TEACHING***

#### **3.1 Introduction:**

One of the issues that influences the learning achievement of foreign language learners is the very notion of affect. Great attention has been called for to the latter element with regard to different educational milieux. Yet, one may ask the very question of why really does it matter to take students' affect into account in one's teaching practices? Devising *adequate* classroom activities that fit the very objectives set within a particular syllabus may be, for some practitioners, quite enough to fulfil the teaching task of a given subject matter. Yet, for others; it is quite important to support one's teaching strategies with appropriate affective scaffolding that may help students reach optimum learning results. The term affect refers to a variety of factors that shape the psychological dimension of an individual. In this respect, a cluster of aspects relevantly linked to moods, feelings and attitudes interact within an interplay that is to determine a person's quality and extent of achievement in a given situation.

On a more basic level, it is believed that the very context of foreign language learning and teaching depends not only on some ritual pedagogical practices aimed to reinforcing students' linguistic and communicative competencies, but also on seriously considering students as representing individual differences that are quite susceptible to psychological variables like motivation, self-esteem and anxiety. The present chapter attempts to provide a theoretical review hinging upon the notion of affect in an EFL situation. It analyses the triangular connection between classroom interaction, learners' affective variables and affective teaching strategies.

#### **3.2 Affect in Foreign Language Learning Context:**

As far as foreign language teaching and learning domain is concerned, the notion of affect has recently gained paramount attention on the part of a wealth of scholars and practitioners. Such growing interest came as a response to the traditional focus on cognitive issues which excluded the treatment of other relevant elements like students' affect related factors that are believed to be reliable determinant of language learning success or failure. Different definitions are attributed to the term affect which is

commonly referred to as a cluster of a person's emotions and feelings that condition their learning behaviour. In this respect, Richards & Schmidt (2002) assert that affect is:

*a term referring to a number of emotional factors that may influence language learning and use. These include basic personality traits such as shyness, long-term but changeable factors such as positive and negative language attitudes, and constantly fluctuating states such as enthusiasm, anxiety, boredom, apathy, or elation.*

Richards & Schmidt (2002: 16)

One example that illustrates the relevance of affect to the learning achievement is the nature of classroom activities assigned to students. Task difficulty level for instance may play a vital role in generating students' positive or negative feelings. As Richards & Schmidt (2002) indicate:

*One theory suggests that affective states are largely determined by the balance between the subjectively assessed level of challenge in an activity and the subjectively assessed level of skill that one brings to that activity. For example, when faced with classroom tasks that are much higher than their level of skill, language learners feel anxious and frustrated; when given tasks that are well below their ability level, they feel bored; giving learners interesting tasks that are challenging but within their ability is most likely to elicit a positive affective response.*

(Ibid)

Arnold (2011) used the two words of 'inside' and 'between' to define the term affect in relation to internal and external features that shape a learner's personality sphere and their learning environment respectively:

*The inside and between is basically what affect is about: on the one hand, the individual or personality factors (self-concept/self-esteem, anxiety, inhibition, attitudes, motivation, learner styles...) which we can consider as inside the learner, and on the other, the relational aspects which develop between the participants in the classroom – between students or between teacher and students - or possibly between learners and the target language and culture.*

Arnold (2011: 11)

From another parameter, Gardner (1985) uses the term affective component to refer to “emotional reactions”. As for Carver and Scheier in Shah & Gardner (2008), affect: “*pertains to one’s desires and whether they are being met*” (Carver & Scheier in Shah & Gardner (2008: 310).

### **3.2.1 Why Affect?**

To reiterate, paying attention to the dimension of affect is continuously called for as a prerequisite practice in teaching a foreign language. In order to justify such orientation, many reasons have been provided all of which stress the significance of interaction between learners’ psychological traits and a set of classroom circumstances including the nature of the target language itself in influencing the learning process and achievement. For Arnold (2011) affect is a relevant element that is present in any learning situation, yet more pervasive in a language learning context. This is because:

*our self image is more vulnerable when we do not have mastery of our vehicle for expression – language.*

Arnold (2011: 11)

Qin (2007) makes reference to the Humanistic approach to language teaching to emphasise the importance of affect in the learning operation. Supporters of the mentioned approach focus on a learner-centred orientation that gives priority to active involvement of students as individuals representing their own psychological aspects and needs. Humanistic trends stress actual sensitivity to the learners’ feelings and emotions within classroom settings. In Qin’s words:

*Humanistic approach to second language teaching is characterized by learner-centeredness in that a student is first of all regarded as a person—a whole being, with his individual characters both in cognition and in affect. It assumes that students learn a second language best when they are treated as individuals with their own characters and specific needs.*

Qin (2007: 60-1)

Humanistic Language Teaching (HLT) principles as delineated by Arnold (2011) make the core of some prominent teaching methods namely the Silent Way,

Suggestopedia, Community Language Learning and Total Physical Response all of which highlight affect-sensitive issues notably:

- *Language learning should take place in a low-anxiety atmosphere.*
- *Opportunities for learners to succeed and thus raise their confidence should be built into classroom activities.*
- *The learner should be considered holistically: cognitive, emotional and physical aspects.*
- *Language learning should involve personally meaningful experience.*
- *Learner knowledge and resources should be drawn upon and autonomy is to be favoured and developed.*

Arnold (2011:12)

Arnold then illustrates the importance of affect in language teaching and learning through referring to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) (1) which comprises among the covered competencies in language learning the *Existential competence* (savoir-être):

*which is basically composed of elements of the affective domain: attitudes, motivations, values, beliefs, personality factors (such as self-confidence, self-esteem, anxiety/fear). According to the Framework (5.1.3), these aspects significantly influence language learners and users both in their communicative acts and their ability to learn.*

Arnold (2011:13)

Elaborating on the above discussion, it has been made clear that attention to affect is of an escalating primacy in language learning and teaching domain.

### **3.2.2 Students' Personality and Psychological Traits:**

The present section is a review of the main research findings hinging upon the significance of individual students' psychological traits in shaping their learning behaviour. In the same respect a growing body of studies (Gardner & Lambert: 1972; Deci & Ryan: 1985; Brown: 1987; Leeper: 1988; Skehan: 1989; Cohn: 1990; Weiner: 1992; Arnold: 1999; Norton: 2000; Brophy: 2004; Dörnyei: 2005; Kumaravadivelu: 2006 and Arnold: 2011) suggest that affective variables like motivation, attitudes, self-esteem, anxiety and the construct introversion/extroversion are among the most reliable determinants of the quality and the extent of the learning achievement.

### 3.2.2.1 Motivation:

Commonly thought of as an *impetus to initiate* particular practices or actions (Topalov, 2012), motivation is one of the relevant affective aspects that influence academic achievement. In Richards & Schmidt's words motivation is:

*in general, the driving force in any situation that leads to action. In the field of language learning a distinction is sometimes made between an orientation, a class of reasons for learning a language, and motivation itself, which refers to a combination of the learner's attitudes, desires, and willingness to expend effort in order to learn the second language.*

Richards & Schmidt (2002: 343)

Elaborating on this, students' motivation accounts for students' desire to engage and participate in a given learning situation. On a more basic level, Dörnyei (2005) says that without enough motivational degree, individuals cannot achieve their goals even if they possess higher abilities. Yet, as suggested by Richards & Schmidt in the definition above, motivation has also to do with the very reasons and objectives that would determine students' involvement or non-involvement in the learning process in general, and in specific academic tasks in particular.

Gardner and Lambert (1972) have elaborated extensive studies on the field of motivation. They assert that motivation can be classified into two basic types: instrumental motivation and integrative motivation. Such a classification is relatively identified by two different clusters of attitudes. A desire to learn a language as a means for achieving instrumental goals (getting a job, furthering a career abroad...etc) would employ an instrumental motivation, while a desire to learn a language in order to identify with that language group culture and become a member of its society would employ an integrative motivation.

Unlike integrative motivation, instrumental motivation is believed to result in optimum proficiency in the target language:

*...When there is a vital need to master a second language, the instrumental approach is very effective, perhaps more so than the integrative.*

Gardner & Lambert (1972) in Hahn (1989:09)



It is worth mentioning, however, that the exclusive effectiveness of one type of motivation over the other has been brought into question. Recent findings, (Arnold, 1999), state that FL learning success may be the result of a mixture of both orientations.

Norton (2000) introduces the concept of “investment” and links it to motivation to point out to the relationship between learners and the desire to learn and practise the target language. He suggests that students invest in learning a second language with the idea of getting in return some more symbolic and material resources. In this context, Norton excludes the notion of instrumental orientation from the concept of investment. Yet, he underlines that the latter is a more complex cluster of different desires that are determined by the learners’ socially and historically constructed relationship to the target language.

Deci & Ryan (1985) employ the construct extrinsic/ intrinsic motivation. Extrinsic motivation is determined by external factors mainly the desire to obtain a reward (please the teachers or parents) or avoid punishment. As for intrinsic motivation, the learning achievement is at once the reason and the target, i.e. the desire to learn is energised by a curious interest in learning itself. Brophy (2004), in his Goal Theory related to students’ motivation, differentiates between ‘*learning goals*’ and ‘*extrinsic goal orientations*’. He suggests that:

*Unlike learning goals, which focus on satisfying curiosity or interest, responding to challenges, or developing understandings (i.e., the learning process itself), extrinsic goals focus on rewards associated with displays of successful learning.*

Brophy (2004: 99)

On the one hand, researches (Arnold, 1999), (Gardner & Lambert, 1972) have shown that an intrinsically motivated learner would do better than an extrinsically motivated one. Kohn (1990) asserts that the introduction of an extrinsic reward would reduce the learner’s interest even if the learning task is intrinsically motivating. Having an intrinsic motivation, students are more likely to rely on strategies demanding more effort and enabling them to process information more deeply. On the other hand, extrinsically motivated learners tend to make a minimal effort to get the maximal reward, Leeper (1988). These assumptions bring into consideration the necessity of encouraging intrinsic motivation rather than extrinsic one. This can be done according to Brown (1994) by trying to involve students in ‘content-based activities’ actually linked to their interests and

expectations. Yet, since the introduction of a reward seems to be motivating for some individuals, it may be beneficial not to exclude it completely from the teaching process.

While the extrinsic-intrinsic representation accounts for motivational sources (external-internal), the “*resultative hypothesis*” suggests that the degree of motivation would be rather determined by previous learning experiences. Learners who have experienced success in the past are likely to exhibit a high level of motivation that pushes them persistently to try harder while faced to a new learning situation. The converse, however, is true: bad learning experiences would produce demotivation. For instance, failure in particular tasks can discourage learners and so kill their will for learning in general and participation in the classroom in particular (Skehan, 1989).

In the same line of thought, Mc Clelland’s (1989) “*need achievement theory*” introduces the concepts: “achievers” and “low achievers”. The former stands for learners who, being encouraged by previous successful learning situations, consider new learning tasks as:

*...outside their present capabilities, but attainable with some effort.  
They are people, that is, who expect the world to contain reasonable  
challenges, and respond to such challenges...*

Meara & Skehan (1989: 50-1)

Alternatively, the concept “low achievers” refers to those learners who, because discouraged by past failure, exhibit a poor level of motivation and a relative unwillingness to perform.

Yet, the “*need achievement theory*” doesn’t not seem to gain solid ground. Some researchers, like Jones (1973), assert that the consideration of motivational degree as a result of previous learning experiences is not quite valid. They report that the need to achieve does not depend on a stable factor like academic success or failure, but rather on different motivational agents like sex, task difficulty etc... (Jones (1973) in Skehan (1989)).

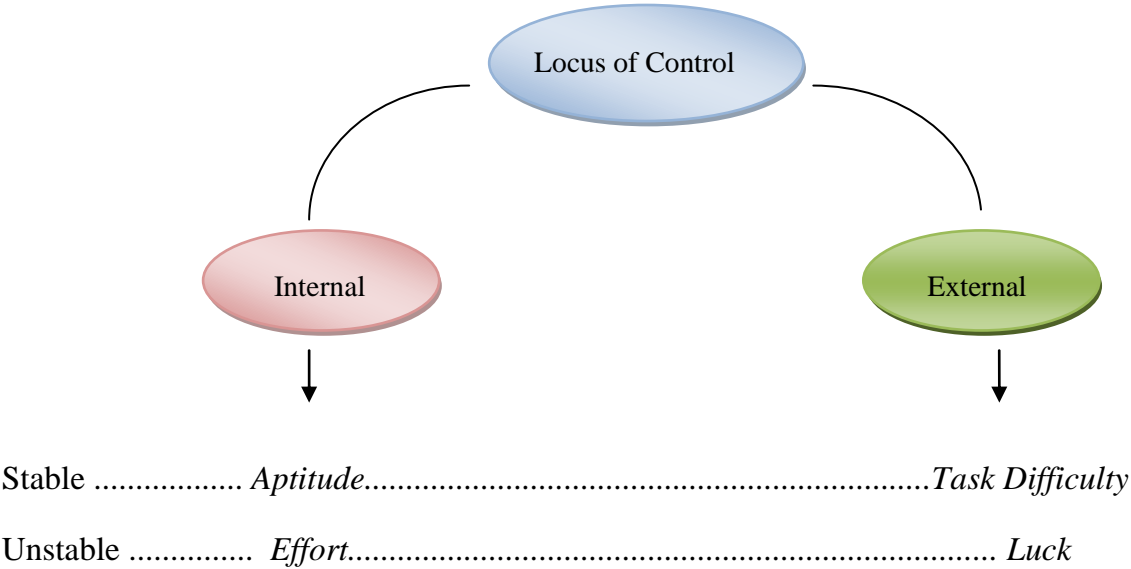
From another angle, Weiner (1992) labelled three main concepts dealing with motivation. These are: “*attribution theory*”, “*learned helplessness*” and “*self- efficacy*”. The “*attribution theory*” states that learners’ perception of the very factors that contributed to their past success or failure will, to some extent, influence their performance. Learners who attribute their past failure to a lack of ability appear to develop a low self-esteem and

thus a poor motivational level, whereas learners who see their failure as a result of non stable factors such as bad luck or task difficulty would not fall in self-devaluation. The following quotation illustrates the previous interpretation:

*Success and failure perceived as due to internal causes such as personality, ability or effort respectively raises or lowers self-esteem or self-worth, whereas external attributions for positive or negative outcomes do not influence feelings about the self.*

Weiner (1985) in Arnold (1999: 16)

The following figure illustrates Weiner’s (1985) *attribution theory* with its two main cause characteristics being internal such as ability and effort, or external like task difficulty and luck.



**Figure 3.1: Causes Analysis within the Attribution Theory (Adapted from Meara & Skehan (1989))**

❖ *The above figure is an illustration of Weiner’s (1985) attribution theory.*

As for the second construct which is “*Learned Helplessness*”, the latter accounts for learners’ conviction through past negative experience, that failure is their inevitable companion. These learners, after repeated failure, have helplessly ‘learnt not to try’ because they believe that the outcome will be the same. Those learners, according to Arnold (1999):

*...are submerged in a helpless state that engulfs them and they feel that they cannot possibly achieve their goals, no matter what they do...*

Arnold (1999: 16)

As for “*self-efficacy*”, it consists of the learners’ judgement of their own capacities in tackling a particular learning situation. It has been argued that a positive judgement would reinforce self-esteem and foster motivation. As far as performance is concerned, findings (Arnold, 1999) show that teachers can foster learners’ self-efficacy by giving them ‘meaningful’ classroom activities which they can undertake successfully. Therefore, a ‘sense of effectiveness’ and self-confidence would raise among students who will, consequently, develop an optimum interest in learning (Oxford & Shearin, 1994 in Arnold, 1999).

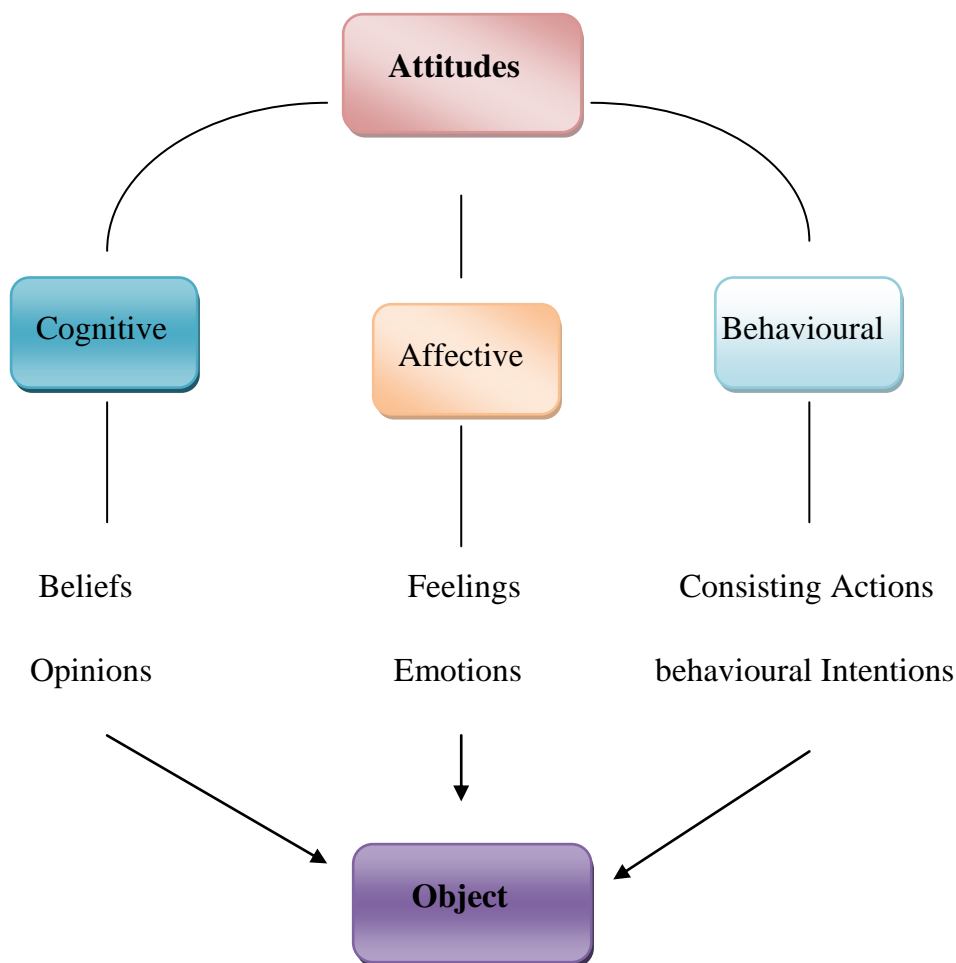
#### 3.2.2.2 Attitudes:

Another important affective factor relating to SL/FL learning is attitudes. The latter variable is often linked to language motivation and some researchers have studied them together as one variable, yet others believe that they (attitudes and motivation) are two separate factors (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). Gardner (1980) defines attitude as:

*The sum total of a man's instincts and feelings, prejudice or bias, preconceived notions, fears, threats, and convictions about any specified topic.*

Gardner (1980: 267) in Al-Tamimi & Shuib (2009: 33)

However, attitudes are thought to be encompassed within three main categories: cognitive, affective and behavioural (Al-Tamimi & Shuib (2009) after Wenden (1991)). The cognitive category covers a person’s beliefs, ideas or stances vis-à-vis a particular object. The affective one includes a person’s feelings and emotions in relation to the object. However, the behavioural category refers to a person’s *consisting actions or behavioural intentions* towards the object (ibid).



**Figure 3.2: Wenden’s (1990) Classification of Attitudes**  
**(Adapted from Al-Tamimi & Shuib (2009))**

❖ *The figure above illustrates the three types of attitudes according to Wenden (1990).*

Richards & Schmidt (2002) provide a more specific definition covering language attitudes which, according to them, consist of:

*the attitudes which speakers of different languages or language varieties have towards each other’s languages or to their own language. Expressions of positive or negative feelings towards a language may reflect impressions of linguistic difficulty or simplicity, ease or difficulty of learning, degree of importance, elegance, social status, etc. Attitudes towards a language may also show what people feel about the speakers of that language. Language attitudes may have an effect on Second Language or Foreign Language learning.*

Richards & Schmidt (2002: 286)

Learners' attitudes are determined by internal and external elements. The internal ones refer to learners' own feelings and opinions in relation to a particular thing or person (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). The external ones can be environmental and pedagogic factors. In Kumaravadivelu's (2006) words:

*The environmental factor includes social, cultural, political and economic imperatives that shape the L2 educational milieu... The pedagogic factor shapes how teachers, learners and the learning situation interact with each other to trigger positive or negative attitudes in the learner. The teacher's curricular objectives, classroom activities and even personal attitudes play a role in influencing the learner's attitude to language learning (Malcolm, 1987).*

Kumaravadivelu (2006: 39)

It is worth mentioning that researchers agree that positive attitudes towards the target language group and culture correlate to better learning achievement. The reverse, however, is true (Brown, 2000). Negative attitudes are believed to be generated by an inadequate exposure to the target language culture mainly through books, television, and media. Therefore, language teachers can intervene and try to transform those negative attitudes into positive ones by exposing language learners to more consistent sources pertaining to the target language culture; like meeting 'actual persons from other cultures', (Brown, 2000).

### 3.2.2.3 Self-Esteem:

Another important affective variable in foreign language learning is self-esteem (SE). This latter is believed to be of a pervasive influence on students' learning achievement. It has been claimed that individuals cannot succeed in undertaking any activity if they lack a sense of SE (Brown, 1987). Coopersmith (1967) defines SE as:

*the evaluation which the individual makes and customarily maintains with regard to himself; it expresses an attitude of approval or disapproval, and indicates the extent to which an individual believes himself to be capable, significant, successful and worthy.*

Coopersmith (1967) in Brown (1987: 101-2)

According to Brown (1987), SE is classified into three specific types: global SE, situational SE and task SE. Global SE is a stable self-evaluation of one's personality after an accumulation of experiences. It is thought to be resistant to changes unless after extended therapy. As for situational SE, it refers to one's self-evaluation in relation to specific situations such as: education, work, or to certain personality traits notably gregariousness, empathy...etc

Task SE has to do with particular tasks in a given situation. For instance, as far as language teaching and learning are concerned, specific or situational SE might refer to second language learning, while task SE might be related to a particular skill in the learning process such as speaking and writing; or a particular kind of classroom activities like grammar exercises or overt oral performance in the classroom (Brown, 1987).

As far as educational performance is concerned, research proves that a high level of SE would foster better learning results (Raffini, 1996 in Dörnyei, 2005). Conversely, low SE would greatly incapacitate the learner from reaching their learning potential.

Like motivation, SE is likely to be influenced by past learning experiences. In this context, Canfield & Wells (1994) say:

*the student who has had a good deal of success in the past will be likely to risk success again; if he should fail, his self-concept can 'afford' it. A student with a history predominated by failures will be reluctant to risk failure again. His depleted self-concept cannot afford it...*

Canfield & Wells (1994) in Arnold (1999: 12-3)

Yet, Brown (2000) raised the very question of whether it is high SE which results in learning success, or it is learning success which leads to high SE. He went further, then, in the same context speculating about whether teachers are to work on improving their students' self-esteem so as to push them towards optimum learning achievement, or focus on raising their students' language proficiency so as to increase their self-esteem level. In order not to be subjective, we can say that if we consider foreign language learning as an end, raising learners' SE, then, comes first as a prerequisite tool.

Horwitz & Cope (1986) investigated other related factors to SE. They asserted that teachers can have a strong influence on their students' self-evaluation, either positively or negatively. On the same line of thought, V. de Andrés (1990) suggests that the teacher's

disapproving comments towards students have a harmful effect on the learners' performance. Teachers are, then, asked to implement effective strategies that could conclusively raise their students' SE. In this context it is worth to quote Canfield & Wells (1994) who maintain that:

*the most important thing a teacher can do to help students emotionally and intellectually is to create an environment of mutual support and care. The crucial thing is the safety and encouragement students sense in the classroom... Further, they must recognise that they are valued and will receive affection and support.*

Canfield & Wells (1994) in Arnold (1999: 12)

#### 3.2.2.4 Anxiety:

From Brown (1973), Chastain (1975), and Scovel (1978) to Bailey (1983), Horwitz (1986), Lucas (1984), Young (1986) and Arnold (1999) the notion of language anxiety has been given undivided attention within the scope of foreign language learning and teaching researches. In its broader sense, anxiety is defined as a cluster of apprehension feelings and fear that are triggered by something threatening. However, when it comes to foreign language learning context, most scholars agree that the most pervasive affective factor that is believed to impede students' academic achievement is language anxiety. The latter, in Richards & Schmidt words, is defined as:

*Subjective feelings of apprehension and fear associated with language learning and use. Foreign language anxiety may be a situation-specific anxiety, similar in that respect to public speaking anxiety. Issues in the study of language anxiety include whether anxiety is a cause or an effect of poor achievement, anxiety under specific instructional conditions, and the relationship of general language anxiety to more specific kinds of anxiety associated with speaking, reading, or examinations.*

Richards & Schmidt (2002: 285)

Yet, Spolsky (1982) assumes that 'an anxious learner will not be a good one'. On a more basic level, research (Nunan, 1998) has shown that classroom anxiety is a phenomenon present in all classrooms. Yet, FL anxiety is thought to be quite unique. In this respect, Horwitz and Cope (1986) suggest that language classroom anxiety is:



*a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviours related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process.*

Horwitz and Cope (1986) in Nunan (1998: 155)

In the context of EFL, language learning anxiety is unique because students are asked to perform in a language which they have not yet mastered. This may imply that students would be ‘much more vulnerable to negative evaluations’, because in a language classroom making mistakes would be inevitable (Tsui, 1998 in Nunan 1998).

It has been claimed that anxiety can manifest two different facets: trait anxiety and stage or state anxiety. Trait anxiety is a permanent characteristic in an individual personality. Stage anxiety is temporary and it is linked only to some particular situations like public performance or language learning (Brown, 2000).

Yet, Scovel (1978) in Dulay et al. (1982) differentiates between “debilitating anxiety” (harmful anxiety) and “facilitating anxiety” (helpful anxiety). The former is believed to have a negative effect that consists mainly of a feeling of discomfort which hinders a person’s performance. The latter has a positive effect, it urges the individual to try harder and not to give up a task, and so, results in better performance.

But, the existence of facilitating language anxiety is an idea that was rejected by some researchers. Horwitz (1990) in Arnold (1999) asserts that helpful anxiety is related only to ‘very simple learning tasks’ but not to ‘complicated learning’. From another fence, Hadley (1992) in Arnold (1999) indicates that, in language learning, a certain degree of ‘tension might be useful’; but according to her it is quite inadequate to call such tension ‘anxiety’.

For a better understanding of how language anxiety operates and affects language learners, we consider some of its crucial correlates. The latter may be internal to the learner like tolerance of ambiguity or external like teacher-learner interactions.

#### 3.2.2.4.1 Tolerance of ambiguity:

It is the willingness of accepting ambiguous ideas or propositions that contradict one’s beliefs or knowledge. Recent findings (Arnold, 1999) prove that learning a new language manifests considerable ambiguity related to meaning and pronunciation, which would provoke anxiety. Therefore, less ambiguity-tolerant learners are reported to be

highly anxious and persistently inhibited more than those with a more tolerating tendency, (Chapelle and Roberts, 1986).

#### 3.2.2.4.2 Self-esteem:

Linked to anxiety, a growing body of evidence suggests that the degree of one's self-esteem is a relevant determinant of students' performance in relation to their anxiety level. According to Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) a higher level of self-esteem can help students overcome their anxiety when learning a foreign Language. Conversely, students whose self-esteem level is lowered by the teacher's negative feedback cannot overcome their anxiety, and so fall in a low performance.

#### 3.2.2.4.3 Test Anxiety:

Another important correlate of language anxiety is test anxiety. It could be defined as:

*The tendency to become alarmed about the consequences of inadequate performance on a test or other evaluation.*

Sarason (1984) in Arnold (1999: 64)

Test anxiety is believed to be closely related to communicative situations within an evaluative aim (Oxford in Arnold, 1999). Oral performance in the language classroom is considered as a testing form. In such a situation it is not only the teacher who is to evaluate the student but the whole class too. Therefore, some students constantly avoid such overt performance by fear of negative evaluation (Bailey and Nunan, 1998).

#### 3.2.2.4.4 Beliefs:

According to Horwitz's (1988) studies, language anxiety has also to do with the beliefs held by students when learning a FL. Horwitz asserts that some learners stick to some mistaking ideas like: 'they should be able to speak with great accuracy and an excellent accent', or 'two years is long enough to become fluent' in English, and so forth. Such beliefs, however, are believed to be anxiety-producing, simply because they are quite unrealistic.

From another fence, Young (1991) points out that language teachers who maintain a rather traditional perspective about language teaching (stressing directiveness, authoritativeness, errors correction, intimidation...etc) would unconsciously trigger their students' anxiety.

#### 3.2.2.4.5 Risk Taking:

Research suggests that risk-taking tendency depends substantially on one's anxiety level. Ely (1986) reveals that extreme uneasiness in the language classroom decreases students' will to take risks. Students who are turmoiled by the fear of making mistakes or by the frequent ambiguities of the target language are more likely to take less risks. Krashen (1976) describes such learners as *wait and see* people.

It is noteworthy that risk-taking is believed to be a positive variable, for it enhances subconscious language learning.

*The successful learner is more likely to be one who takes his existing language system to the limit, and tries out risky hypotheses where feedback will be most revealing. Such a risk-taking language learner is similar to Popper's 'bold scientist'.*

Skehan (1989: 107)

#### 3.2.2.4.6 Competitiveness:

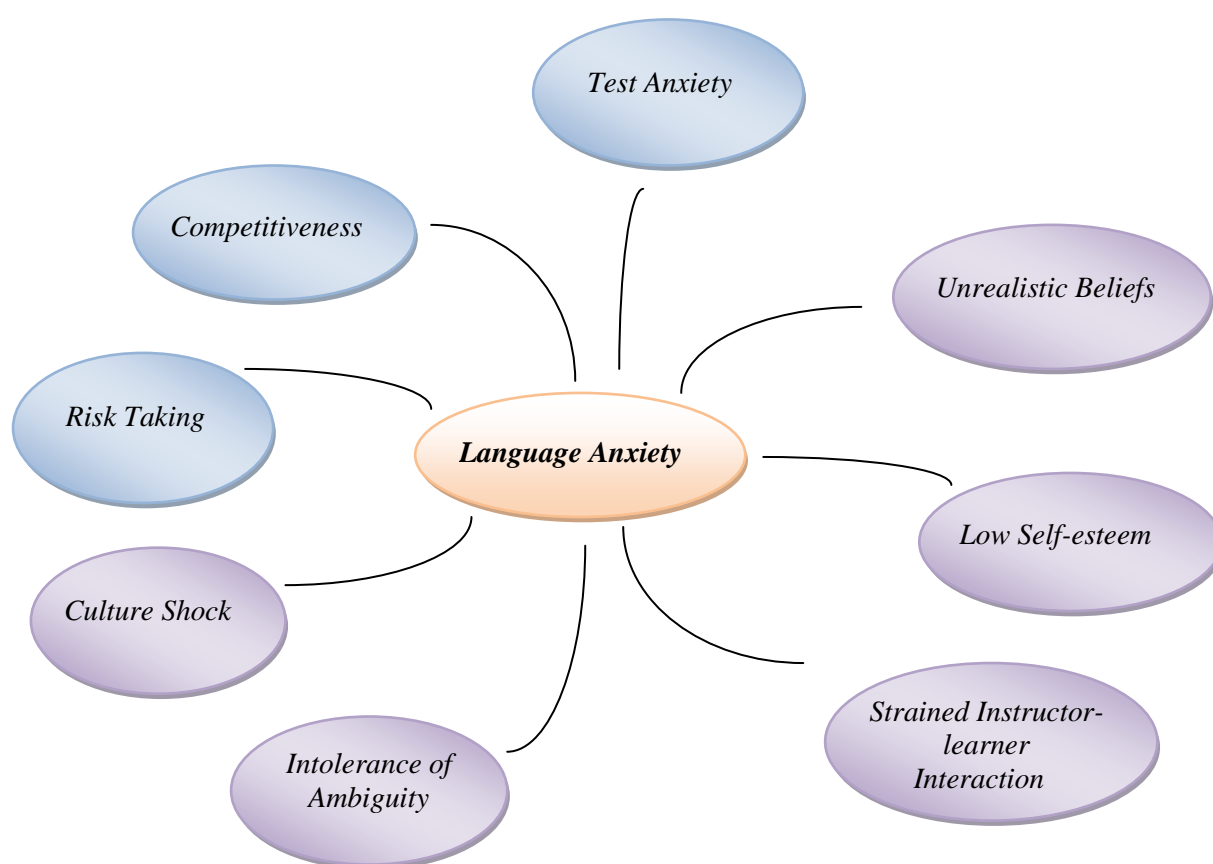
Bailey's (1983) studies of language anxiety show that a learner's pressure to outdo others in the classroom can produce anxiety. The latter can be debilitating and, thus, hindering optimum performance. Competitiveness can result in a feeling of discomfort when the competitor fails to attain their rivals or their 'idealised self-image'. Scarcella & Oxford (1992) in Arnold (1999) report that competitiveness does not necessary lead to anxiety in all cases. Students 'in competitive cultures' are not influenced negatively by the competitive atmosphere, and can succeed in competition since they are already acquainted with rivalry.

#### 3.2.2.4.7 Identity and Culture Shock:

When learning a given language, a sense of identification with that language group may raise among some learners. According to Young (1992), identification with the target language group correlates positively with a reduced level of anxiety. Conversely, learners who do not identify with the target language group are reported to have a high anxiety level. Yet, language anxiety is not provoked only by a non identification feeling. An over-identification with the target language group can energise the feeling of loss of personal identity, and so results in culture shock (2) which is considered as a form of anxiety (Arnold, 1999).

### 3.2.2.4.8 Instructor-learner Interactions:

Young (1990), Koch and Terrel (1991), Price (1991) and Scarcella & Oxford (1992) point out that language anxiety is connected also to the nature of interactions occurring between the teachers and their students. Some of the teachers' behaviours in the classroom can be detrimental for students. For instance, harsh errors treatments and disapproving comments from the side of the teacher are stated to be anxiety-creating factors that influence negatively students' performance.



**Figure 3.3: Factors Influencing Language Anxiety (Adapted from Arnold (1999))**

❖ *The figure above summarizes the eight main factors that can influence students' anxiety level.*

The items in purple colour have a direct negative effect on one's performance, being anxiety-creating agents. The items in blue colour have a relative influence on language anxiety according to, as we have already explained, one's trait anxiety level.

### 3.2.2.5 Extroversion/ Introversion:

The construct extroversion/ introversion is another important variable relating to language learning. Yet, according to Brown (1987), a clarification of the terms seems to be important, since there is a mistaken conception of the construct suggesting that extroversion correlates to successful learning achievement.

In a definition of extroversion and introversion, Eysenck (1965) says:

*the typical extrovert is sociable, likes parties, has many friends, needs to have people to talk to and does not like studying by himself. He craves excitement, takes chances, often sticks his neck out...and is generally an impulsive individual. He always has a ready answer, and generally likes change. The typical introvert, on the other hand, is a quiet, retiring sort of person, introspective, fond of books rather than people; he is reserved and distant, except with intimate friends. He tends to plan ahead...and distrusts the impulse of the moment...*

Eysenck (1965) in Skehan (1989: 100)

It is widely believed that extroverted learners tend to outperform introverted ones, because they have the advantage of being sociable and outgoing. These characteristics correlate positively with overt performance and participation in the classroom, and thus lead to better learning achievement. On the other hand, introverted learners are reported to exhibit a lower language aptitude because of their reserve and self-restraint (Arnold, 1999).

Conversely, Eysenck (1965) claims that extroversion is built up of two main components: sociability and impulsivity. The former is believed to 'distract' an individual from the process of learning and make them develop a 'reactive inhibition' (3) to learning more quickly. In the same line of thought, Entwistle & Wilson (1977) in Skehan (1989) suggest that language learning success is better favoured by introversion rather than by extroversion, because introverted learners tend to encode information more efficiently into long-term memory.

From another point of view, Rossier (1976) identifies a positive correlation between oral fluency and sociability. In the same respect, Naiman (1978) and Mc. Donough (1981) assert that extroversion can be a positive factor to promote communicative competence.

The different views mentioned above make it clear, to some extent, that linking extroversion or introversion to language learning success in an exclusive manner is quite

misleading. What we have to know, however, is that in a language classroom what appears to be appropriate for an extroverted learner could not necessarily be so for an introverted one. Arnold (1999), Brown (1987) and Skehan (1989) certify that instead of trying to create over-extroversion among learners; teachers have to accept that both extroversion and introversion have their positive features in the learning process.

### **3.3 Learning Styles: when Affect Meets Cognition:**

Quite fundamental to the practice of EFL teaching is the exploration of students' learning styles. The latter aspects involve a range of cognitive skills that would determine how a particular individual learns. Brown (2000) offers an interesting analysis of the terms: 'style', 'cognitive styles' and 'learning styles'. In this respect, he says:

*Style is a term that refers to consistent and rather enduring tendencies or preferences within an individual. Styles are those general characteristics of intellectual functioning (and personality type, as well) that pertain to you as an individual, and that differentiate you from someone else. For example, you might be more visually oriented, more tolerant of ambiguity, or more reflective than someone else – these would be styles that characterize a general pattern in your thinking or feeling.*

Brown (2000: 113)

Brown approaches the notion of cognition and learning by explaining that:

*The way we learn things in general and the way we attack a problem seem to hinge on a rather amorphous link between personality and cognition; this link is referred to as cognitive style. When cognitive styles are specifically related to an educational context, where affective and physiological factors are intermingled, they are usually more generally referred to as learning styles.*

Ibid (2000: 113-4)

On a more basic level, Arnold (2011) explores the relationship between affect and cognition to reason the fact that both dimensions are interrelated, and that any assumption separating affect from cognition is but a wrong one. She supports her assertion by referring to Damasio (1994), LeDoux (1996), Jensen (1998), Bless & Fiedler (2006), and Forgas (2008) all of whom point to the significant role of affect in complementing the cognitive function. As far as the learning process is concerned, neurobiological studies suggest that it is quite inadequate to *justify making artificial division between affect and*

*cognition* (Arnold, 2011). Elaborating on these concerns, Arnold (2011) illustrates the intricate relationship between affect and cognition when quoting Jensen (1998) saying that he:

*gives a good example of the complementary nature of the two functions when he explains how our logical, thinking side may tell us to set a goal but it is our emotional side that gets us involved enough to act, to work towards the goal. The amygdala, the part of our limbic system that is responsible for emotions, has a strong effect on the frontal lobes, which are in control of our thinking processes. A very active area of scientific research is affective neuroscience and it tells us that our frontal lobes help us work out the details of our goals and plans, but it is our emotions then that push us to execute them.*

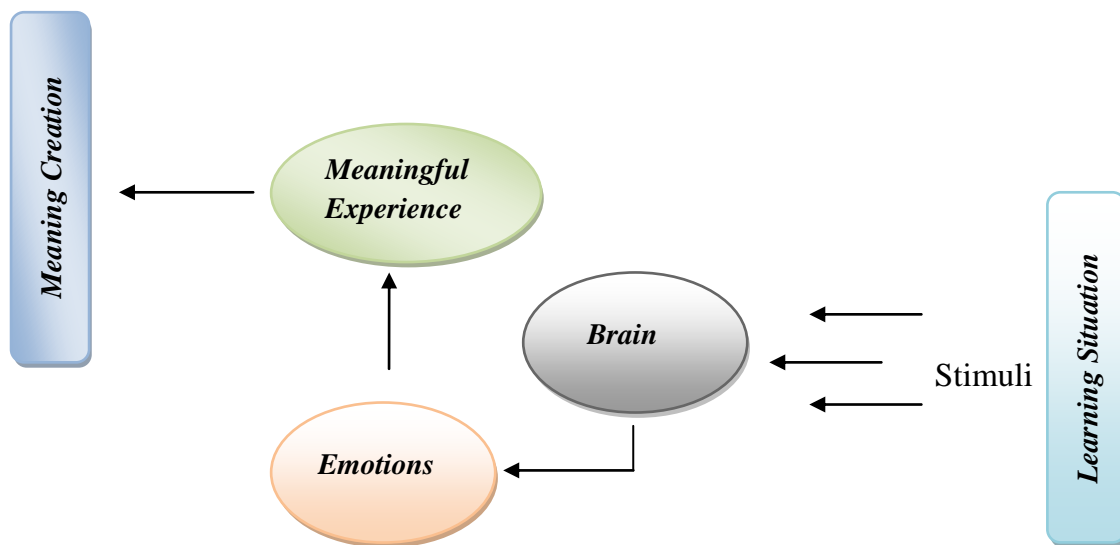
Arnold (2011: 13)

The above explanation then makes it clear that the affective dimension is of a paramount importance since it has utter control on one's mental processes prerequisite for learning to happen. Arnold then draws attention to the fact that although cognition is a relevant aspect that needs to be carefully considered in the learning process, the affective function should seriously be approached if teachers are to help their students think effectively.

In the same line of thoughts, Brown (2000); pointing to the role of learning styles in academic achievement, underlines the converging dimensions of affect and cognition:

*Learning styles mediate between emotion and cognition, as you will soon discover. For example, a reflective style invariably grows out of a reflective personality or a reflective mood. An impulsive style, on the other hand, usually arises out of an impulsive emotional state. People's styles are determined by the way they internalize their total environment, and since that internalization process is not strictly cognitive, we find that physical, affective, and cognitive domains merge in learning styles.*

Brown (2000: 114)



**Figure 3.4: Cognitive and Affective Functioning in Meaning Construction**  
(Adapted from Arnold (2011))

❖ *The figure above is an illustration of how affect influences the mental operation of meaning construction in a learning situation.*

According to Arnold, when the brain is exposed to a set of stimuli it proceeds to filtering out unnecessary or uninteresting input before *connecting to* meaningful experience so as to *get the necessary attention for learning to occur*. Such connection is established through emotions which in their turn *engage meaning* (Arnold, 2011).

### 3.4 On the notion of Classroom Interaction:

One of the relevant elements in foreign language learning process is Classroom interaction. The latter is defined by Richards & Schmidt (2002) as:

*The patterns of verbal and non-verbal communication and the types of social relationships which occur within classrooms.*

Richards & Schmidt (2002: 74)

In the same line of thoughts, Brown (2000) gives a more elaborate definition stressing a set of variables. In his words, classroom interaction is:

*the collaborative exchange of thoughts, feelings, or ideas between two or more people, resulting in a reciprocal effect on each other.*

Brown (2000: 165)



Yet, it is important to underline that classroom interaction is a process that involves a number of elements the understanding of which helps better tackle subject matters related to EFL teaching and learning in general and students' involvement and contribution in particular.

### **3.4.1 Language Input:**

An important element in language teaching is the concept of input. The latter consists of any type of information provided to learners in the language classroom. Yet, as far as oral communication is concerned, it is important to mention Tsui's (1995) assertion about modified input. Echoing Krashen's findings (1977, 1982, 1985), she states that teachers' modification of their input is quite prerequisite to make it comprehensible to learners, and so, allow language learning development.

Yet, Johnson (2001) points out to the unreliability of Krashen's theory saying that:

*...though comprehensible input may play an important role, it is not in itself enough: understanding is not quite the same as acquiring.*

Johnson (2001: 95)

He backed his idea referring to Swain's (1985) the *Output Hypothesis theory*. The latter states that language comprehension is different from language production, and that learners can produce language only if they are 'pushed to produce output'. The idea that mastering the speaking skill relies on the practice of speaking itself is supported by a number of researches (Nation & Newton, 2009).

Johnson continues with a second hypothesis provided by Allwright (1984) and Long (1983). The *Interaction Hypothesis* states that language acquisition takes place through the process of interaction where students practise 'talking with others'. The same assumption is held by the constructivism trend which suggests that: "*knowledge is 'constructed' through interaction with others*". Kumar & Eng (2009) in Barnard & Torres-Guzmán (2009:82).

### 3.4.2 Negotiation of Meaning:

Closely related to the concept of input is the process of negotiation of meaning. As FL learning represents some occasional ambiguities to students, participants in classroom interaction may have recourse to meaning negotiation which is defined as:

*the interactive work that takes place between speakers when some misunderstanding occurs.*

Ellis (1997) in Johnson (2001: 95)

The *Interaction Hypothesis* mentions that negotiating meaning contributes to providing both comprehensible input to the learners; and modified output (Edwards & Willis, 2005). In other words, by negotiating meaning in conversational tasks, learners manage to comprehend classroom interaction which turns to a comprehensible input leading to target language development (Edwards & Willis, 2005).

Bygate (1988) believes that negotiation of meaning is the ability to exchange ideas ‘clearly’ including the way ‘participants signal understanding’. He suggests that two important agents can build up understanding when interacting. The first is the choice of appropriate explicitness level. The second consists of the procedures used to ensure understanding. Procedures of negotiation may include: paraphrase, metaphor and the use of vocabulary.

### 3.4.3 Teacher Feedback:

Another important aspect of classroom interaction is teacher feedback. It consists of the teacher’s evaluation of students’ performance. It is believed that providing feedback to learners is a major element in language teaching (Chaudron, 1988). On the same line of thought, Harmer (2001) claims that feedback is double edged: it offers language students both correction and assessment of their performance in the classroom.

From another fence, he points out that:

*Decisions about how to react to performance will depend upon the stage of the lesson, the activity, the type of mistake made, and the particular student who is making that mistake.*

Harmer (2001: 104)

According to Edge (1989), students’ mistakes can be classified into three main types: ‘slips’, ‘errors’ and ‘attempts’. *Slips* are those mistakes students can correct themselves once they are made aware of them by the teacher. *Errors* are mistakes that students are unable to correct and that require the teacher’s intervention. *Attempts* are what

students want to say but cannot formulate because of insufficient knowledge of the correct forms (Edge, 1989).

Harmer (2001) mentions that the type of mistakes which draws the teacher's attention the most is *errors*. He goes on saying that students' errors can be generated from two main sources: L1 interference and developmental errors. As for the first source, it consists of students' confusion between features of their first language and the target language. Such confusion can result in errors closely related to pronunciation and grammar. As for the second source, it involves that part of the natural process of language learning where students make developmental errors like an over-generalisation of a grammatical rule, for example: *she taked the book* (Harmer, 2001).

It is worth mentioning, however, that errors are; as suggested by Harmer (2001), 'part of the students' interlanguage' which students are endeavouring to build up and persistently 'reshape' until reaching an optimum level of proficiency. Therefore:

*When responding to errors teachers should be seen as providing feedback, helping that reshaping process rather than telling students off because they are wrong.*

Harmer (2001: 100)

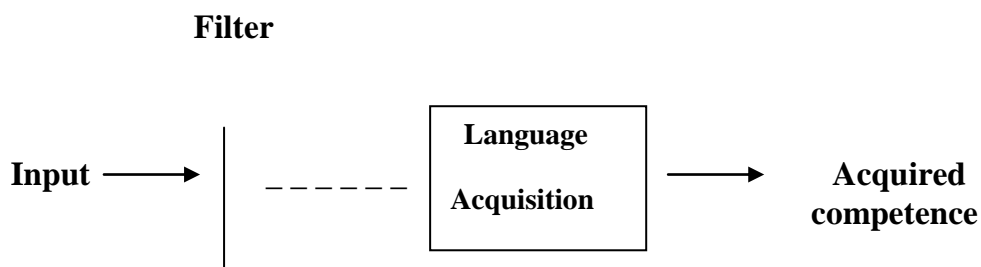
Researches believe that the teacher's corrective feedback to students' mistakes in conversation tasks can have a negative impact on students' performance. Frequent correction is reported to increase learners' affective filter, and thus reduce their will to overt performance in the classroom. On the same line of thought, Tsui (1995) underlines that it is unnecessary to correct mistakes made by 'very shy and reticent' students or by those with a 'low language proficiency' level.

As far as teacher feedback is concerned, recent studies (Shah& Gardner, 2008), (Dörnyei, 2005) and (Brophy, 2004), in FL learning and teaching stress the importance of learners' affectivity in the classroom. The latter is reported to have profound effects on students' learning process in general and their oral performance in particular.

#### **3.4.4 The Affective Filter Hypothesis:**

The *Affective Filter Hypothesis* introduced by Dulay et al (1982) states that language input has to pass first through students' filter before being processed and become intake. This filter consists of a set of affective factors that influence students' learning behaviour. Positive factors would determine an 'open filter' letting the input in.

Conversely, negative factors would determine a ‘closed filter’ preventing input from passing to the language acquisition device (Johnson, 2001).



**Figure 3.5: The Affective Filter. Johnson (2001: 94)**

❖ As shown on the diagram, the affective filter is the first barrier to be crossed by the input.

The more comfortable students are the less active the filter is leading, thus, to an optimum acquisition of competence.

The importance of students’ affectivity has drawn the attention of many researchers in the field of language learning and teaching. From Gardner & Lambert (1972) to Dörnyei (2005), the notion of affect remains a reliable determinant of language learning success or failure.

### **3.5 Teacher’s Affective Modelling and Strategies:**

The present part of this chapter aims at shedding light on the importance of the role of the teacher in the learning process. Most importantly, it attempts to put an emphasis on the notion of affective teaching and its vital role in developing learners’ FL proficiency in general and fostering their oral skill abilities in particular.

#### **3.5.1 Affective Modelling:**

Arnold (1999), inspired by neo Vygotskian theory (4), makes use of the term *modelling* to introduce the notion of *affective modelling*. Tharp & Gallimore (1988) state that modelling is: “*the process of offering behaviour for imitation*”

Tharp & Gallimore (1988) in Arnold (1999:106)

Modelling in language teaching is thought to be linked to cognitive contexts: a teacher can be a positive model when showing to learners, through examples, how to use a given linguistic item in an appropriate manner. Yet, Arnold (1999) assumes that modelling can also be applied in affective perspectives. She says:

*So just as we strive to pass on to our learners linguistic knowledge which is useful and empowering, we should also be concerned to provide a model that leads to increasing their affective competence.*

Arnold (1999:106)

In addition to providing language input to the students and contributing to the interactive work of the classroom, teachers can provide affective models that may influence their students in the first place. Therefore, a sense of positivism and ‘improvements’ can be developed among learners if their teachers themselves enhance positive ‘aspects of themselves’ (Waters, 1998 in Arnold, 1999). In this context Pine & Boy (1977) suppose that:

*Pupils feel the personal emotional structure of the teacher long before they feel the impact of the intellectual content offered by that teacher.*

Pine & Boy (1977) in Arnold (1999: 107)

### **3.5.2 Reflection:**

Recalling what happened in the classroom and analysing both what ran wrong and what was interesting for students so as to make of one’s teaching practices more effective, is what Stanley (1999) names ‘teaching reflectively’. In the same line of thought, Freeman (1998) portrays reflective thinking as “inquiry-oriented teacher research”. The latter could be defined as:

*a state of being engaged in what is going on in the classroom that drives one to better understand what is happening – and can happen – there.*

Freeman (1998) in Kumaravadivelu (2006: 173)

Stanley (1999) stresses that the act of reflection is to bring about actual changes that contribute to raising students’ achievement and enhancing the teachers’ experiences in the domain of teaching, otherwise it will be doomed to staleness. On this related issue, and referring to Dewey’s (1933) work and that of Schön (1983, 1987, and 1991) Stanley points out to the way an efficient reflection can be carried out. She mentions the following steps:

- *“think back,*
- *try to remember as much detail of the events as possible,*
- *investigate reasons for the events,*
- *re-frame events in light of several theoretical frameworks,*
- *generate multiple understandings,*
- *decide on what needs to be done next in relation to the analysis of what has already happened. ”*

Stanley (1999) in Arnold (1999: 110)

Walsh (2006) introduced the framework of Self- Evaluation of Teacher Talk (SETT) as a means for analysing classroom interaction. Though the SETT framework main objective is “*to help teachers both describe the classroom interaction of their lessons and foster an understanding of interactional processes*” Walsh (2006:62), it may be a good practice of reflection on the events that take place in the classroom.

The practice of reflection on the language class can be applied through the use of different means. Teachers, according to Stanley (1999), can have recourse to ‘inner reflection’. The latter consists of a kind of inner dialogue in which questions about the details of the classroom events are raised by the teacher so as to analyse particular points, find alternatives or plan future actions. Yet, Stanley (1999) on the basis of her studies on reflective teaching believes that inner reflection cannot be actually reliable, because it is not ‘factual or neutral’. For her, what seems to be more appropriate for the reflective activity is the use of teachers’ journals, video or tape recorded lessons and dialogues. Therefore, teacher corpus (5) on the other hand is believed to be a fundamental reflective means that contributes to the development of one’s teaching practices (O’Keeffe et al., 2007).

*...corpora can also be used by teachers as tools for reflective practice and professional development. In a practical sense this means that small corpora are created by teachers and analysed so as to reflect on, better understand and enhance their own professional practice. In the case of classroom practice, transcripts from classroom interactions can facilitate close inspection and build up sensitivity to the language that we use so as to hone our judgements about what we say in the classroom.*

O’Keeffe et al. (2007: 220- 1)

It is noteworthy to mention that ‘critical thinking’ is one among the nine characteristics of ‘the good language teacher’(6) suggested by Allen (1980) in Brown (2000). More interesting is Manen’s (1991) *theory of practice* described by Kumaravadivelu (2006) as the combination of thought and action as a result of “pedagogical thoughtfulness”. The latter is believed to be sustained by the teachers’ reflective thinking (Kumaravadivelu, 2006).

Even, for Bailey (1997) reflection means a lot in the development of one's teaching career. In this context, she writes:

*...reflective teaching is extremely valuable as a stance, a state of mind, a healthy, questioning attitude toward the practice of our profession. (It could also be the starting place for many research projects, and these are not limited to the action research tradition. Numerous issues will arise which could be approached through naturalistic inquiry or the experimental approach, but the choice to pursue these avenues rests with the individual teacher.).*

Bailey (1997: internet page)

From another angle, Gebhard & Oprandy (1999) stress the importance of the 'exploration of teaching'. They assert that exploring can allow teachers to be more aware of their 'teaching beliefs and practices'. In this context, Greene (1973) in Gebhard & Oprandy (1999) believes that creating new perspectives on one's teaching will enhance the teacher's effectiveness for a long term.

### **3.5.3 Facilitation:**

Facilitation is thought to be a paramount component of effective teaching. It can relate to both the cognitive and affective contexts. From a cognitive parameter, facilitating the process of language learning to students can be approached through the use of some activities and techniques like task repetition (7) (Edwards & Willis, 2005); or code switching (Kumar & Eng ,2009). As for the affective parameter, Underhill (1999) states that facilitation depends tremendously on the teacher's abilities and skills to build up a more relaxing atmosphere in the classroom allowing the enhancement of more learning opportunities.

As far as affective facilitation is concerned, being the focus of the present theoretical part, Underhill (1999) distinguishes three different kinds of teachers: *lecturer*, *teacher* and *facilitator*.

A *lecturer* is a teacher having a good mastery of the topic to be taught, but no skill or methodology for achieving their teaching objectives. A *teacher* is the one who has both knowledge of the topic and the practical teaching skills. Yet, a *teacher* does not focus on the enhancement of 'personal and interpersonal classroom skills' nor does he target the development of learners' 'self-direction and self-evaluation' (Underhill, 1999).

Yet, a *facilitator* is a teacher who, in addition to his/her knowledge of the topic and familiarity with appropriate teaching skills and techniques, pays undivided attention to learners' affective aspects so as to help them reach their learning objectives in a more responsible way. In Underhill's words a facilitator:

*actively studies and pays attention to the psychological learning atmosphere and the inner processes of learning on a moment by moment basis, with the aim of enabling learners to take as much responsibility for their learning as they can.*

Underhill (1999) in Arnold (1999: 126)

But, as Underhill (1999) clarifies, the three terms mentioned above do not necessarily apply to their respective definitions in their normal use: a lecturer (as a job), for example, can have all the characteristics of a good facilitator. The reverse, however, is true.

Emery (1999) states that the exam-oriented nature of ELT makes language teachers stress on passing on knowledge about the target language to their students forgetting some humanistic aspects of teaching. Such a fact is believed to have certain negative effects on students' achievement. Emery (1999) thinks that if learners are to achieve optimum learning results, teachers need to reconsider their role and bring about some concrete changes to the practice of teaching. She points out that the creation of a facilitating learning environment is the new role that the teacher has to accomplish in the language classroom.

As far as facilitation is concerned, Emery (1999) underlines three main elements building up the facilitative process. These are:

#### 3.5.3.1 Initiation:

It consists of the making of a fertile and supportive atmosphere in the classroom. This does not rely only on the provision of a suitable classroom setting, but also and most importantly on the understanding and development of two basic teaching skills: 'the ability to listen accurately' and 'an attitude of availability' (Emery, 1999).

#### 3.5.3.2 Observation:

It is the observation and acceptance of students' quality of performance, regardless its degree of appropriateness, along with the teachers' recognition of their students' actual potential. The main aim of observation is to try to understand the learners' behaviour so as to be able to encourage them do better, rather than to force them to (Emery, 1999).



### 3.5.3.3 Response:

According to Emery (1999), the teachers' response is to take the form of an engagement of partnership with the students helping them and sharing knowledge with them, and not passing it on in an authoritative way.

Brown (2000) makes reference to facilitation as one among other roles attributed to what he calls "the interactive teacher". He suggests that:

*The facilitating role requires that you step away from the managerial or directive role and allow students, with your guidance and gentle prodding, to find their own pathways to success. A facilitator capitalizes on the principle of intrinsic motivation by allowing students to discover language through using it pragmatically, rather than by telling them about language.*

Brown (2000: 167- 8)

It is worth to mention, however, that facilitation in English language teaching encompasses different aspects that have a strong influence on the learning process. As mentioned by Underhill (1999):

*all aspects of the Facilitator's presence including feelings, attitudes, thoughts, physical presence, movements, quality of attention, degree of openness and so on, have an effect on the learning atmosphere and on what possibilities within each group member are opened or closed at any moment.*

Underhill (1999) in Arnold (1999: 132)

In a communicative approach to foreign language teaching and learning, Littlewood (1999) refers to the changing role of the teacher; traditionally defined as 'instructor', mentioning the notion of 'facilitator of learning'. The latter function, according to Littlewood (1999), subsumes a number of tasks mainly:

- giving help or advice to students
- localising students' "strengths and weaknesses"
- contributing in classroom activities "as a co-communicator" participant
- trying just to be "a human among humans"

### 3.5.4 Autonomy Enhancement:

Referring back to the constructivist theory we can notice the pervasive role of learner autonomy in building up language learning. The constructivist theory states that: *“knowledge cannot be taught but must be constructed by the learner”*

Candy (1991) in Benson (2001: 35). Such an approach to language learning clearly supposes that the learning process relies substantially on the learners’ abilities to undertake learning on their own. Such a kind of learners’ enterprise and independence in learning is referred to as learners’ autonomy. The latter can be defined as: *“a capacity to take control of one’s own learning in the service of one’s perceived needs and aspirations”* Aoki (1999) in Arnold (1999: 144).

Aoki’s conception of autonomy can be supported by some perceptions held by humanistic psychology researchers, like Maslov (1970) and Rogers (1983), who think that students’ “thoughts, feelings and motivation” are important elements contributing in the learning process (Schalkwijk et al. (2002) in Savignon(2002)).

From a starting point in cognitive psychology which holds that learning is built up through “collecting” and “storing” information in the brain, researchers studied metacognition (8) and the effects of metacognitive activities on the learning achievement and found a positive correlation between the two (Schalkwijk et al., 2002). Therefore, they pointed out to the teachability of “the effective use” of both learning strategies and metacognitive skills leading to explore metacognition as an element that can enhance learner autonomy (Schalkwijk et al., 2002).

Yet, Vygotsky (1978, 1986) maintains that complete autonomy cannot be beneficial for the students. He suggests that learning can take place only through the practice of interaction under the prerequisite guidance of the teacher or the collaboration of peer learners who may play the role of “mediators” (Schalkwijk et al., 2002). In the same context, Little (1990) affirms that:

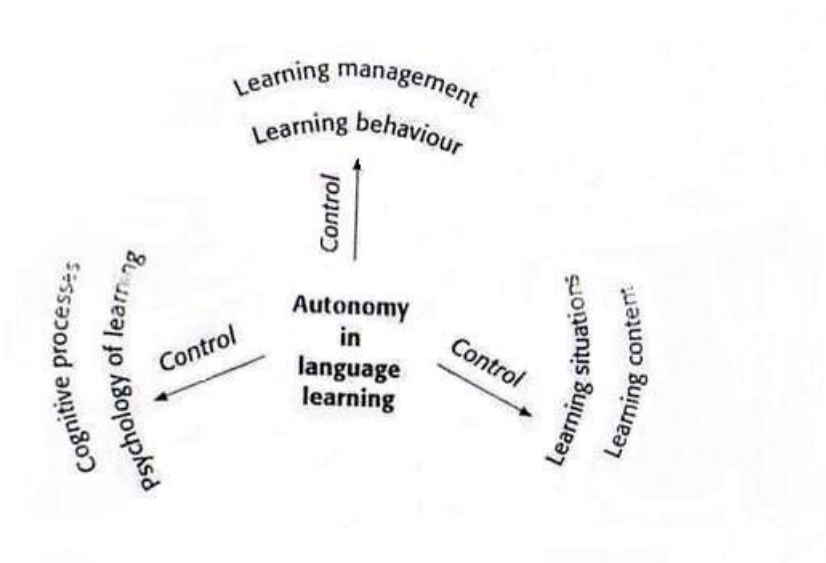
*In the classroom context, autonomy does not entail an abdication of responsibility on the part of the teacher; it is not a matter of letting the learners get on with things as best they can.*

Little (1990) in Benson (2001: 48)

As to Benson (2001), he describes autonomy and reinforces Holec's (1981) and Little's (1991) perceptions of the same issue. He points out to three main areas where autonomous learners may take control over their "own learning" (Holec,1981): learning management, cognitive processes and learning content. Benson (2001) explains that:

*These three levels of control are clearly interdependent. Effective learning management depends upon control of the cognitive processes involved in learning, while control of cognitive processes necessarily has consequences for the self-management of learning. Autonomy also implies that self-management and control over cognitive processes should involve decisions concerning the content of learning.*

Benson (2001: 50)



**Diagram 3.6: Defining Autonomy: the Capacity to Take Control over Learning.**

**Benson (2001: 50)**

- ❖ *The diagram above illustrates the three interdependent areas where autonomous learning can take place.*

It is worth mentioning that learner autonomy is reported to be closely linked to motivation. Brophy (2004), rehearsing Deci's, Schwartz's, Sheinman's and Ryan's (1981)

findings, states that enhancing students autonomy correlates positively with a higher level of motivation and thus optimum learning results. In Brophy's (2004) words:

*students of autonomy-supportive teachers showed more curiosity, desire for challenge, and other evidence of mastery motivation, whereas the students of controlling teachers showed less of this mastery motivation and expressed lower confidence in their academic abilities and lower self-worth perceptions.*

Brophy (2004: 191)

As far as the teacher's role in enhancing learners' autonomy is concerned, Walter (1997) reviews three main roles, proposed by Voller (1997), portraying the teachers as: "facilitators, counsellors and resources".

A crucial keyword in learner's autonomy is decision-making. Aoki (1999) underlines that learners are viewed as actual 'members of a decision-making body'. They can cooperate with teachers, head teachers and even curricula designers when possible. Yet, Aoki (1999) maintains that learners are to experience partial autonomy first, i.e. they are not to make important decisions right from the beginning. They rather need to be guided with some support from the surrounding milieu. Aoki (1999), echoing Nedelsky (1989) mentions that such partial autonomy, depending on social support, may pave the way for learners to think about full autonomy. Such expectations among learners will nourish and reinforce their feeling of autonomy.

### **3.6 Affect and Students' Diversity:**

The notion of students' diversity in classrooms has gained undivided attention in educational contexts. It is widely granted that students differ in the way they learn things. Some respond better to auditory stimuli like sound or music, others prefer visual ones such as pictures or video animation. According to Harmer (2010) the Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) model can show how particular students are especially influenced by visual or auditory input and are therefore more likely to remember things effectively when seeing them or hearing them. Another learners' variation consists of the fact that some students tend to be efficient in *kinaesthetic* activities which involve a sort of physical exercise like moving around or rearranging things with the hands. Yet, it worth to mention that though all individuals, non handicapped ones, have the ability to respond to all of the three types of stimuli, some tend to be powerfully influenced by one or other of them (Harmer, 2010).

The construct of Multiple Intelligences (MI) first elaborated by Gardner (1983) is another area that concerns students' differences. The MI theory holds that people possess a range of various intelligences (mathematical, emotional, musical, interpersonal, etc), yet:

*While one person's mathematical intelligence might be highly developed, their interpersonal intelligence (the ability to interact with and relate to other people) might be less advanced, whereas another person might have good spatial awareness and musical intelligence, but might be weak mathematically.*

Harmer (2010: 16)

According to Harmer (2010), it is inadequate to qualify an individual as being *intelligent* or *unintelligent* because if one has limited abilities in one domain that does not imply that their skills are limited also in the other fields.

On a more basic level, Arnold (2011) suggests that students' diversity needs to be seriously considered by the teacher if they are to create a favourable affective climate within their classrooms. Awareness then of the very various learning styles and personality aspects of students on the part of their teacher is in itself a positive factor that can bring optimum results as far as students' affective predispositions are concerned. In this respect, Arnold (2011) clarifies:

*One of the advantages of attention of affect is that it can make it much easier to address learner diversity. To begin with, a seemingly small change in attitude on the part of the teacher can make a big difference (Underhill 1989). If we are aware of our students as individuals, each a representative of diversity and having a unique identity, we can communicate to them in subtle ways acceptance of and respect for their individuality. This can facilitate a positive classroom climate and the creation of a well-functioning group in which the learning process can unfold. There, diversity may be seen less as a problem than as a natural part of life, an interesting challenge and a resource.*

Arnold (2011: 14-5)

Therefore, a classroom with students' diversity can be an actual opportunity for teachers to draw optimum profits from the various intelligences and learning styles which can positively be explored to support language learning (Reid (1995) in Arnold (2011)).

From another angle, Harmer (2010) maintains that devising classroom activities needs to take into account students' variation. Yet, at the same time teachers can always try to find out about possible *generalisations* which can allow fostering some learning behaviours or habits that will help all categories of students (Ibid).

### **3.7 Conclusion:**

This chapter has attempted to explore the role of affect in foreign language learning in relation to three main parameters, notably students' personality and psychological traits, classroom interaction and teaching strategies. Yet, the present theoretical review has first given some justifications as to why attention to affect matters in educational contexts in general and EFL learning/teaching in particular. With regard to this concern, a growing body of evidence suggests that transferring linguistic and cultural knowledge to students in an *adequate* way depends tremendously on creating positive attitudes, emotions and feelings among them.

Closely linked to the notion of affectivity is the learning styles parameter. As mentioned in a related section to the present chapter, an individual's affective predisposition has a *considerable* influence on their very mental processes. A neurobiological explanation then was provided to illustrate how, in a learning situation, positive affect contributes to effective cognitive functioning in constructing meaning. From another angle, interaction is referred to as a crucial element in the language classroom. As pointed to in this chapter, different relevant affective factors, like motivation, self-esteem and anxiety, contribute to condition the quality and extent of the learning achievement. Yet, the pervasive influence of students' affect on the very different stages of language learning makes it quite necessary for many experts and practitioners, such as Arnold (1999), Harmer (2001) and Brophy (2004), to call for attention to teachers' affective strategies notably modelling, reflection, facilitation and autonomy enhancement. The latter practices are thought to be optimising learning factors as far as the dimension of affect is involved.

The next chapter provides an analysis of students' oral skills in relation to both pragmatic and affective concerns. A part of the empirical study tries to cover the effect of favourable affective predispositions, mainly motivation and positive attitudes in enhancing students' pragmatic competence in oral classes.

### Notes to Chapter Three:

1) - According to the Council of Europe (2014):

*“The Common European Framework provides a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc. across Europe. It describes in a comprehensive way what language learners have to learn to do in order to use a language for communication and what knowledge and skills they have to develop so as to be able to act effectively. The description also covers the cultural context in which language is set. The Framework also defines levels of proficiency which allow learners’ progress to be measured at each stage of learning and on a life-long basis.*

*The Common European Framework is intended to overcome the barriers to communication among professionals working in the field of modern languages arising from the different educational systems in Europe. It provides the means for educational administrators, course designers, teachers, teacher trainers, examining bodies, etc., to reflect on their current practice, with a view to situating and co-ordinating their efforts and to ensuring that they meet the real needs of the learners for whom they are responsible.”*

Council of Europe CEFRL (2014: 1)

2) - Culture shock is defined as:

*“the psychological and social disorientation caused by confrontation with a new or alien culture”*. Routledge Encyclopaedia of Language Teaching and Learning (2000: 165).

More precisely, it consists of:

*Strong feelings of discomfort, fear, or insecurity which a person may have when they enter another culture. For example, when a person moves to live in a foreign country, they may have a period of culture shock until they become familiar with the new culture.*

Richards & Schmidt (2002: 139)

3) - It is a relative psychological discomfort that manifests on the form of incapacity to perform or produce language.

4) - In the Vygotskian theory efficient teaching:

*awakens and rouses to life those functions which are in a stage of maturing, which lie in the zone of proximal development.*

Vygovstky (1956) in Arnold (1999:106)

5) - Teacher corpus is a kind of data support for teachers which allows them to make use of a range of texts, information about students, selected activities to mention some of them.

6) - It is important to point out to another important characteristic of the “good language teacher” which consists of a high degree of subject-matter knowledge (Andrews & McNeil in Bartels, 2005)

7) - Task repetition consists of assigning the same task for students twice or three times. The aim of such teaching practice is to make the learners familiar with the activity in hands, and so develop more self confidence and willingness to fully express themselves (Edwards & Willis, 2005).

8) - Metacognition is defined as:

*Knowledge of the mental processes which are involved in different kinds of learning. Learners are said to be capable of becoming aware of their own mental processes. This includes recognizing which kinds of learning tasks cause difficulty, which approaches to remembering information work better than others, and how to solve different kinds of problems.*

Richards & Schmidt (2002: 328-9)



*CHAPTER FOUR:*  
**STUDENTS' PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE AND PSYCHOLOGICAL  
INTERFERENCE: ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS**

## CHAPTER FOUR

### STUDENTS' PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE AND PSYCHOLOGICAL INTERFERENCE: ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

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## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **STUDENTS' PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE AND PSYCHOLOGICAL INTERFERENCE: ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS**

#### **4.1 Introduction:**

The present chapter represents the practical part of this research work. It analyses the different data collected from the targeted population being 2<sup>nd</sup> year LMD Students of English and OCE teachers at the Department of English- University of Saida. As mentioned earlier in chapter one, the researcher has had recourse to an investigation methodology subsuming a set of different research tools, notably classroom observation, DCTs, audio recorded role-plays and a questionnaire.

The central focus of the study then is cast upon the exploration of students' target language pragmatic skills along with affective interferences in OCE classes. The inquiry is made in relation to the main research questions set in the present study.

#### **4.2 Analysis of the OCE Observation Grids of the Pre-Pragmatic Instruction Phase:**

As a very first step of the practical research methodology, the observational practice is concerned with analysing the sample's oral communicative skills. It stresses, at the beginning, on trying to cover the different items that relevantly relate to the OCE learning process before entirely focalising on students' pragmatic competence.

##### **4.2.1 Procedure:**

It is to be noted, however, that the researcher has taken meaningful advantage of the fact of being a teacher of 2<sup>nd</sup> year OCE classes in the sense that he has been able to monitor the sample in regular sessions. Therefore, the choice of some speaking assignments has been most of the time related to the main problematic of the present research.

For the very purpose of assessing students' oral abilities in general and their pragmatic skills in particular, the researcher has selected a set of topics that he has administered to the sample during a 16-month period spread out over the academic years 2013/2014 and 2014/2015. It should be mentioned however, that this first observational phase has not included any direct instructions related to pragmatics in language use. Students were just given some classroom speaking assignments and were then asked to perform in small groups or in pairs depending on the nature of the activity.

#### **4.2.2 Results:**

The following grids display the main activities administered to 2<sup>nd</sup> year students in OCE classes along with corresponding descriptions of their contributions as far as involvement and spoken discourse are concerned.

##### **4.2.2.1 The Blue Star Hotel Activity:**

The objective of the activity, which is adapted from Cotton et al. (2005), revolves around the use of the target language in specific real life situations. It focuses mainly on the employment of some speech acts strategies including complaining, apologizing and negotiating.

<i>Activity Description and Procedure</i>	<i>General Observations</i>	<i>Observations on Students' Discourse and Behaviour</i>
<p>The teacher describes the following situation:</p> <p>You were wandering around the street when somebody gave you a leaflet. It was an advertisement for a holiday centre called "The Blue Star Hotel".</p> <p>You started reading and you felt interested in the features and facilities of the centre as described in the leaflet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New and luxurious building</li> <li>- Large and equipped rooms</li> <li>- Large balcony with a beautiful view of the sea</li> <li>- Relaxing Garden</li> <li>- Swimming pool</li> <li>- Shopping centre (five-minute walk)</li> <li>- Interesting price (payment is to be done in advance)</li> </ul> <p>You decided then to spend your holiday at that centre, but once there you discovered a totally different setting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Old building and rotten building</li> <li>- Cramped room</li> <li>- Air conditioner not functioning</li> <li>- No balcony</li> <li>- No garden</li> </ul>	<p>1- <u>Classroom setting</u>:</p> <p>The teacher is explaining the activity standing in the middle of the classroom. The tables are arranged in a semi circle allowing students to see each other.</p> <p>During the performances, student 1 (playing the role of the manager) and student 2 (playing the role of the customer) are sitting at a table in the front facing the whole class. The teacher is sitting with the rest of the students.</p> <p>2- <u>Activity Preparation</u>:</p> <p>After describing the activity situation and eliciting the main key words and vocabulary related to it, the teacher asks the class to work in pairs to prepare their dialogues. He gives the students 20 minutes as a maximum time to write and rehearse their scenarios.</p> <p>During the rehearsing phase most of the students seem relaxed, but not anymore look so after the teacher says that</p>	<p>Only 7 students out of 36 seem to have a better command of the spoken English. Many students exhibit a low proficiency level. Their fluency and accuracy in speaking are quite weak.</p> <p>-In spite of the 30-minute time limit granted to them (for most students were not yet ready after the 20 minutes allotted to the activity preparation) they look unprepared and uncertain with a relative dependence on their slips of paper.</p> <p>- Most students seem to have stumbling difficulties in formulating meaningful sentences and even single words.</p> <p>These are examples of mistakes produced in their speech:</p> <p>"I want to see the headmaster, where is it?"</p> <p>"I want to speak with you something"</p> <p>"I surprise!"</p> <p>"Why you are deceptive me?"</p> <p>"The system of the hotel do not allow to do this."</p> <p>"You are stay a few days"</p> <p>"When I called them no one cared me"</p> <p>"I promise you as an apologize to book you a suit for you"</p>

<p>-No shopping centre -No swimming pool</p> <p>The teacher then asks students about how they would behave in such a situation trying to elicit some key words like: deception, deceptive, lies, apologise, complain etc...</p> <p>Students are asked after that to role play the situation stressing the following points:</p> <p><i>Customer:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Angry and complains about the situation</li> <li>- Describes the difference between the leaflet publicity and the actual ugly place they found</li> <li>- Asks for a refund</li> </ul> <p><i>Manager:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Very diplomatic and kind</li> <li>- Offers alternative solutions</li> <li>- Tries to make decisions and reach a compromise</li> </ul> <p>Never accepts giving the money back to the customer</p>	<p>everyone is going to pass and role play the situation. An interactive work then, between the peers takes place but with a remarkable use of the mother tongue language.</p> <p>The teacher moves from a pair to another to give students some help when needed.</p>	<p><i>"The glasses are broked"</i></p> <p><i>"I did not found anything "</i></p> <p><i>"Remember me about the characteristics you have mentioned in the leaflet"</i></p> <p><i>"When I entered the room I shocked"</i></p> <p><i>"I know that you does not accept my justification "</i></p> <p><i>"This is the 5 stars hotel!?"</i></p> <p><i>"Yes, there is a lot of problems "</i></p> <p>In addition to inadequate structure, students' oral production exhibits also an inappropriate use of speech acts mainly those related to the activity: complaining, asserting and apologizing. And sometimes no apologizing strategy is used but instead a much more provocative expression.</p> <p><i>"We are not responsible of your stupidity"</i></p> <p><i>"It is not our problem "</i></p> <p><i>"I really feel sorry about you "</i></p> <p><i>"I will not bring you back your money, what do you gonna do?"</i></p> <p><i>"We will not bring you back your money and do whatever you want!"</i></p> <p>It is to be mentioned also that pronunciation mistakes and complete influence of the mother tongue language intonation wrap to a great extent students' speech.</p>
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**Table 4.1: The Blue Star Hotel Activity Observation Grid**

- ❖ *The table above illustrates students' learning behaviour and oral discourse observed during the speaking assignment of the "Blue Star Hotel".*

As it can be deduced from the grid above, the participants tend to have a weak mastery of their speaking skills. Manifest difficulties are observed not only at the level of discourse formulation but also at the level of speech acts realisation mainly those of complaining and apologising.

#### 4.2.2.2 Guess which is True Activity:

It is a game like activity which focuses on using the target language to recall and tell personal stories. It is a kind of individual assignment that helps to get some data on how the participants employ English language to describe their own past life experiences. It is also aimed to explore the quality of students' overt production in terms of both fluency and accuracy.



<i>Activity Description and Procedure</i>	<i>General Observations</i>	<i>Observations on Students' Behaviour and Discourse</i>
<p>As a warming up phase, the teacher starts the session by asking students if they have anything to say before proceeding with the planned activity.</p> <p>After a complete silence marked by a patent unwillingness on the part of the whole class to say anything, the teacher gives the following instructions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- You are with a group of friends and you decide to play a speaking guessing game.</li> <li>- You opt for short story telling revolving around your own personal life as a topic.</li> <li>- Think of three events: two real ones that truly happened to you in the past, and one which is only the product of your imagination.</li> <li>- Tell your three stories to your classmates without saying anything as to their truth or untruth.</li> <li>- You (audience) listen to your classmate then guess which story is imaginary.</li> </ul>	<p><u>1-Classroom setting:</u></p> <p>Standing in the middle of the classroom, the teacher is addressing the class within a semi circle setting.</p> <p>During the performances every student is called to tell their story in the front side facing the whole class.</p> <p><u>2-Activity Preparation:</u></p> <p>The teacher tells students that they have 15 minutes to prepare their stories. He explains that they have to do a narration, which is obviously an oral exercise, and so they need not to depend entirely on their sheets of paper they usually blacken each time they prepare for a speaking assignment.</p>	<p>The majority of students look stressed and uncomfortable when the teacher says that everybody is going to tell their stories, and that their oral performances will be marked.</p> <p>- During each narration, except a few students, the audience tends to show very little interest and attention to what their friend on stage is saying. Instead, they keep writing down and consulting their dictionaries to finish their own incomplete work.</p> <p>-As for students' oral production, most of the participants tend to exhibit a low accuracy level marked by pervasive grammatical, lexical and syntactic shortcomings. These are some examples:</p> <p><i>"My dad paid a money", "the officer came and asked us to went with him", "I broked my arm", "we received a phone", "one day I am coming very late", "my shoes broke and I will be shocked", "I was with my big sister", "he said me", "the car fly", "the things that happen I can't remember it", "in one night..", "I see a light".</i></p> <p>- In addition to the mentioned types of mistakes, students seem to have difficulties at the level of pronunciation and intonation, where sometimes the influence of L1 and L2 is quite noticeable.</p>

**Table 4.2: Guess which is True Activity Observation Grid**

- ❖ *The table above displays students' learning behaviour and oral discourse observed during the speaking assignment of "Guess which is True".*

The results obtained from the above observational practice description indicate the informants' communicative uneasiness when recounting personal experiences using the target language. They also show the negative impact of anxiety on students' overt performance when being subject to evaluation.

#### 4.2.2.3 Free Topic Discussion Activity:

The present activity is different from the two previous ones in the sense that the choice of both the type of the exercise and its topic relates to students' occasional aspiration. Yet, the objective remains the same: observing the participants' oral contribution. The class were asked to discuss the issue of respect in general and within the Algerian society in particular.

<i>Activity Description and Procedure</i>	<i>General Observations</i>	<i>Observations on Students' Behaviour and Discourse</i>
<p>The teacher greets the class and asks them if they have anything to say: an idea, a preoccupation or any information that they want to share with their classmates.</p> <p>The teacher reminds the class of the five-minute free speech they are granted at the beginning of each session.</p> <p>A student volunteers and says that she wants to tackle the topic of respect as a class discussion.</p> <p>The teacher agrees and tells the students that the whole session will be devoted then to debate their friend's proposed topic.</p> <p>He starts the discussion by asking students about the meaning of the word "respect".</p>	<p><u>1-Classroom setting:</u></p> <p>The class is arranged in an orderly row setting with the teacher standing in the middle facing the students.</p> <p><u>2-Activity Preparation:</u></p> <p>No time for preparation is granted to students as they start immediately tackling the topic by answering the teacher's first question.</p>	<p>-The majority of students look interested in the discussion. Everybody wants to give their point of view in relation to a particular detail.</p> <p>- The whole class seem quite motivated and less strained as they tend to eagerly volunteer for turn taking.</p> <p>- As for the quality of their oral production, most of students tend to exhibit almost the same low accuracy and fluency level. Pronunciation and intonation mistakes are also patently noticeable stumbling, sometimes, the normal flow of the communicative activity because of some occurring misunderstanding.</p> <p>- These are some examples of the participants' spoken discourse where most of the inappropriate forms are grammatical:  <i>"this phenomena", "misunderstood by the most of people", "there is a lot of type of respect", "there is people...", "we will all dying", "people should be respect the others", "I choosed to...", "it depends about the person".</i></p> <p>- Worth to mention that most of students' grammatical mistakes consist of inappropriate use of tenses, prepositions and personal pronouns.</p>

**Table 4.3: Free Topic Discussion Activity Observation Grid**

- ❖ *The table above shows students' observed learning behaviour and oral discourse during the free topic discussion assignment.*

The idea one may formulate, according to the results obtained from the present observational practice, is that the participants tend to exhibit a relatively low level of oral production. As far as students' accuracy is concerned, difficulties are patently observed in the employment of the basic grammatical rules necessary for the attainment of appropriate linguistic structure in speech production.

### **4.3 Analysis of the DCT of Apologising:**

The second tool the researcher has utilised to collect data on the sample's oral production is the discourse completion task (DCT) of apologizing. Yet, it should be noted however, that the very specificity of a DCT is that it focuses primarily on the analysis of the informants' pragmatic competence in relation to the use of one or different speech acts within a given conversational situation. The present instrument then is aimed to analyse students' employment of the apologising strategies when using the target language.

#### **4.3.1 Procedure:**

In order to investigate students' pragmatic abilities, a sample of 45 second year students of English at the Department of English participated as data providers through filling out Discourse Completion Task (DCT) sheets targeting the speech acts of apologizing (see appendix 1).

It is worth to mention, however that DCTs; initially introduced by Blum-Kulka in (1982), are believed to be among the most reliable means that a number of researchers usually have recourse to when gathering data about language learners' pragmatic competence (Azis, 2012). They consist of some structured questionnaires having as a primary objective eliciting what a speaker would say in a given conversational situation. In addition to the context description, the DCT provides also a clear delineation of the setting, the social distance between the participants as well as their respective status. The informants are, thus, requested to complete some parts of a selected scenario which may be dealing with particular or different contexts like asking questions, apologising, inviting and accepting or declining invitations, congratulating, etc.

#### **4.3.2 Results:**

The DCT of apologising used in this study consists of a questionnaire dealing with 7 different situations. The participants were requested to complete each scene with expressions that they would actually use if faced with those situations in real life. Yet,

before handing out the DCTs sheets to the participants the researcher has first conducted a preliminary study to verify the clarity and reliability of the instrument. Therefore, he has proceeded to checking the informants' understanding of each situation and providing extra information when needed.

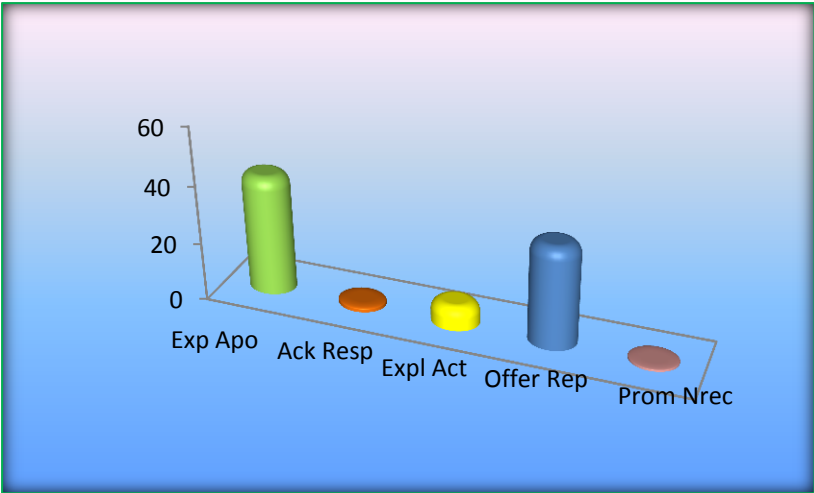
The analysis of students' responses is based on the classification of the different strategies they have used in realising the speech act of apologising. The researcher has adopted Blum-Kulka's and Olstain's (1989) criteria employed by Azis (2012) in a study assessing students' pragmatic competence.

No	<i>Strategies of apologizing</i>	<i>Examples</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
1	Expression of apology	I'm <u>sorry</u> . I didn't mean that.	In this strategy, the speaker explicitly conveys his/her apology by using formulaic and routinized expressions.
2	Acknowledging responsibility	Sorry, I gave you a wrong answer. <u>It's my fault</u> .	In an attempt to placate the interlocutor, the speaker chooses to express responsibility for the offence which created the need to apologize.
3	Explanation or account	<u>I'm always so busy in the morning</u> that I forgot to bring your comic books.	The speaker explains the objective reasons for violation at hand.
4	Offer of repair	I'm really sorry Sir, some pages in your journal are torn. <u>Please allow me to repair/recopy them</u> .	For the offence the speaker has executed, he/she offers repair to the interlocutor which directly relates to the offence perpetrated.
5	Promise of non recurrence	Sorry Sir, (some pages of your journal are torn). <u>It will not happen again next time, I promise</u> .	Whenever the speaker's sense of guilt is strong enough, he/she may feel the need to promise that the offensive act will never occur again.

**Table 4.4: Strategies of Apologizing  
Azis (2012: 12-3)**

❖ *The above table displays some strategies conventionally used in the realisation of the speech act of apologizing.*

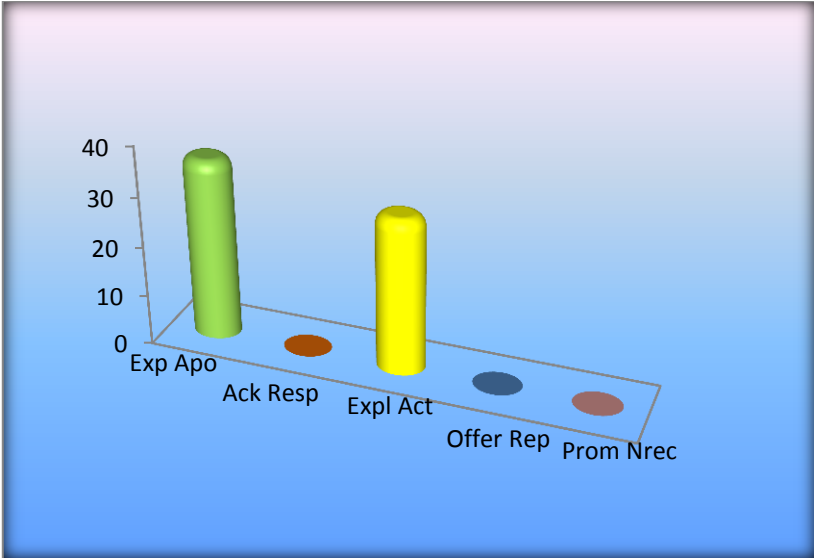
The results obtained from the sample indicate that the respondents tend to realise the speech act of apologizing using those strategies mentioned above, but with patent differences in the degree of preference. As far as the first situation is concerned, the informants have used all the five strategies. Yet, the most preferred ones are expression of apology (91%) and offer of repair (78%). Explanation or account comes at the third rank with (18%) rate of preference.



**Diagram 4.1: Apologizing strategies Used in Situation 1**

❖ *This diagram shows students' responses in the first apologizing situation.*

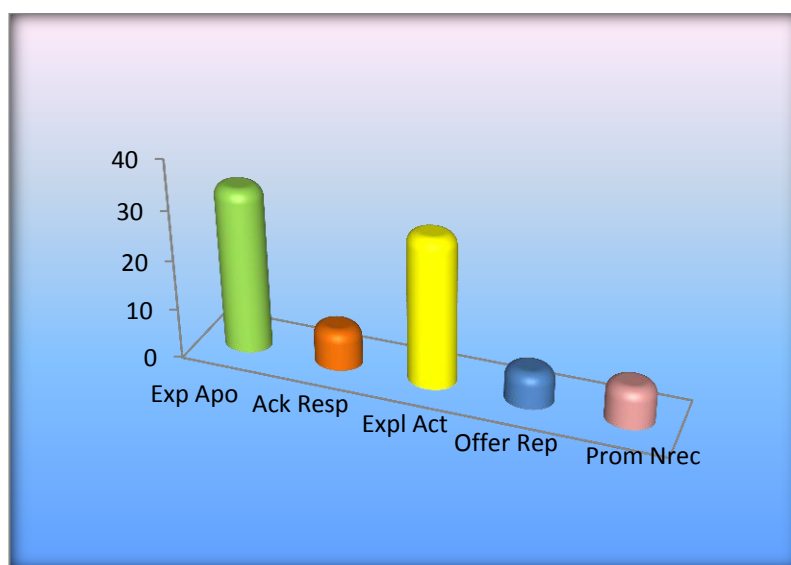
However, in a different context encompassed in the second situation; the informants have used only two strategies with almost similar degree of preference. These are expression of apology (80%) and explanation or account (69%).



**Diagram 4.2: Apologizing strategies Used in Situation 2**

❖ *The diagram above shows students' responses in the second apologizing situation.*

As far as the third situation is concerned, the respondents tend to have recourse again to all the five strategies, but always with varying rates of preference. The two most chosen strategies are expression of apology and explanation or account with the preference rates of (73%) and (67%) respectively. Less importance then is given, but with approximately equal degree of preference, to the remaining strategies of acknowledging responsibility (18%), offer of repair (16%) and promise of non-recurrence (18%).

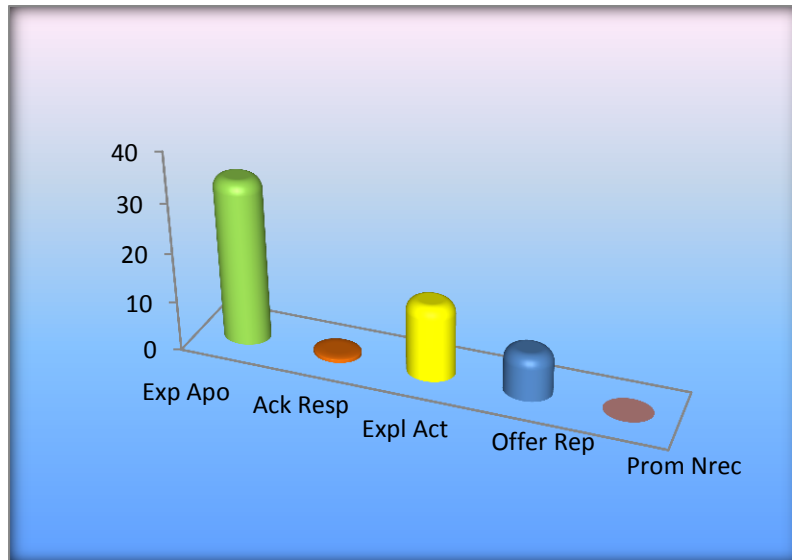


**Diagram 4.3: Apologizing Strategies Used in Situation 3**

❖ *This diagram shows students' strategies employed in the third apologizing situation.*

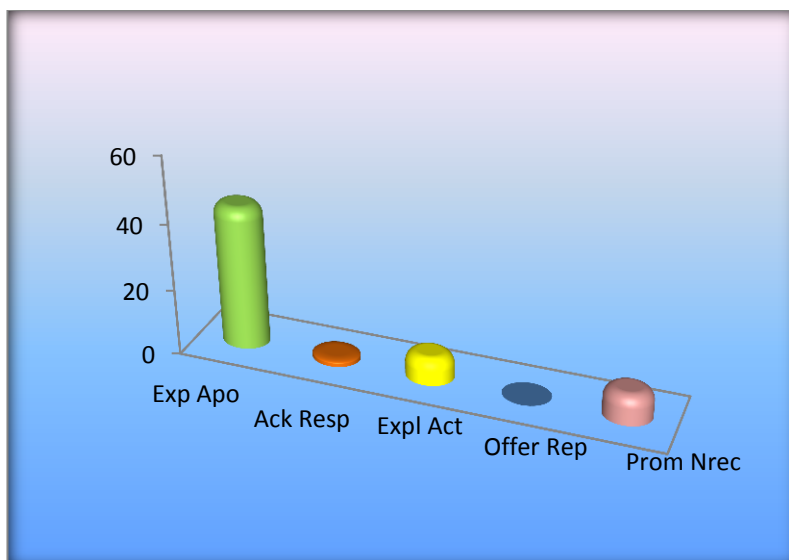
In situation 4, the use of expression of apology (73%) and explanation or account (33%) as the two most preferred strategies seems to delineate the informants' same pragmatic behaviour as to the realisation of the speech act of apologizing.

❖ *The following diagram displays students' responses in the fourth apologizing situation.*



**Diagram 4.4: Apologizing Strategies Used in Situation 4**

Yet, results concerning situation 5 show that the respondents gave equal importance to the employment of explanation or account (18%) and promise of non-recurrence (20%) after confirming the highly frequent use of expression of apology (96%).

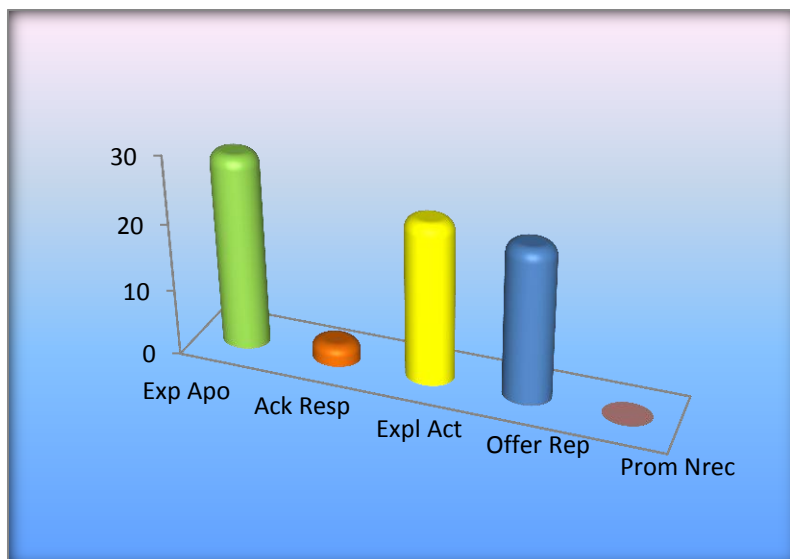


**Diagram 4.5: Apologizing Strategies Used in Situation 5**

In situation 6 the informants opted for the use of 4 strategies. Expression of apology (64%), explanation or account (53%), offer of repair (51%) and; with the lowest degree of preference, acknowledging responsibility (7%).

❖ *The diagram above shows students' responses in the fifth apologizing situation.*

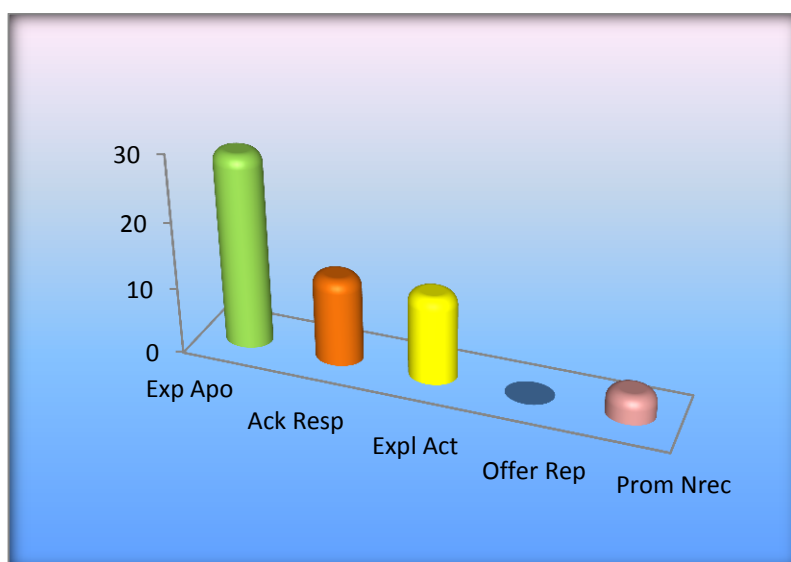




**Diagram 4.6: Apologizing Strategies Used in Situation 6**

❖ *This diagram shows students' responses in the sixth apologizing situation.*

As far as the last situation is concerned, the respondents' realisation of the apologizing speech tends to focus again on almost the same strategies but with a slight difference manifested in the variation of the degree of preference of each strategy. Expression of apology then comes at the first position (64%), followed by acknowledging responsibility (29%); explanation or account (29%) and finally promise of non-recurrence (9%).



**Diagram 4.7: Apologizing Strategies Used in Situation 7**

❖ *The diagram above displays students' apologizing strategies employed in the seventh situation.*

The following table summarises the informants' responses provided in each situation within the DCT of apologizing:

<b>Apologizing Strategies Used by the Participants</b>					
	<b>Expression of Apology</b>	<b>Acknowledging Responsibility</b>	<b>Explanation or Account</b>	<b>Offer of Repair</b>	<b>Promise of Non-Recurrence</b>
Situation 1	41 (91%)	2 (4%)	8 (18%)	35 (78%)	1 (2%)
Situation 2	36 (80%)	0	31 (69%)	0	0
Situation 3	33 (73%)	8 (18%)	30 (67%)	7 (16%)	8 (18%)
Situation 4	33 (73%)	1 (2%)	15 (33%)	9 (20%)	0
Situation 5	43 (96%)	2 (4%)	8 (18%)	0	9 (20%)
Situation 6	29 (64%)	3 (7%)	24 (53%)	23 (51%)	0
Situation 7	29 (64%)	13 (29%)	13 (29%)	0	4 (9%)

**Table 4.5: Respondents' Apologising Strategies Used in Each Situation**

Table 4.6 displays the average number and percentage of students for each preferred strategy in relation to the entire seven situations proposed to them in the same apologising DCT:

<b>Apologising Strategies Used by Average Number of Participants</b>					
	<b>Expression of Apology</b>	<b>Acknowledging Responsibility</b>	<b>Explanation or Account</b>	<b>Offer of Repair</b>	<b>Promise of Non-Recurrence</b>
All	34.85	4.14	18.42	10.57	3.14
DCT	(77%)	(9%)	(41%)	(23%)	(7%)

**Table 4.6: Respondents' Preferred Apologising Strategies in the Entire DCT**

Therefore, the obtained data shows that the respondents' use of the apologising speech acts is limited to 3 main strategies. These are: *an expression of an apology* (ex: I am so sorry, I did not mean it) with 77% preference, *an explanation or account* (ex: I had a big problem, that is why I did not come) with 41% preference and *an offer of repair* (ex: Don't worry I will make a photocopy for you) with 23% preference. A small proportion, thus, of the participants opted for *acknowledgement of responsibility* (ex: this is my mistake) and *a promise of non-recurrence* (ex: I promise you, it is the last time!) with a preference rate of 9% and 7% respectively.

It seems *obvious*, then, to notice that for the majority of the respondents it is the expression of an apology which is the most important strategy to be used when apologising to someone. This reflects the informants' awareness that to realise the speech act of apologizing the employed utterance should include at least one expression that conveys in the most explicit way the illocutionary intent of an apology. In addition and according to appropriateness criteria set up by native speakers (Azis, 2012) the use of such strategy is an indicator of the speaker's sincerity.

The participants' responses analysis also shows that in apologizing a second rank priority, however, is for giving reasons or justifying deeds through offering explanations and accounts. Yet, the use of such strategy according to native speakers norms, is believed to be inappropriate, for:

*giving reasons on what causes the offence is not always necessary, as it may give bad impression to the speaker him/herself. Furthermore, the interlocutor may consider the apology insincere.*

Azis (2012: 13)

The sample's pragmatic behaviour in the apologizing speech event is finally completely delineated by the employment of the third most preferred strategy which is the offer of repair. Such choice is believed to be appropriate since showing readiness to repair upon the offence indicates the speaker's willingness and desire to show politeness and save their face and that of the interlocutor.

However, neglecting the employment of promise of non-recurrence and especially acknowledging responsibility indicates the informants' inappropriate realisation of the speech act in question. This is because taking on responsibility while apologizing is conventionally considered by native speakers as a key element necessary to placate the interlocutor's anger when an offence is perpetrated.

Yet, as far as the informants' grammatical and syntactic structure of their responses is concerned one may point out to a relative inappropriate linguistic competence of the sample in question. A great proportion of the informants tend to exhibit a low mastery of vocabulary, tenses, prepositions and conjunctions when formulating utterances related to the speech event of apologizing.

What can be deduced then from the data obtained is that the informants' realisation of the speech act of apologizing is somehow below average level. This is due, from one hand, to the limited employment of extended strategies like acknowledging responsibility; and to the overuse; from the other hand, of the redundant and inappropriate strategy of *explanation and account*.

#### **4.4 Analysis of the DCT of Requesting:**

With the very same purpose of analysing the informants' pragmatic competence, the researcher has used a second DCT. The latter instrument, which is adapted from Rose (1994), focuses primarily on the realisation of the speech act of requesting in different contexts.

##### **4.4.1 Procedure:**

The same sample then, 45 second year students of English at the Department of Literature and English, were asked to fill in an eight-situation written discourse task. Within the pilot study phase, the researcher has verified the informants' understandability of the instructions as well as the different contexts and situations described on the DCT.

#### 4.4.2 Results:

The DCT of requesting (see Appendix 2) consists of a questionnaire dealing with 8 different situations. The participants were asked to fill in the blank space with expressions that they would employ when faced with those situations in real life. Worth to mention that the researcher has used the same criteria provided by Blum-Kulka and Olstain (1989) in classifying and analysing the sample's responses.

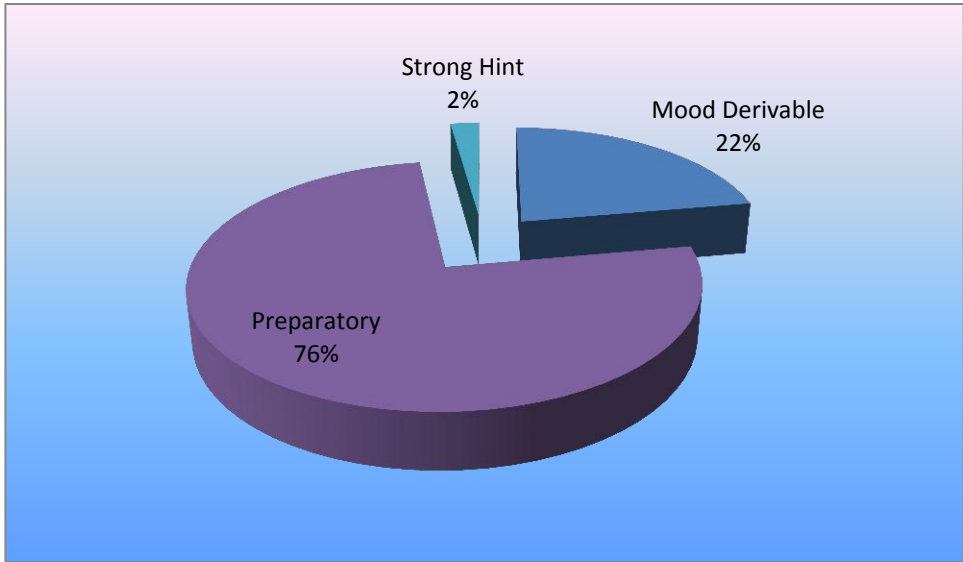
:

No	<i>Strategies of requesting</i>	<i>Examples</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
1	Mood derivable	<u>Help</u> me to legalize this academic transcript, please.	In this strategy, the speaker uses his/her grammatical mood of the locution to show its illocutionary force as requests. The prototypical form is the imperative.
2	Hedged performatives	Sir, I'd like to <u>ask</u> your help to ...	To show the requestive intent, the speaker modifies the illocutionary verb.
3	Want statement	<u>I'd like</u> to borrow your computer ...	The speaker expresses explicitly his/her desire so that the event denoted in the proposition come about.
4	Preparatory	<u>Could</u> you give me more time to ...	The speaker manipulate the preparatory condition usually used to convey the requestive intent, either showing ability, willingness, or possibility.
5	Strong hint	Will you still be using <u>your computer</u> after 10 pm?	Although the illocutionary intent is not immediately derivable from the locution, the locution refers to relevant elements of the intended illocutionary and/or prepositional act.

**Table 4.7: Strategies of Requesting  
Azis (2012:08)**

- ❖ *The above table illustrates the main strategies conventionally used in the realisation of the speech act of requesting.*

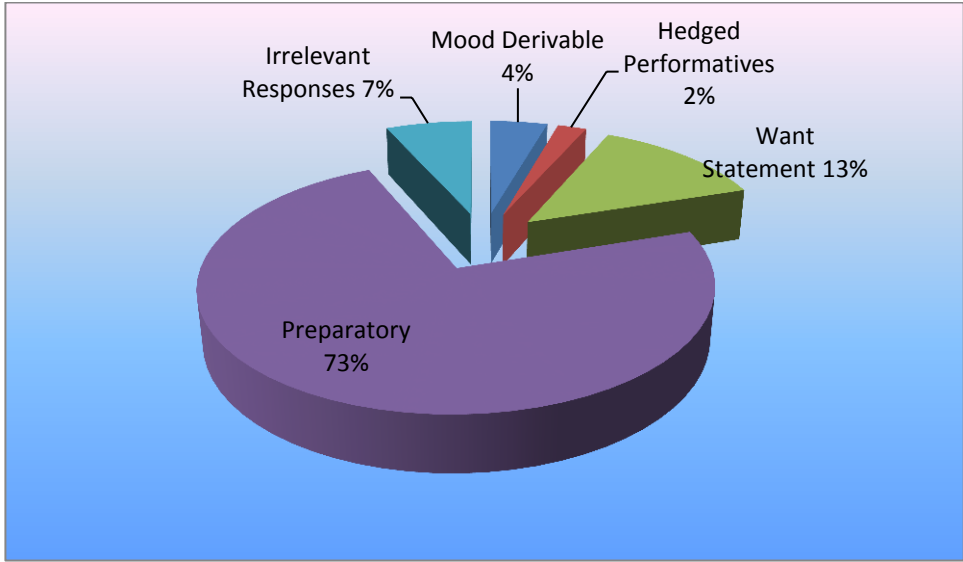
The results obtained show that all the respondents tend to use those five strategies mentioned above, yet with varying rates of preference. As far as the first situation is concerned, the informants have used 3 main strategies. These are: preparatory (76%), mood derivable (22%) and strong hint (2%).



**Pie-chart 4.1: Request Strategies Used in Situation 1**

❖ *The pie-chart above shows students' responses in the first requesting situation.*

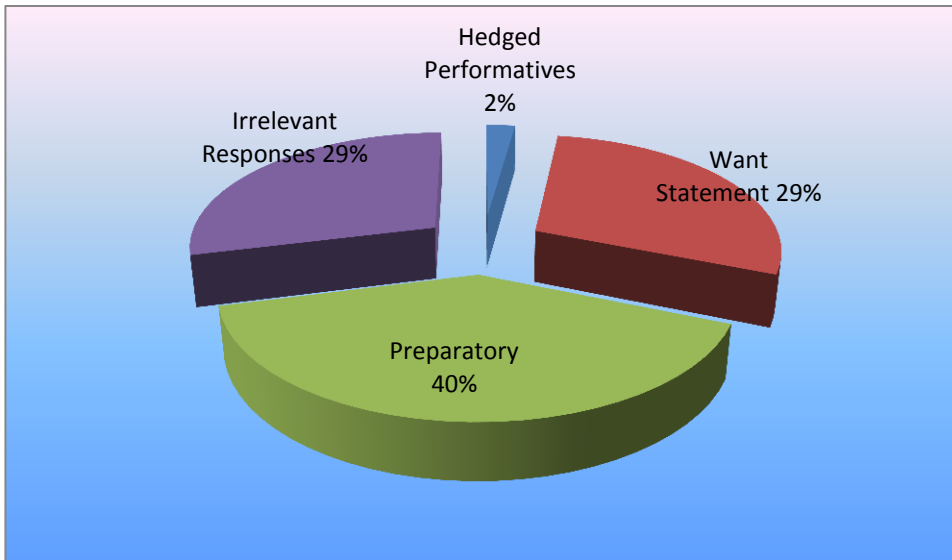
In the second situation, the informants had recourse to 4 strategies. The most frequently used one is preparatory (73%), followed by want statement (13%), mood derivable (4%) and hedged performatives with the lowest rate of (2%). Yet, (7%) of the informants provided irrelevant data.



**Pie-chart 4.2: Request Strategies Used in Situation 2**

❖ *This pie-chart illustrates students' responses in the second requesting situation.*

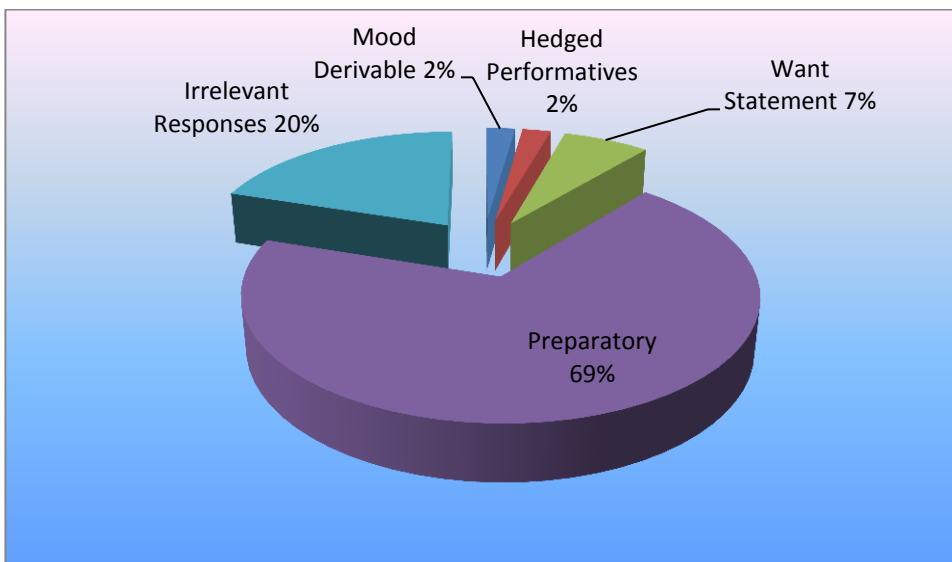
As for the third situation, the results show that the respondents used 3 different strategies: preparatory, want statement and hedged performatives with the preference rates of (40%), (29%) and (2%) respectively. An important proportion of students (29%), however, provided irrelevant data.



**Pie-chart 4.3: Request Strategies Used in Situation 3**

❖ *The above pie-chart displays students' responses in the third requesting situation.*

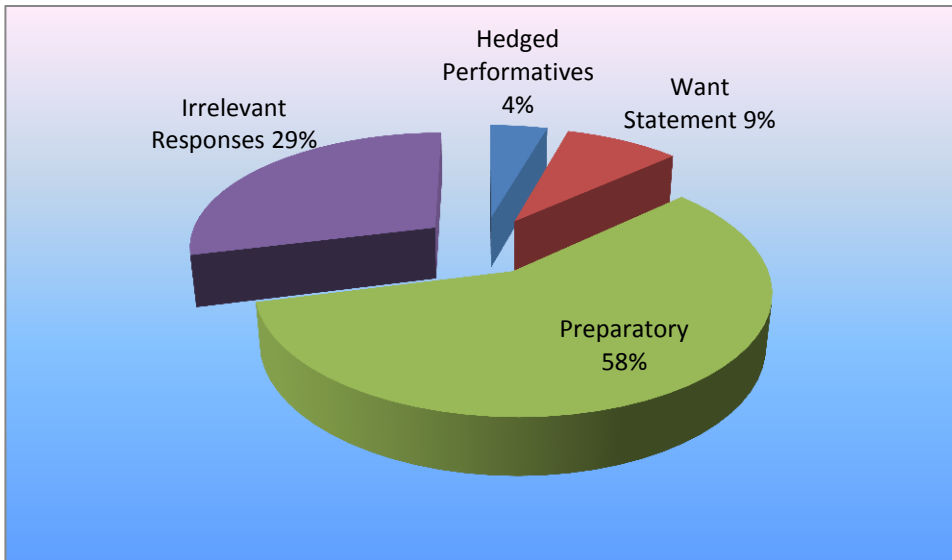
The use of preparatory as a request strategy was also quite significant in situation 4 with a preference rate of (69%), followed by want statement (7%), hedged performatives (2%) and finally mood derivable (2%). Yet, irrelevance in responses was also present with a percentage of (20%).



**Pie-chart 4.4: Request Strategies Used in Situation 4**

❖ *The pie-chart above shows students' responses in the fourth requesting situation.*

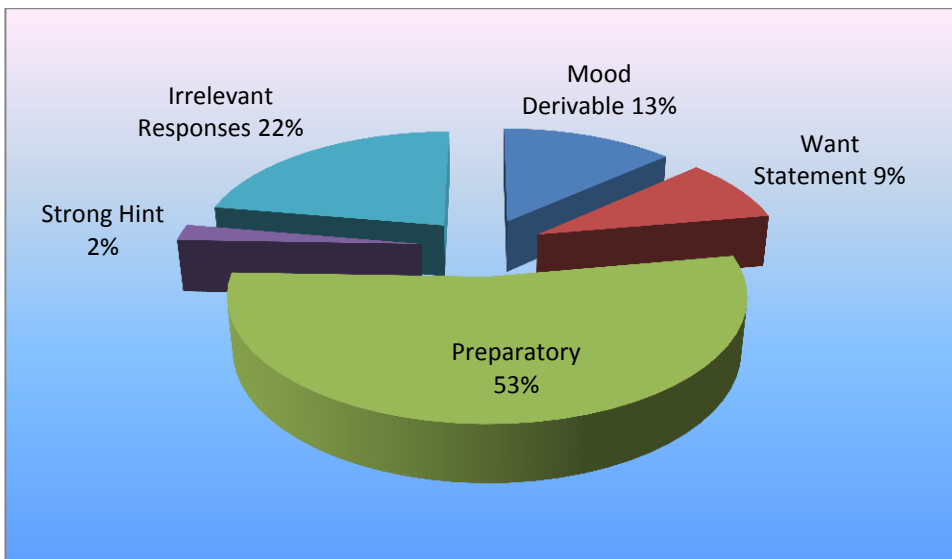
In situation 5, the informants had recourse to almost the same strategies being preparatory (58%), want statement (9%) and hedged performatives (4%); while (29%) of them provided irrelevant data.



**Pie-chart 4.5: Request Strategies Used in Situation 5**

❖ *This pie-chart illustrates students' responses in the fifth requesting situation.*

As for situation 6, again preparatory was the most frequent strategy used by the informants with (53%) rate followed by mood derivable (13%), want statement (9%) and strong hint with the lowest rate of (2%). A relative deficiency in students' realisation of the act of requesting in the situation in question manifested itself in the provision of irrelevant responses with (22%) rate.



**Pie-chart 4.6: Request Strategies Used in Situation 6**

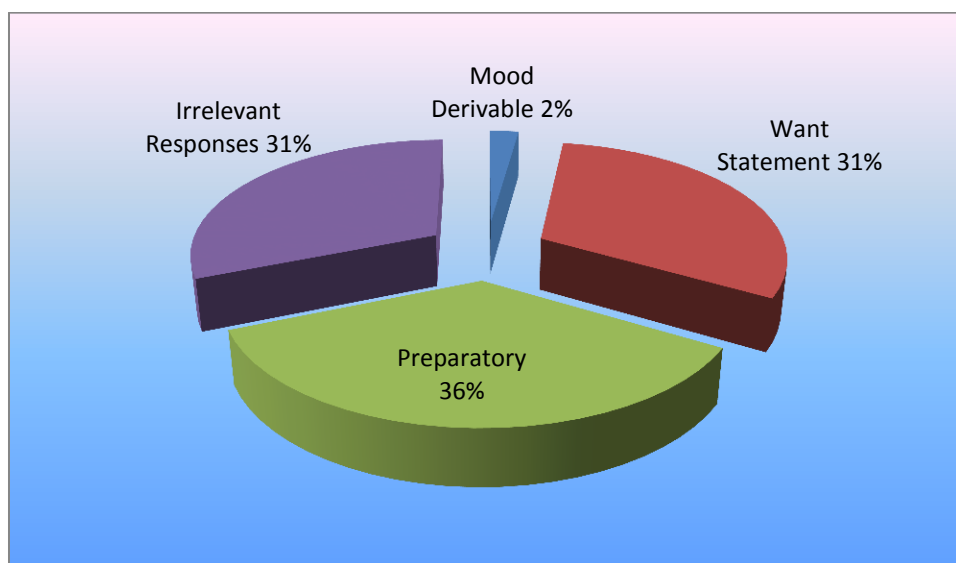
❖ *The above pie-chart displays students' responses in the sixth requesting situation.*

Two strategies were used with almost the same degree of preference in situation 7. These are preparatory (36%) and want statement (31%). Only 1 informant (2%) used



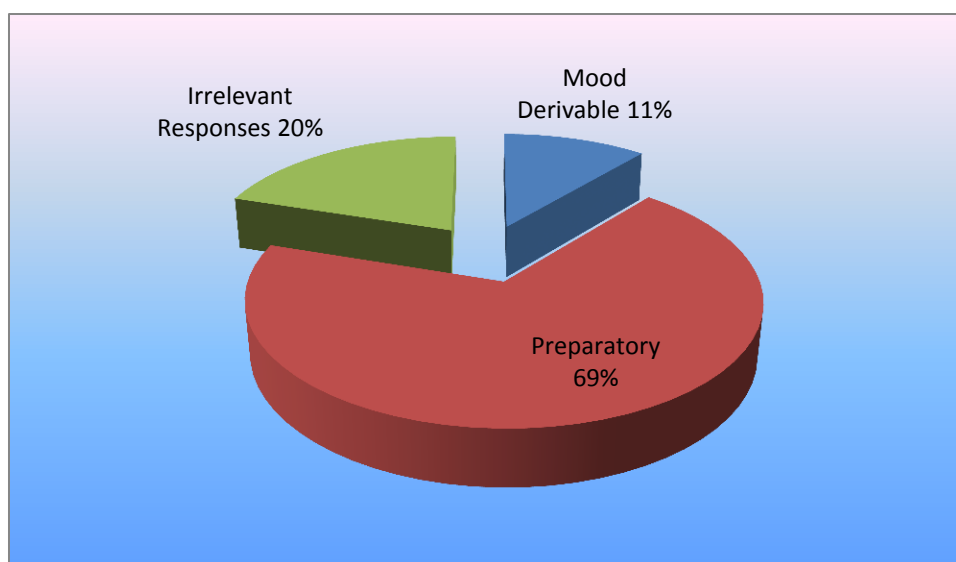
mood derivable in the speech act realisation. Yet, approximately one third of the sample (31%) failed to provide appropriate responses.

❖ *The following pie-chart shows students' responses in the seventh requesting situation.*



**Pie-chart 4.7: Request Strategies Used in Situation 7**

As far as the last situation is concerned, the informants' realisation of the requesting act was limited to the use of only 2 strategies: preparatory (69%) and mood derivable (11%). However, (20%) of the total responses were irrelevant.



**Pie-chart 4.8: Request Strategies Used in Situation 8**

❖ *The above pie-chart illustrates students' responses in the eight requesting situation.*

As far as the informants' responses through the entire DCT of requesting are concerned, one may notice a relative consistency on the choice and employment of

particular strategies in the realisation of the act in question. The calculation of the average number of strategies employed for each situation within the whole DCT shows, as displayed in table 3.7, that students tend to focus more on the interlocutors' abilities or inabilities to comply with their demands when realising the act of requesting. This is reflected by the frequent use of preparatory, which is a hearer oriented strategy, with the highest rate of (59%).

The second most frequently employed strategy to realise the act of requesting, which is rather a speaker oriented one, is want statement with a (12%) rate of preference. Mood derivable comes at the third rank with the rate of (7%). Such a low frequency of use of this strategy indicates that the participants tried to respect the politeness principle by avoiding the use of the imperative form, though having a requesting illocutionary force (1).

Therefore, and following the appropriateness norms of the request realisation by native speakers highlighted by Azis (2012) and Akutsu (2006) one may say that the sample's pragmatic competence in the present context is satisfactory (2).

<b>Responses Provided by Average Number of Participants</b>						
	<b>Mood Derivable</b>	<b>Hedged Performatives</b>	<b>Want Statement</b>	<b>Preparatory</b>	<b>Strong Hints</b>	<b>Irrelevant Responses</b>
All	3.12	0.62	5.5	26.62	0.25	8.87
DCT	(7%)	(1%)	(12%)	(59%)	(1%)	(20%)

**Table 4.8: Respondents' Preferred Requesting Strategies in the Entire DCT**

❖ *The table above summarises students' responses in the whole requesting DCT.*

Yet, it is important to point out that though 80% of the sample managed to provide relevant data manifested in the use of appropriate requesting strategies, their responses tend to exhibit a relatively inadequate structure. Mistakes in grammar and syntax were pervasively present. But these did not actually create great misunderstandings or misinterpretations to the illocutionary intent of the requests, but rather led to redundancy (3) and verbosity in some cases.

Therefore, one may deduce from the data obtained through the DCT of requesting that the sample's both pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic competencies are relatively satisfactory, unlike their linguistic competence which tends to be somehow low.

#### **4.5 Analysis of the OCE Observation Grids of the Post-Pragmatic Instruction Phase:**

Within the present phase, the researcher has had recourse to the observational practice, as a data collecting tool, for the second time. What is different, then, is the inclusion of instructions in pragmatics in OCE classes. The participants have been acquainted to, through illustrations and practice, the concept of pragmatics and language use.

##### **4.5.1 Procedure:**

The researcher, as an active observer, has endeavoured to present the different facets of the use of the target language in actual real life like situations within both pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic contexts (see chapter two) before administering two speaking activities. The latter ones have served as the target of the post pragmatic instruction observational process.

##### **4.5.2 Results:**

The following grids show the main activities administered to 2<sup>nd</sup> year students in OCE classes. Most importantly, they include some corresponding descriptions of the sample's learning behaviour as far as involvement and spoken discourse are concerned. In addition to the participants' oral production extent and quality, the researcher has paid attention to their psychological dimensions focussing on some relevant elements like motivation, anxiety and attitudes.

##### **4.5.2.1 The Trade Union Meeting Activity:**

It is a role-play activity that has a similar objective as that of the Blue Star Hotel assignment which was addressed to the participants in the pre-pragmatic instruction phase. Students are to produce different speech acts notably requesting, complaining, refusing and negotiating before having recourse to decision making strategies in a business like atmosphere. The main observational points of the activity are displayed in the following table:

<i>Activity Description and Procedure</i>	<i>General Observations</i>	<i>Observations on Students' Behaviour and Discourse</i>
<p>The teacher starts the activity by asking the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What do workers do when they meet problems at work?</li> <li>- Are there any other alternatives if their employers do not solve their problems?</li> <li>- How do we call that organization or group of people who represent and speak on behalf of the employees?</li> </ul> <p>The teacher then asks students to role play the following situation:</p> <p><u>Group 1(4 students):</u></p> <p>You are members of a company's trade union and you are having a meeting with the management board. You have a list of complaints about the problems that the employees are suffering from. You discuss the issues with the employers and try to draw maximum benefits for the workers. You focus on negotiation as a means to win the case.</p>	<p>1- <u>Classroom setting:</u></p> <p>The teacher is giving the instructions moving within the inner space of the U shape like arranged tables.</p> <p>After explaining the activity, the teacher asks the class to form groups of 9 students. The semi circle arrangement of the class, with some roaring noise of the tables, metamorphoses into a scene of 4 gatherings of students scattered here and there in the classroom.</p> <p>During the performances, Group 1 (playing the role of the trade unionists) is sitting at a table to the left in the front. Group2 (playing the role of the management board) is sitting at a table to the right in the front facing the whole class. The student modeling the chairman role is sitting at a separate table between the two groups.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Most groups look enthusiastic and motivated before, during and after the activity. Every student performing shows a patent attachment to the corresponding role attributed to them. Although the activity requires the use of particular register involving in its turn particular words and expressions that seem unfamiliar to students, the latter ones look relaxed and comfortable.</li> <li>- The audience tends to show undivided attention to what the members of the group on stage performance are saying, and seems quite delighted with both the activity and their friends acting.</li> <li>- The whole class seems to be overwhelmed by a noticeable funny atmosphere nurtured by some participants' witty comments and jokes made within the course of the activity.</li> <li>- As for students' oral production, some inconveniences are noticed at the level of accuracy. The following examples illustrate some of the language mistakes made by the participants:</li> </ul>

<p><u>Group2 (4 students):</u></p> <p>You are members of a company's management board and you are having a meeting with a group of trade unionists. You listen to their preoccupations and try to reach a compromise, but always acting in favour of the interests of your company.</p> <p><u>Student (X):</u></p> <p>You are a chairman of an official meeting gathering a group of employers on one hand, and a group of trade unionists on the other hand. You are asked to preside and conduct the meeting as an outside adviser whose job is to arbitrate the dispute between the opposing sides.</p> <p>The teacher concludes the instructions by eliciting some key words and expressions from the class like: workers rights, worker duties, health insurance, pension, promotion, retirement, job accident, indemnity, indemnify, sick leave...etc</p>	<p><u>2-Activity Preparation:</u></p> <p>The teacher grants the five groups a 30-minute time limit to prepare their speeches.</p> <p>The teacher moves from a group to another to answer students' questions and provide them with some help with vocabulary and particular technical expressions.</p>	<p><i>"Our problems which are represented at the level of health, transportation, safety.... cliness"</i></p> <p><i>"Do you have any comments of this problem?"</i></p> <p><i>"Let me clear to her that..."</i></p> <p><i>"The responsible of director transportation they are who they are persons who absent... not from us"</i></p> <p><i>"But this your work!"</i></p> <p><i>"that is not what we are claiming of"</i></p> <p><i>"But the employees houses is not near to the company"</i></p> <p><i>"what about the others who is not resident?"</i></p> <p><i>"we are claiming of the transportation means that mean that we need busses, cars who take in charge to bring the employees to the company"</i></p> <p><i>Some employees don't came to their work because of this problem"</i></p> <p><i>"They should waiting you"</i></p> <p><i>"we have test this tools and it is fake"</i></p> <p><i>"We have old fashioned sewing machines and it break down a lot"</i></p> <p><i>"Our life has become expensive"</i></p> <p><i>"You have to treat your problem before we lost our lives"</i></p> <p><i>"The problem which face the workers is the transport issue, it is very tired for us"</i></p> <p>.</p>
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**Table 4.9: The Trade Union Claims Activity Observation Grid**

- ❖ *The above table shows the participants' learning behaviour and oral discourse in the "Trade Union Claims" assignment.*

In this post pragmatic instruction phase, the data obtained indicates that the sample tends to exhibit positive attitudes towards the activity dealt with. Genuine interest in contributing to the assigned speaking task was quite manifest. One may deduce then that introducing such type of oral tasks, targeting the practice of language use in real life like situations, triggers students' motivation and involvement to an optimum extent.

Yet, the positive psychological conditions that accompanied the exercise did not seem to have tangible effects on the sample's pragmatic contributions. Still inappropriateness in the realisation of some speech acts were observed among the majority of the participants. It was noticed that when it came to scenes of requesting, apologising, warning or threatening; the presence of L1 pragmatic rules was widely felt.

As far as the participants' linguistic competence is concerned, grammatical and syntactic inconveniences of their utterances were, as illustrated in the grid above, pervasively present.

#### 4.5.2.2 Free Speech Acts Activity:

In this activity students were asked to perform short role-plays hinging upon the free use of different speech acts in different conversational situations.

<i>Activity Description and Procedure</i>	<i>General Observations</i>	<i>Observations on Students' Discourse and Behaviour</i>
<p>After a ten-minute warming up phase the teacher tells the class that the session is devoted to the use of different speech acts in different contexts.</p> <p>He then asks them to form small groups of 4 students before giving them a list of five different speech acts. These are: requesting, apologizing, inviting, declining or accepting invitation and complimenting.</p> <p>The participants in each group are asked to choose only 2 or 3 speech acts and employ them in a situation that they are to role play. The teacher explains that students are free in the choice of their topics, but stresses at the same time that they have to focus on the structure of their utterances for each speech event rather than on the story of the play itself.</p>	<p><u>1-Classroom setting:</u></p> <p>The teacher is giving the instructions standing at the inner space of the U shape like arranged tables.</p> <p>After listening to and understanding the activity instructions, students start moving to form small groups. Classroom setting then changes from a semi circle to a scene of 5 gatherings of students dispersed over the four corners of the room.</p> <p>During the performances, some students move to the front of the class to role play their speech event. Others prefer to stay within the respective position of their own group.</p> <p><u>2-Activity Preparation:</u></p> <p>A 25-minute time is granted to students for preparation. During this period the teacher joins the five groups separately and starts a short conversation with</p>	<p>-The majority of students look interested in the activity but, at the same time, uncertain about how to include 2 or 3 speech acts as a central focus in a short play.</p> <p>-As for the questions addressed to the participants in the preparation phase, most students affirm that they refer to Arabic language whenever they want to realize particular speech acts in the target language. They explain that translating from Arabic to English helps them understand better and eventually communicate better.</p> <p>-However, a few students highlight the use of some expressions and words that they hear from native speakers of English, in movies or other TV programmes, as a key tool for different speech acts realisation.</p> <p>- As far as the participants' performances in the present activity are concerned, the speech acts that the students tend to use the most are apologizing, inviting and declining invitations. Yet, their introduction within the role played situation does not seem appropriate, i.e. the strategies used by the participants in the corresponding contexts of those speech acts are quite limited. The illocutionary intent of</p>

	<p>them. He asks the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-In such interactive context, how do you retrieve words and expressions to perform the speech acts required for each situation?</li> <li>-Do you refer to your first language to perform the speech acts in English?</li> </ul>	<p>utterances is sometimes not well expressed because of inadequate use of grammar and syntax.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For example, the following response used by a participant as an attempt to realize the speech act of accepting a wedding ceremony invitation may inevitably lead to misunderstanding and eventually to a pragmatic failure: <i>"it is an absolutely that I came for your special night"</i>.</li> <li>- In addition to the use of less expanded speech act strategies and inaccurate pragmalinguistic choices (4) the majority of the participants tend to exhibit a relatively low linguistic competence manifested in the employment of inappropriate grammatical forms like: <i>"I just know him maybe for one years"</i>, <i>"so your friends is very important than us or what?"</i>, <i>"you are a business?"</i>, <i>"girls you can came to eat... it is a time to eat"</i>, <i>"next Thursday I have a travel to see my grand mum, it feels so ill"</i>, <i>"what about bring her a ring?"</i>, <i>"we forget mum's birthday today"</i>, <i>"me too, I forget her birthday"</i>.</li> </ul>
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**Table 4.10: Free Speech Acts Activity Observation Grid**



❖ *The above table shows the participants' learning behaviour and oral discourse in the free speech acts assignment.*

As displayed in the grid above, though the participants were given complete freedom to choose their topics in a role play assignment their pragmatic skills remain limited. More patently observed is the inappropriate linguistic competence that made the sample's realization of speech acts a quite challenging task.

Therefore, the results obtained through this second post pragmatic observational practice seem to confirm the idea that nurturing positive affective conditions in the OCE class is not enough to raise students' pragmatic competence. Furthermore, the inability of selecting and employing adequate linguistic forms, as far as grammar and syntax are concerned, is more likely to be a relevant cause of students' communicative uneasiness in the realization of particular speech acts in given real-life like conversational situations.

#### **4.6 Analysis of the Audio Recorded Plays:**

In an attempt to get more relevant data as to the samples' oral production in the post pragmatic instruction phase, the researcher has employed audio recorded role - playing as an extra research instrument. Such choice is motivated by the very idea that role- plays are believed to have almost the same eliciting results as those of a DCT. This is because both instruments are reported to allow the control of some relevant variables mainly context, politeness factors, social distance and status, *gender and age of the participants, or their proficiency level* (Félix-Brasdefer (2010) in Martinez- Flor and Usó- Juan (2011)). According to Tran (2003):

*Role-plays can be defined as simulations of social interactions in which participants assume and enact described roles within specified situations.*

Tran (2003:3)

Yet, it is to be noted that a distinction is to be made between a closed role-play and an open role-play. The former is a simulation of a situation where the participants' performance depends on particular precise instructions, while the latter is a simulation of a situation where the participants do not follow any further guidelines when performing.

Worth to mention, however, that the researcher has opted for the use of the open role plays in the present collecting data phase. This is because of two main reasons: the first is that:

*open role-plays may involve as many turns and discourse phases as interlocutors need in order to maintain their interaction. Furthermore, arranging different roles may allow researchers to observe how the sociopragmatic factors of*

*power, distance and degree of imposition (Brown & Levinson, 1987) may influence learners' selection of particular pragmalinguistic forms to express the communicative act involved in the role-play performance.*

Martinez- Flor and Usó-Juan (2011: 52)

The second reason is that eliminating restrictions and guidelines in a speaking activity may create positive conditions and attitudes among learners who may feel a certain degree of reassuring freedom and autonomy. This may undoubtedly reduce the participants' language anxiety level or any other negative affective factors that may interfere and hinder their oral production.

#### **4.6.1 Procedure:**

The role-playing activity was administered to the same sample, second year students, in the second semester within three regular OCE classes. Three different groups with a total number of 90 students participated in the assignment. The latter consists of a simulation of a conversational situation where two students are asked to play the role of two fans inviting and hosting three celebrities, the roles of whom are modelled by three other participant students. Both parts, hosts and guests, are asked to hold a casual and convivial conversation over a coffee table at tea time. No further guidelines as to the topic of discussion or turn management were given. The students were told to feel free to role play the situation the way they feel at ease with.

The very aim of this activity is to gather some data about the students' use of the target language within the interactive dimension of speaking. It also aims at analysing students' pragmatic skills in a social context through observing their speech behaviours mainly: opening and closing conversation, turn-taking mechanism, negotiating and the choice and employment of pragmalinguistic forms to realize particular speech acts.

#### **4.6.2 Results:**

After audio recording all the performances, the researcher has proceeded with the plays transcription which was a very time-consuming task (5). Because it is an axiomatic fact that interaction is a very complex activity, the speech transcript may help provide a detailed version of not only what is said and in which context, but also of the way participants engage in the conversational practice. Therefore, the researcher has used the Jefferson Transcription System (JTS) (see appendix 3) which is believed to be a reliable tool widely used by many conversation analysts.

Five plays out of thirteen were selected for the transcription process. The selection was based on the validity of the sound quality of the recorded plays as well as the relevance extent of the participants' oral production.

As far as play 1 is concerned, reading the transcript (see appendix 4) may give us a first impression of a low mastery of the target language on the part of the participant students. Noticeable deficiencies at the level of linguistic competence portray the general aspect of the interactive activity presented in the play.

Examples of linguistic inappropriateness may include the following exchanges:

*Exp3: I eh wish I eh I will eh near to you to eh to taste your delicious plate.*

*Exp4: Me too I wish it (.) I wish it and by the way how you (.) can you tell us how you how you start in this domain of eh.*

*Exp5: Nice eh as you know eh my eh story with this art started when eh when I was eh six year (.) when I was six year eh and eh after eh my mother discover eh this eh talent when I was eh thirteen thirteen years eh this eh (.) ee she she discover this eh creation in the eh decoration of the ( ) and sweets and the eh the new ideas eh for me and of course eh my family tel eh encourage me to he he (.) to go and eh eh to eh my father tell tell for me eh if I want eh I can (.) eh (.) this is the eh the sto (.) eh it's eh in the first it's eh so hard but eh it will be easy.*

Almost the same linguistic shortcomings can be observed in the second and even in the rest of the other plays. Although students were granted enough time to prepare their plays, they tend to exhibit actual difficulties in using appropriate tense forms. Other linguistic problems include the miss use of the plural forms, personal pronouns, question forms and prepositions. The following examples, extracted from the transcriptions of play2, 3, 4 and 5 (see Appendix 4), illustrate those grammatical inaccuracies:

*Exp 6: I see you have bring some cakes.*

*Exp 7: You made this tea? [*

*Exp 8: Yes she made it.*

*Exp 9: Actually I introduct my eh [*

*Exp 10: I think your dream has eh realized [*

*Exp 11: Yes (.) it's an honour to us.*

*Exp 12: This remember me the old days (.) do you remember?*

*Exp 13: It was very interested (.) oh my God [*

*Exp 14: In my life eh? (.) embarrassing thing ? there is a lot of embarrassing thing eh like eh [*

*Exp 15: Oh Carmen (.) I can't believe that I'm seeing you after all this eh years you forget about us (.) but eh okay (.) I was so happy when you eh win on the eh Arab idol (.) and eh by the way I vote for you↑ [SO MUCH (.) you have to pay to me (h) [*

*Exp 16: They didn't they didn't give us any eh (.) any piece of private or space to I am just eh from eh (.) when I was eh at the airport the journalist come to me please please I want just an interview I ca I tell him I am wearing my eh (.) my eh casquette (French word) (h) and I am (.) my cap and I was running eh (.) and he was after ME until until I eh was eh it came eh a girl eh a little girl and she told me please I love you so much I want to take a photo with you so I eh (.) they she stopped me [*

*Exp 17: Amina I have eh some question to ask to you (.) eh your eh (.) the the job of journalist do you choose it or eh just eh job like that to earn money and eh.*

*Exp 18: How many child eh you have eh Khadidja?*

*Exp 19: Yes journalist is my dream (.) yes and I eh (.) I eh SUFFER fo for eh REALISE this eh dream.*

*Exp 20: Yes and I have two child Aya and eh Abderrahmane.*

*Exp 21: So this is my sister eh which I eh already (.) tell eh told you about it (.) sho so eh today is eh her birsday birthday [*

*Exp 22: You already invited him in your show (.) Mr. Bean?*

*Exp 23: What about you? you didn't eh told us about your childhood and eh.*

*Exp 24: Like me (.) I birth in a poor family but my mother was eh house keeper and my father was a hair dress I decide to study and help my families [*

*Exp 25: I eh I supposed to be there for eh ten month but fortunately I stay I stayed there only for three month and eh I became free.*

*Exp 26: I don't I don't mix between the eh personal li my personal life and eh my work I mean eh the personal is personal I keep it as a secret (.) even my eh (.) my neighbours doesn't know what 's what's what's going on in my house eh you know[*

*Exp 27: I really appreciate (.) thank you sister to bring me ( ) eh this eh giants this icons and eh [*

In addition to pinpointing some grammatical errors in the sample's spoken discourse, the analysis of the transcripts has allowed the researcher to depict some pragmatic issues related to the participants' contribution in the assigned role plays. The pragmatic analysis was based on Grice's (1975) theory as to meaning inference and conveying by speakers and hearers in a conversational situation (see chapter two). More

precisely, the researcher has used the Gricean Cooperative Principle (CP) as a main reference for the analysis of students' utterances.

The reason behind opting for this analysis criterion is that the CP fits better as a tool to study the participants' rhetorical effectiveness in such type of exercise, which is an illustration of language use in social interactions. Therefore, an analysis grid based on Grice's four conversational maxims has been elaborated, as displayed in the table below:

<i>Grice's Cooperative Principle in Interaction</i>	
<i>Conversational Maxims</i>	<i>Description</i>
<b>1- Quantity</b>	<i>Speakers are required to convey the appropriate amount of information needed in the conversational exchange, nor more neither less than is required.</i>
<b>2- Quality</b>	<i>It stresses the truthfulness of the speakers' contribution, false or non evident speeches are to be avoided.</i>
<b>3- Relevance</b>	<i>Speakers have to say things that are relevant.</i>
<b>4- Manner</b>	<i>Speakers are required to be perspicuous, orderly and concise avoiding both ambiguity and verbosity.</i>

**Table 4.11: Conversational Analysis Grid Based on Grice's CP**

❖ *The above table shows the four conversational maxims as highlighted by Grice (1975).*

As for the five role-plays, the analysis of the respective transcripts indicates certain communicative failures on the part of the participants due to the violation of some conversational maxims notably those of manner and quantity.

❖ *The following table displays some conversational excerpts that demonstrate the students' pragmatic gap as far as the Grice's CP is concerned.*

<p align="center"><i>Transcript Excerpts Illustrating Students' Communicative Weaknesses</i></p>	<p align="center"><i>Violated Maxims according to Grice's CP</i></p>	<p align="center"><i>Source of the Excerpts</i></p>
<p><b>1-:</b> <i>Your phone eh make me (.) your phone make sur (.) make me (.) surprise.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Manner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Play 1</li> </ul>
<p><b>2-:</b> <i>I miss your eh face in eh (.) Imène.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Manner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Play 1</li> </ul>
<p><b>3-:</b> <i>Thank you for your invitation (.) that's what I was waiting for because I enjoy your meeting and eh (.) and eh (.) you know I (.) because I (.) because I decrease decrease all the all the pression of work you know.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Manner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Play 1</li> </ul>
<p><b>4-:</b> <i>Nice eh as you know eh my eh story with this art started when eh when I was eh six year (.) when I was six year eh and eh after eh my mother discover eh this eh talent when I was eh thirteen thirteen years eh this eh (.) ee she she discover this eh creation in the eh decoration of the ( ) and sweets and the eh the new ideas eh for me and of course eh my family tel eh encourage me to he he (.) to go and eh eh to eh my father tell tell for me eh if I want eh I can (.) eh (.) this is the eh the sto (.) eh it's eh in the first it's eh so hard but eh it will be easy.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Manner and relevance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Play 1</li> </ul>
<p><b>5-:</b> <i>Eh the story was eh from eh my childhood and eh I want to to eh I was eh (.) ( ) want to eh to make some flowers on the hair of my mother then eh (h) then I eh I want to chair an eh an institute of eh of this art of hair style and eh and I take my diploma eh so my ehf my father's eh friend eh suggests eh if I can eh open eh a sho a shop for this hair style and I agree (.) then eh the work develop until I eh I open an eh a very famous eh famous shop I _____</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quantity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Play 1</li> </ul>

<p><b>6-:</b>  <i>-You will be present in my marriage already I</i>  <i>- Of course just eh just with eh a big or a large kitchen and let me alone (h) I mix.</i></p>	<p>- Manner</p>	<p>- Play 1</p>
<p><b>7-:</b> And Will Smith (.) Will Smith I remember your film the seven pounds (.) and I got so much I</p>	<p>- Quantity</p>	<p>- Play 2</p>
<p><b>8-:</b> What I like more ( ) the passage where there were eh Calipso was eh caa (.) catch by eh by the other Carabbians and I</p>	<p>- Quantity</p>	<p>- Play 2</p>
<p><b>9-:</b> Yes it just eh room like that with eh a scree with eh background (.) a green one just eh ( ) but eh I</p>	<p>- Relevance and manner</p>	<p>- Play 2</p>
<p><b>10-:</b> I CAN I can also see that in his movie eh Will Smith he has eh (.) for example you you follow your ( ) and your children also follows you (.) your two your two childrens (.) tha there is one who sing eh and eh one also who follows you in your career I</p>	<p>- Manner</p>	<p>- Play 2</p>
<p><b>11-:</b> I think it's very good (.) they like eh (.) yes yes I</p>	<p>- Manner</p>	<p>- Play 2</p>
<p><b>12-:</b> He is your hire oh my God (h) oh my God.</p>	<p>- Manner</p>	<p>- Play 2</p>
<p><b>13-:</b> A while ago a while ago (.) I worked with eh George Clooney in same movie (.) and you know eh I (0.2) he put eggs in eh (0.2) I know ( ) crazy man I</p>	<p>- Manner</p>	<p>- Play 2</p>
<p><b>14-:</b> I told you (.) I just I eh when I eh received your invitation I was just coming from eh London because I 'd it was eh I</p>	<p>- Quantity and manner</p>	<p>- Play 3</p>

<p><b>15-:</b> No I AM ( ) no I'm just Carmen the eh from the childhood I stay Carmen I can't change ( ) it's eh the fame is hard ( ) to be famous but eh I am trying to be the same and doesn't eh I am not eh to to make the fame change me you know because eh the fame is eh so dangerous to be famous.</p>		<p>- Quantity - Play 3</p>
<p><b>16-:</b> Did you fi find it funny? eh the eh did you enjoy this eh field of singing and do you↑ have time to eh for for yourself don eh without eh working did you find eh ( )</p>		<p>- Manner - Play 3</p>
<p><b>17-:</b> Okay we want to eh to go to play and our eh (.) what we were playing in our childhood and doing some eh practice.</p>		<p>- Quantity - Play 3</p>
<p><b>18-:</b> Armina I have eh some question to ask to you (.) eh your eh (.) the the job of journalist do you choose it or eh just eh job like that to earn money and eh.</p>		<p>- Manner - Play 4</p>
<p><b>19-:</b> - Oh yes (.) and eh what do you think about eh Aljazeera channel? do you think I - Aljazeera it's eh it's a good but eh I didn't find it (.) I start from eh Algeria and I didn't have eh any eh invitation for eh from Aljazeera or eh another eh channel (.) so I stay eh in Algeria.</p>		<p>- Relevance - Play 4</p>
<p><b>20-:</b> Jour journalist in general not easy but eh in the same time it's eh good for eh the other for you I</p>		<p>- Manner - Play 4</p>
<p><b>21-:</b> Actually eh talking about my childhood (.) I grew up in a poor family (.) so it's obvious that my father couldn't take care of our family (.) so for this reason I decided to help him by eh I eh start buying eh lemon and eh cake in the street (.) so you can say that I</p>		<p>- Manner - Play 5</p>

**Table 4.12: Students' Interactional Failures in Relation to the Gricean CP**



As displayed in the table above, the students involved in the interactional activity of the role-plays tend to exhibit certain weaknesses related to Grice's conversational maxims. One may notice the participants' frequent violation of the principle of manner in some exchanges making their discourses sound gloomy and incomprehensible in many occasions (see examples 1-2-3-4-6-9-10-11-12-13-14 16-18-20 and 21 in the table above).

In addition to having patent interactional difficulties related to the maxim of manner, the very same participants are sometimes likely to produce wordy and unnecessary utterances, from one hand, and; in some other occasions, very short and incomplete sentences from another hand. This indicates students' inappropriate spoken discourse production as far as the maxim of quantity is concerned (see examples 5-7-8-14-15 and 17 in the table above).

Besides the relatively inefficient conversational skills of the participants, tackled so far within the Gricean Cooperative Principle context, the analysis of the role-play transcripts reveals the inadequate use of some pragmalinguistic elements required in the realization of specific speech acts. The following examples illustrate the participants' pragmatic weakness as far as the speech act of offering is concerned:

*-Exp1:*

- The Arabian tea (.) oh (*from play 2*)

- YEAH (.) do you want? (*from play 2*)

*-Exp2:* Do you need some cakes? some cakes? (*from play 2*)

*-Exp3:* What you drink? Coffee or eh eh tea? (*from play 4*)

One may deduce from the analysis of the present data that although the introduction of pragmatic instruction in the OCE class contributed to raising positive affective predispositions among students (6) the latter's use of the target language in oral communicative tasks remains relatively unsatisfying. Furthermore, students' lack of appropriate linguistic competence seems to have a pervasive negative influence on their pragmatic competence. The participants in the role-playing assignment tend to have limited mastery of the necessary conversational skills, mainly those encompassed in the Grice's CP, because of a patent inappropriate control of the target language linguistic features especially grammar, syntax and vocabulary.

#### **4.7 Analysis of the Teacher Questionnaire:**

The present part of this thesis is devoted to the analysis of the teacher's questionnaire, the last research instrument employed in this study. As mentioned earlier in

chapter one, a questionnaire was addressed to OCE teachers at the department of English – University of Saida. The aim was to collect data as to OCE teachers' profile and their very perceptions of their students' oral production in the classroom. It also aimed at knowing about the very teaching practices of the OCE module in relation to pragmatic and cultural concerns. A final objective of the tool in question was to elicit some practical teaching suggestions as to improving students' oral communicative skills in general and pragmatic ones in particular.

#### **4.7.1 Procedure:**

Eight OCE teachers at the department of English – University of Saida contributed to the present research work as data providers through filling in a semi structured questionnaire (see appendix 5) organized in the following sections:

4.7.1.1 Section one: Teachers' Profile Information: It contains five different questions that ask about the teachers' status, their field of specialism as well as their experience and opinion about teaching the oral skills.

4.7.1.2 Section two: Teachers' Perspectives on their Students' Oral Production: Made of five questions, this section is designed to get some insightful information as to students' learning behaviour and in particular their oral performance in the OCE class. It tackles issues related to the involvement and motivation of students, their speaking deficiencies sources and conversational assignments preferences.

4.7.1.3 Section three: the Oral Skills in Relation to Culture and Pragmatics: It is a five-question section that aims at knowing about OCE teachers' practices and perceptions as far as their students' cultural awareness and pragmatic competence are concerned.

4.7.1.4 Section four: Suggestions: It contains three questions that ask about possible techniques and activities that may help enhance students' oral production as well as their pragmatic awareness and skills. This final part of the questionnaire tackles also the very issue of OCE syllabus design in relation to the target language pragmatic norms.

#### **4.7.2 Results:**

##### 4.7.2.1 Section one:

As far as the first section is concerned, the respondents consist of 7 assistant teachers and 1 part-time teacher. Their fields of specialism are applied linguistics (2 teachers), didactics (4 teachers), sociolinguistics (1 teacher) and ESP (1 teacher). They

have been teaching the oral skills for periods varying between 1 and five years. Yet, none of them has done any training in teaching the skills in questions.

Most of the respondents (7 teachers) mentioned that they like teaching the oral skills because of their significant importance in the act of communication. In this respect, one informant added that teaching the oral skills is an opportunity for both teachers and students to cover a wide range of topics that can be learnt within an enjoyable atmosphere. But at the same time, she explains further, teaching the oral skills may sometimes be a tough and displeasing activity because students are more likely to be susceptible to much psychological discomfort that most of the time impedes the normal flow of the teaching/learning process. Another teacher pointed out that she does not like teaching the oral skills because it is difficult to get the students involved.

#### 4.7.2.2 Section two:

The results obtained in the second section for the first question indicate that 6 teachers consider their students' motivational level as average, while only 2 evaluate it as high. As for the second question, 4 teachers see that their students' performance in the oral class is satisfying as a whole, while 3 teachers believe that it is average level and only one considers it as good.

As far as questions 3, 4 and 5 are concerned; the following table displays the main data obtained from the teacher's responses:

<i>Teachers' Responses in Section two</i>					
<i>Students' Oral Production Problems</i>	<i>Number of Teachers</i>	<i>Causes of Students' Low Oral Performance</i>	<i>Number of Teachers</i>	<i>Students' most Preferred Activities</i>	<i>Number of Teachers</i>
- Fluency	6	- Insufficient knowledge about the topic	2	- Discussions and debates	4
- Accuracy	2	- Foreign language anxiety	3	- Role-plays	6
- Vocabulary	6	- Lack of vocabulary	6	- Games	7
- Pronunciation	3	- Psychological discomfort	2	- Presentations and talks	2
- Intonation	6	- Low linguistic competence	1	- Story telling	0
- Reticence	1	- Lack of reading	1		
- Code Switching	1	- Lack of practice	1		

**Table 4.13: Teachers' Perspectives on Students' OCE Skills**

❖ *The above table shows the teachers' perspectives as to their students' oral capacities.*

As it can be noticed from the table above, most teachers point out to fluency, vocabulary and intonation as the most related problems in their students' oral production. From another parameter, the same respondents believe that lack of vocabulary and foreign language anxiety are relevant causes of students' inappropriate spoken performance. They have also pointed out to inappropriate linguistic competence, lack of reading and lack of practice as other related sources of students' low oral achievement.

#### 4.7.2.3 Section three:

The answers provided to question one, which focuses on OCE teachers' practices in relation to the three functions of speaking, show that 7 teachers focus on speech as interaction in teaching the oral skills. Yet, noting that some respondents ticked more than one option, speech as performance was pointed out to be the focus of the oral classes by 4 teachers. Only 1 teacher, however, referred to speech as transaction.

The results obtained for the second question, which asked the respondents to rate their students' abilities in the three types of speech in question, are displayed in the following table:

		<i>Students' Abilities Levels</i>	<i>Number of Teachers</i>
<i>Main Types and Functions of Speaking</i>	Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- High</li> <li>- Satisfying</li> <li>- Average</li> <li>- Low</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0</li> <li>2</li> <li>5</li> <li>1</li> </ul>
	Transaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- High</li> <li>- Satisfying</li> <li>- Average</li> <li>- Low</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0</li> <li>0</li> <li>6</li> <li>2</li> </ul>
	Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- High</li> <li>- Satisfying</li> <li>- Average</li> <li>- Low</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0</li> <li>3</li> <li>4</li> <li>0</li> </ul>

**Table 4.14: OCE Teachers' Evaluation of their Students' Oral Abilities**

- ❖ *The above table illustrates students' levels in the three types of speech as assessed by the teachers.*

As it is shown through the figures in the table above, the respondents' answers tend to indicate that students have an average level of ability in the three types of speaking.

Question three was asked with the very aim of getting some insightful information as to the types of activities OCE teachers focus on in teaching speaking as interaction. The results indicate, then, that engaging in small talks and recounting personal experiences are the most used speaking assignments with a preference rate of 87% (7 teachers) and 50% (4 teachers) respectively. However, 2 teachers referred to opening and closing conversations, and only one pointed to exchanging greetings. In the rubric *other*, one teacher mentioned: *"performing role-plays involving the use of different speech acts"*.

As far as question four is concerned, 4 teachers (50%) indicated that their students' awareness of the socio-cultural aspects of language use is average level, while 3 teachers (37%) stated that it is low. Only one teacher (12%), however, mentioned that it is satisfying.

Results obtained for question five show that almost the majority of the respondents (5 teachers) believe that their students' pragmatic competence in conversational activities is low. Two teachers, on the other hand, believe that their learners' pragmatic competence is satisfying; while 1 teacher thinks that it is average level.

#### 4.7.2.4 Section four:

The results obtained in the last section, which is devoted to teachers' suggestions as to the three-fold concern of students' enhancement of the oral abilities, efficient teaching practices in relation to pragmatics and OCE syllabus design, helped the researcher gather insightful data.

As far as the first question is concerned, most teachers suggested that the communicative method can bring optimum results in enhancing students' oral abilities. One teacher pointed out to the importance of focussing on task-based activities. Another teacher stressed on the use of audio and video-watching activities. Yet, one respondent emphasised on the affective side of students saying that: *"one of the most appropriate ways to enhance students' oral skills is to ensure an anxiety free classroom atmosphere before selecting and implementing motivating activities that actually fit students' interest and expectations"*.

Responses to the second question, which asked about how to develop students' target language pragmatic skills, highlighted the importance of the following teaching practices:

- Role-play assignments that focus on realistic situations and life style topics.
- Exposing students to authentic target language excerpts that illustrate its actual use in miscellaneous contexts.
- Raising students' awareness of both linguistic and extralinguistic knowledge of the target language.
- Introducing reading and urging students to read so as to foster optimum acquisition of appropriate vocabulary.
- Implementing the use of audiovisual tools and native-speaking sources in teaching the oral skills.
- Focusing on task-based activities which raise students' awareness and learning of the main communicative functions of the language forms they are dealing with.

As far as the third question is concerned, all the respondents indicated that syllabus designers should take into account the introduction of pragmatics in teaching the oral skills. In order to do so, they proposed different ways stressing the following processes:

- The introduction of verbal and non verbal communication in oral activities like role-plays and simulations.
- *“Incorporating more pragmatic knowledge and cultural information about the target language”*.
- Giving priority to the frequency of exposure to the selected content, i.e. assigning more listening practice where students are introduced to models of language use and functions. Oral practice, then, may come after making sure that students have been exposed to and received enough knowledge of the various pragmatic features and aspects of the target language.
- Taking into account the main syllabus design criteria such as learnability, frequency, coverage and usefulness of the selected content to be taught.
- Integrating topics that *“highlight the importance of language functions and speech acts that reflect the rules and conventions acceptable by the target language (in this case the British and the American communities) through idiomatic expressions, collocations and social cultural topics. This can be achieved through giving special*

*attention to appropriateness and acceptability of utterances in a given context”.*

#### **4.8 Discussion and Interpretation of the Main Results:**

The different research tools employed in this study were aimed at gathering relevant data that may help answer the three research questions, and check their corresponding hypotheses. In the pre-pragmatic instruction phase, the observational practice and the two DCTs of apologizing and requesting were used to assess second year OCE students’ pragmatic competence. However, the post-pragmatic instruction observational practice and the audio recorded role plays were designed to know about the implications of introducing pragmatics in the OCE classes. The teachers’ questionnaire, then, was employed to get some more insightful information as to second year OCE students’ learning behaviour, and find out about possible remedies and practical ideas to foster students’ oral production in general and their pragmatic skills in particular.

As far as the observational study conducted in the pre- pragmatic instruction phase and the DCTs of apologizing and requesting are concerned, the outcomes of the analysis revealed that second year OCE students’ pragmatic skills are relatively inappropriate. Observing the sample’s oral production in the speaking assignments has given a clear image of patent difficulties at the level of discourse formulation in general and speech acts realisation in particular.

Furthermore, following the appropriateness norms of the apologizing realisation by native speakers, highlighted by Azis (2012), the analysis of the DCT of the speech act in question confirmed students’ pragmatic weakness. The latter was reflected through the limited use of more efficient and extended strategies like acknowledging responsibility, and at the same time through the frequent use of the redundant strategy of explanation and account.

Yet, the analysis of the second DCT which targeted the speech act realisation of requesting showed that the sample employed some strategies, mainly preparatory, that complied with the appropriateness norms highlighted by Akutsu (2006) and Azis (2012). However, this is not quite enough to say that their pragmatic skills are satisfactory regarding the opposite results obtained through the other DCT, the observation grids, and OCE teachers’ questionnaire. Therefore, these findings tend to support the first hypothesis stipulating that second year OCE students’ pragmatic skills are relatively *inappropriate*.



As far as the post- pragmatic instruction phase is concerned, the analysis of the two observation grids showed that although the selection and the assignments of the oral tasks took into account students' affective dimensions; the sample exhibited almost the same low pragmatic abilities. Yet, in addition to the mentioned issue related to pragmatic inappropriateness of language use, students' spoken discourse reflected also manifest low linguistic competence.

However, both deficiencies, pragmatic and linguistic, were observed through the analysis of the audio recorded role-plays. In this context, the sample showed a completely high motivational level and anxiety free learning behaviour, but a *remarkable* weakness at the level of the main conversational skills which did not comply with the Gricean cooperative principles. These results therefore, tend to validate only the first part of the second hypothesis stipulating that introducing pragmatic instructions in OCE classes may produce positive affect among students. As it was proved by the obtained data, fostered positive psychological predispositions and in particular motivation and attitudes are not quite enough to raise students' pragmatic competence. All the post-pragmatic instruction activities showed 2<sup>nd</sup> year OCE students to lack the appropriate knowledge of the linguistic elements necessary to appropriate use of the target language for functional communicative ends involving both speech acts realisation and actual social conversational practice.

As far as the teachers' questionnaire is concerned, the results analysis helped get some relevant data as to students' learning abilities of the OCE unit. The obtained responses confirmed that second year students' oral performance is relatively limited in terms of fluency and accuracy. Most importantly, although the majority of teachers indicated that they pay manifest attention to exploring the interactive functions of speech in teaching OCE, they reported that their students' pragmatic skills are low. This may make one question the reliability of the very instructions used in dealing with the oral skills knowing that no official syllabus is provided to teachers.

The suggestions supplied by teachers in the last section of the questionnaire, however, consist of some insightful data that help answer the last research question as to possible techniques and practices to raising OCE students' pragmatic abilities. Responses showed an actual sense of teachers' awareness of their students' weaknesses and needs as far as appropriate use of the target language is concerned. They stressed, then, on

importance of the communicative method which they believe can bring concrete results in fostering students' oral proficiency.

At the very same level, the teachers pointed out to the pervasive benefits of considering students' affectivity in devising and assigning particular tasks in the OCE class. In this respect, they suggested that creating a classroom environment optimising students' interest and intrinsic motivation from one hand, and eliminating language anxiety from another hand; will contribute to optimum learning achievement. Such idea is indeed consistent with several research findings related to the role of students' psychological predispositions in foreign language learning process (Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Dulay et al, 1982; Brown, 1987; Skehan, 1989; Meara & Skehan, 1989; Arnold, 1999; Dörnyei, 2005; Shah & Gardner, 2008; Cora Hahn, 1989; Norton, 2000; Brown, 2000; Deci & Ryan, 1985; Brophy, 2004; Kumaravadivelu, 2006).

Developing students' pragmatic competence, which is a central issue in the present study, is a concern to which all the respondents paid undivided attention. Such interest, indeed, is consistent with many calls that have been made favouring the incorporation of pragmatics in EFL/ESL teaching and learning (Barron, 2001; Trosborg, 1995; Rose and Kasper, 2001; Kasper and Rose, 2002; Bardovi-Harlig and Hatford, 2005; Koike, 2010; Morón et al, 2009). The teachers made it clear, through the suggestions they provided, that focus in teaching OCE is to be cast upon the introduction of topics that raise students' awareness of the pragmatic features of the target language. They pointed out to a range of methods that explore the very different communicative functions of language stressing, at the same time, on the authenticity of the linguistic samples being studied on one hand; and the extent of exposure to the instructions in question on another hand.

Yet, what may be deduced from the teachers' contributions, as far as the questionnaire results are concerned, is that the implications of introducing pragmatic instructions in OCE classes would not be quite fruitful without the utmost care in designing a common official syllabus. The latter, according to them, *should* conform to specific and relevant criteria like frequency, sequencing and learnability of the content which should, in its turn, be selected according to students' needs as far as pragmatic knowledge is concerned. These suggestions about syllabus design procedure tend to follow the steps advocated by Taba (1962) and Munby (1984).

#### **4.9 Conclusion:**

The results obtained in this chapter have led to *relevant* conclusions as to the teaching and learning of OCE in relation to both affective and pragmatic considerations. It has been revealed, then, that Second Year oral proficiency is marked by a relative pragmatic weakness. The latter was shown to be manifested through both inappropriate realization of some speech acts, like apologizing and inviting, and low mastery of the basic conversational principles, mainly those of manner and quantity. Yet, such communicative deficiency was clearly accompanied and influenced by a pervasive weak control of the linguistic features of the target language.

However, the study has revealed that the introduction of pragmatics in OCE classes can to a large extent trigger students' interest and motivation leading eventually to positive affective learning predispositions. But the latter factors proved to be insufficient to raise students' pragmatic abilities due to both limited exposure and undeveloped linguistic proficiency. A careful design of an OCE syllabus taking into account the linguistic elements and the very features that represent language in use at the social and cultural levels will help, then, improve student's oral communicative competence. Yet, the fruitfulness of the syllabus depends not only on the selection of relevant content but also on reconsidering issues like sequencing and the extent of exposure. These concerns and other recommendations as to teaching the oral skills in relation to affect and pragmatics will be dealt with to some extent in the next chapter.

## Notes to Chapter Four:

(1): As far as politeness norms, within a requesting context, are concerned Aminudine Azis (2012: 08) states that:

*Viewed from the perspective of politeness, asking the interlocutors' ability to comply with the request is regarded more polite than stating directly what the speakers want the interlocutor to do" ('want statement' strategy).*

(2): Native speakers were reported to use preparatory as an indirect strategy to realise the act of requesting almost all the time (Akutsu, 2006).

(3): A great proportion of the informants' responses were considered redundant because of the inappropriate use of the mitigator *please* which they put in the initial position preceding the auxiliary *could* or *would*.

(4): After the end of the activity the teacher has started a debate with the whole class asking them about how they found the activity and what the main difficulties they faced were. He has also endeavoured to elicit the participants' opinions about their own performances. Most of the students agreed that it was quite difficult for them to find and choose suitable expressions and words for each corresponding speech event. Furthermore, making a short story up from scratch to be performed after 25 minutes was not either an easy task. As far as students' personal judgement on their oral production is concerned, most of them agreed that the strategies they have used in each speech act were not quite sufficient.

(5): The transcription process is not only a time-consuming task but also a relatively difficult one since it requires much more patience and perseverance. According to Paul Kuehn (2015):

*In many ways, producing an excellent coherent transcript is like putting a puzzle together. Some words and ideas you will hear and understand immediately. Other words will have no meaning to you, and at the worst, there will be missing words which you can't hear and understand due to extremely accented speech. Based on seeing the whole picture first and educated guesses, it is necessary to put everything together*

*just like the pieces in a jigsaw puzzle. This can be a very frustrating process, and it demands much patience and perseverance on the part of the transcriptionist.*

Kuehn (2015: 02)

(6): The selection of activities for the post pragmatic instruction phase was based not only on criteria related with the target language pragmatic concerns but also on students' affective parameters. The researcher has endeavoured to employ methods and techniques that may nurture students' motivation and interest in the learning situation and at the same time eliminate all sorts of language anxiety, or any other hindering psychological factors.

***CHAPTER FIVE:***  
***THE ORAL SKILLS BETWEEN PRAGMATIC AND***  
***AFFECTIVE CONCERNS: RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS***

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**CHAPTER FIVE**  
**THE ORAL SKILLS BETWEEN PRAGMATIC AND**  
**AFFECTIVE CONCERNS: RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS**

**5.1 Introduction:**

The present chapter is devoted to the provision of some practical suggestions and recommendations as to OCE teaching practices. On the basis of the research findings covered in the previous chapter and the main theoretical points discussed in Chapter Two, the researcher attempts, via this part, to delineate the very implications of specific instructions for EFL students' oral proficiency development. Within the triangular context of pragmatics, affect and pedagogy, it seems that it is *high time* to reconsider the methods and approaches adopted in teaching OCE at university level.

It is widely granted that one of the utmost motivations, for many people, to learn a foreign language is to appropriately use it in different oral communicative situations and contexts. Therefore, it has become quite necessary to explore the very functional features of the target language while approaching the teaching of the oral skills. In this respect, the introduction of pragmatics and culture in EFL classes in general and OCE ones in particular is *utterly* recommended. Yet, such a practice may lead to *sterile* results if students' knowledge of the linguistic items of the target language is or remains undeveloped. The exploration of task-based teaching, then, is given particular attention in the present chapter. However, the nature of the oral tasks which frequently triggers students' affective discomfort, mainly language anxiety and lack of interest, requires teachers to review and reflect on their own teaching practices.

Part of the remedial proposals covered in the present chapter sheds light on the very necessity of carefully devising effective oral activities that can prompt optimum learning results. Such a prospect invites OCE teachers to pay undivided attention to syllabus design taking into account, in tandem, the very benefits that can be drawn from the implementation of ICT and electronic corpora.

## **5.2 Considerations in Teaching the Oral Skills:**

In the very context of teaching EFL oral skills, a great deal of effort has gone into making a number of pedagogical practices efficient and reliable. Certainly, fashionable teaching methodologies are welcomed, but the teaching situation remains with large class sizes and limited resources (dependent on teachers'). Teaching methodologies, thus, have useful applications only when combined with other factors, notably students' background, preferences and linguistic competence levels. Besides, their needs and affective dimensions are to be given special consideration.

### **5.2.1 Linguistic and Communicative Concerns:**

It has become quite obvious that Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is the approach that emphasizes on meaningful communication and appropriate language use the most. In clearer terms, it sets as its main objective the teaching of communicative competence (Richards, 2006). Most OCE teachers then opt for this approach believing that applying its principles in the oral classroom can help attain optimum results. Yet, as shown in the discussion section of the previous chapter, the approach in question does not seem to bring much benefit as far as students' pragmatic competence is concerned, from one hand. From another hand, the somehow exaggerated focus on fluency and the communicative features of the target language while approaching the teaching of the oral skills has negatively contributed to weakening students' grammatical accuracy when speaking. The latter problem tends to be escalated by the teachers' frequent avoidance or reduction of the corrective feedback (CF) by fear of stimulating students' anxiety which eventually leads to an unwanted reticence in the oral classrooms. In Hunter's words:

*A major issue that continues to challenge language teachers is how to ensure that learners develop accuracy and complexity in their speaking, as well as fluency. Teachers know that too much corrective feedback (CF) can make learners reluctant to speak, while not enough may allow their errors to become entrenched.*

Hunter (2011: 01)

One may question then the reliability of CLT as far as developing students' mastery of appropriate use of the different linguistic forms of the target language since this approach almost puts grammatical practice and drills in quarantine.

However, such prospect does not imply that CLT is of no use in the OCE teaching learning process. The implication, in fact, is that teachers and practitioners need

to adapt the assigned tasks to their students' linguistic levels and needs. In other words, focus is to be redirected to fostering students' mastery of grammar and other linguistic features of the target language. One way to do so is through designing some oral activities that enhance in tandem students' accuracy and fluency. In this respect, the remedial proposal consists of the adoption of what has been called some 25 years ago 'small talk' (ST) (Hunter, 2011). The latter technique is believed to be a good practice that may raise students' accuracy level without being inimical to the communicative end of the CLT.

#### 5.2.1.1 'Small Talk': towards an Accurate and Fluent Speaking Performance:

As described by Hunter (2011), the activity consists of unleashing the learners' interactive abilities without the intervention or the interference of the teacher. The latter is to give feedback but at the very end of the conversational session. A pre-appointed student is to act as the class leader being responsible for the topic selection, provision of vocabulary and questions to support and consolidate the conversations, dividing the class into small groups, and timing the conversation before leading the final phase which is the 'check-in' session. In this step, each group is invited to report on their conversation to the whole class. Hunter (2011) describes the different phases and timing of ST as follows:

*1- The day before the session, the leader announces the topic.*

*2 -At the beginning of the session, the leader writes discussion questions and vocabulary on the board, re-introduces the topic, and clarifies any confusion; the leader also puts the students into groups of three to four and tells the students to begin. (3–5 minutes)*

*3- Groups discuss the topic. (15–20 minutes)*

*4 -The leader asks the groups to bring their conversation to a close and prepare for check in; the groups decide what to report to the class and who will do it. (5 minutes)*

*5- The leader invites each group to check in with the class about the highlights of their conversation. (5–10 minutes)*

*6 -The leader thanks the class and reminds them of the next 'Small Talk' date (1 minute) and leader.*

Hunter (2011: 4)

The seemingly passive role attributed to the teacher, in this type of assignment, is actually an opportunity to carefully observe students' contributions and reflect on what went good and what went wrong. The teacher may eventually give their students a number of suggestions as to improving their interactive abilities (1). Comments then on

the different facets of the participants' oral deficiencies at the very end of the ST session may serve as a potential positive feedback that can allow students to greatly benefit from the teacher's constructive remarks. In fact, in this phase does lie the very core of the '*Small Talk*' conversational assignment where enough room is devoted to correcting students' misuse of grammar or vocabulary. Such type of corrective feedback is widely believed to be quite beneficial since it does not stumble the communicative flow of the activity neither does it trigger students' apprehension or anxiety.

Therefore, the present proposed remedial practice is an actual implementation of accuracy teaching within the strong communicative maxim of CLT; a practice that has long been considered as off-limits by the supporters of the mentioned approach. Thus, with the adoption of ST as a classroom interaction task, OCE teachers can to a large extent focus on and so eventually ameliorate not only students' communicative competencies (2) but also their knowledge of the target language structure and the rules of its appropriate use.

Yet, the very limitation in using ST is that it is quite a hard task for the teacher to observe all their groups of students at once and provide feedback for every single conversation. Hunter (2011) suggests the utilisation of what he calls '*Small Talk*' worksheets. In this procedure the teachers can deal with the participating groups separately listening to their conversation and mentioning down students' inaccurate language use, *whether it interferes with the communicative flow or not*. After that, they can use a computerized database to enter each error accompanied with the name of the students, the topic and the date of the ST session.

**Figure 5.1: Worksheet Entry Form from the Database.**

**Hunter (2011: 5)**

- ❖ *The figure above illustrates Hunter's small talk worksheet entry form with its main features, such as course label, teacher's name, student's name, context...*

The teacher can hand out a hard copy of the ST worksheets to their students who, by reading the different details on it may become aware of their own linguistic weaknesses and the corresponding correct forms of language use as well. As put forward by Hunter:

*Giving learners a written transcription of their errors enables them to correct any 'slips' they have made, and it might push them towards a more stable interlanguage form in cases where there is variability, and this alone makes the activity worthwhile. However, beyond that, if learners truly do not know how to say something because they lack the appropriate structure or vocabulary, some form of guidance is necessary to facilitate more accurate production in the future.*

Hunter (2011: 6)

These worksheets also allow the teacher to pinpoint occasional common errors among students, and so reflect on possible ways to counteract them (Hunter, 2011).

### 5.2.1.2 Task-Based Language Teaching:

Another adaptation of teaching practices related to the recently criticized principles of CLT is Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT). The latter approach which emanates from the very core of CLT is an attempt to reinforce the maxim of communicative competence development in language learning. It stresses on the teaching of language use, for a very meaningful communicative end, through focusing on specified tasks and instructions; for example getting students to book a plane ticket or a table at a restaurant using the target language. The implications of using the TBLT in OCE sessions may be quite fruitful since the approach in question focuses on authentic language use encompassed within real-world tasks. The nature of the latter activities is believed, according to a wealth of literature, to stimulate students' involvement and motivation to a large extent leading to an eventual improvement in their communicative abilities.

TBLT is a practical approach that OCE teachers can greatly benefit from if implemented within their teaching practices. The reason is well explained by Richards & Schmidt (2002) in their vision of TBLT which they define as:

*a teaching approach based on the use of communicative and interactive tasks as the central units for the planning and delivery of instruction. Such tasks are said to provide an effective basis for language learning since they: a involve meaningful communication and interaction, and b negotiation c enable the learners to acquire grammar as a result of engaging in authentic language use.*

Richards & Schmidt (2002: 540)

The usefulness of TBLT then does not lie only on the double edged advantage of boosting student's fluency and accuracy when learning OCE skills, but also on strengthening further relevant principles and practices subsumed in the following points:

- A needs-based approach to content selection.
- An emphasis on learning to communicate through interaction in the target language.
- The introduction of authentic texts into the learning situation.
- The provision of opportunities for learners to focus not only on language but also on the learning process itself.
- An enhancement of the learner's own personal experiences as important contributing elements to classroom learning.

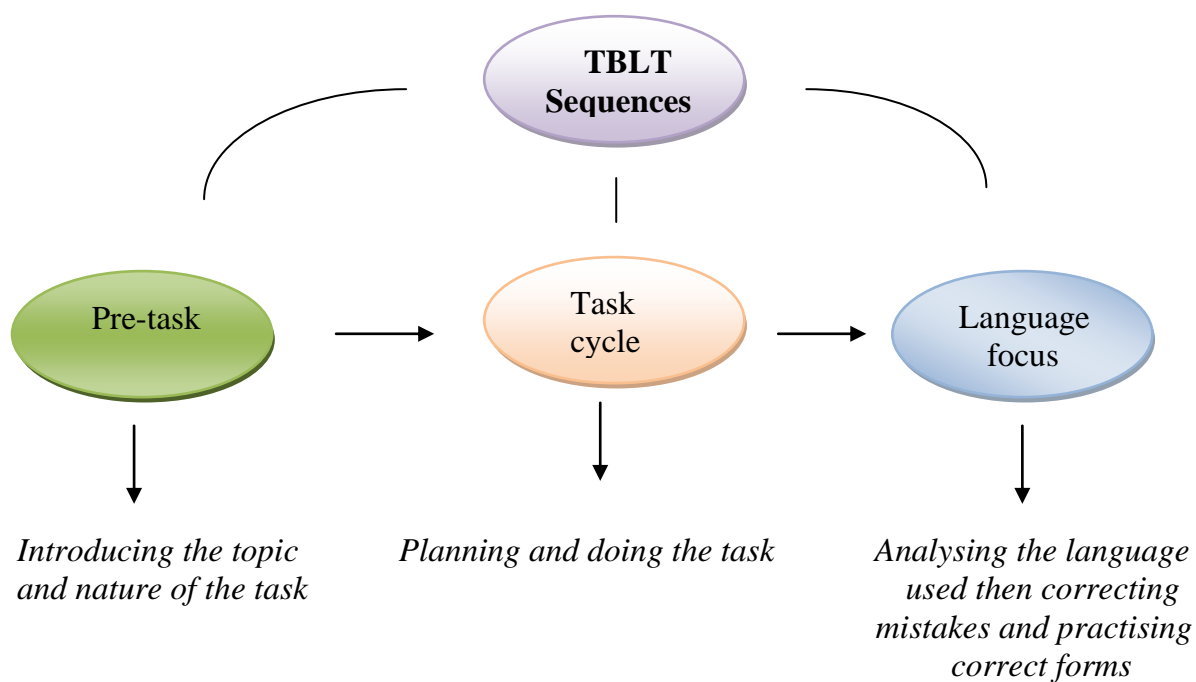
- The linking of classroom language learning with language use outside the classroom. Nunan (2004: 1)

Having the above discussion at hand, and as far as second year students' oral communicative deficiencies pinpointed in the previous chapter are concerned, it seems that it is high time for OCE teachers to focus more than any time before on redirecting their attention towards TBLT. This is because the latter approach can offer more opportunities to nourish students' needs for pedagogical tasks that, as suggested by Nunan (2004), help them effectively develop the skills of expressing different communicative meanings through the deployment of their grammatical knowledge. In fact, a good deal of recent research in the field of applied linguistics and pedagogy has proven the efficacy of TBLT in developing EFL learners' speaking proficiency. For instance, Khoshsima & Bajool (2015) assert that:

*Task-based instruction enables instructors to adjust classroom instruction with students' needs and inspire learners to acquire a high level of language proficiency to satisfy their own need.*

Khoshsima & Bajool (2015: 20)

Yet, the consideration of sequencing while designing and assigning a communicative task within the TBLT is quite important. Harmer (2010) proposes a three-step procedure illustrated in the figure below:



**Figure 5.2: Typical Sequencing of a Task-Based Activity  
(Adapted from Harmer (2010))**

❖ *The figure above displays Harmer's three-step sequencing of a task-based assignment.*

It is worth to mention, however, that the third phase of such typical TBLT sequence tends to consolidate the very idea that the approach in question focuses also on the practice and development of language forms.

### **5.2.2 Affective Concerns:**

While the previous section provided some practical suggestions as to the very issue of communicative and linguistic abilities of second year OCE students, the present one deals with another relevant element, within the very same context, which is students' affectivity. The latter dimension frequently makes OCE classes appear to be somehow more challenging for teachers and practitioners. As mentioned in Chapter Three, EFL students are exposed to a range of negative psychological factors that influence their oral production in the classroom. This section provides some affective strategies that teachers can implement in their classrooms in order to help their students break the hindering barriers, and push them towards optimum achievement.



### 5.2.2.1 Motivational Instructions:

Students' motivation in the classroom is tremendously linked to the teacher's motivation to maintain and develop their students' interest in the learning task. In this respect Davis (1999) suggests the following motivational instructions that a teacher can use to optimise their students' performance:

- Using frequent positive feedback (3).
- Selecting some learning assignments with an average difficulty level.
- Creating a relaxing atmosphere in the classroom.
- Using appropriate material that fits students' needs and expectations.
- Being an enthusiastic teacher.
- Organizing the course.
- Using appropriate and concrete illustrations to reinforce students' understanding.
- Helping students achieve personal goals.
- Discouraging intensive competition among learners (4).
- Referring to students' needs and preferences when selecting classroom activities.

It is worth mentioning, however, that conditions for students' motivation can be created in the classroom by the teacher. In this context, students can be motivated to get involved in classroom activities if they are provided the right conditions by their teacher.

Adding to the nature of activities selected for learners, the beliefs teachers have about teaching and learning and the nature of expectations they hold for their students are also thought to be paramount elements influencing a given learner's motivation. On a more basic level, it is proved that students' performance could deeply be affected by their teachers' aspirations. Hence, if teachers deliberately show their students that they expect them to be hardworking and interested in the learning situations; optimum involvement and motivation are more likely to be energized among students. In this respect Stipek (1988) states that: *to a very large degree, students expect to learn if their teachers expect them to learn.*

Stipek (1988) in Davis (1999: 07)

#### 5.2.2.2 Building up a Learning Community in the Classroom:

It seems to be interesting to implement motivational teaching strategies in the classroom so to foster students' involvement in the learning tasks. Yet, such a practice alone is not enough. If learners' are to draw maximum benefit from the motivational strategies offered by their teacher, a kind of a learning community needs to be built up in the classroom where cooperation between the students and teacher takes place. The teacher's selection of the curriculum has to meet the students' actual needs and expectations so as to allow successful learning enhancement. Fox (2015) stresses a three-facet pedagogical practice that can help teachers effectively create a positive learning community within their classrooms. This involves communication, collaboration and quality feedback.

As far as communication is concerned, students need to know where they are in their learning. Google Apps for Education and add-ons like Autocrat can be used to “*create personalized updates or reports that can be e-mailed to all stakeholders to help keep the focus on what's important: where students are in their learning.*” Fox (2015: 1). As for collaboration, Fox (2015) believes that instead of troubling students with formal and persistent grading of every activity; teachers can encourage their students to *collaborate regularly*. This can be done through exploring social media networks, for example, where students can further their knowledge together outside classroom settings. From another parameter, Fox (2015) calls for a non graded approach to teaching so as to alleviate pressure on students; and allow them better focus on and understand the descriptive nature of feedback.

#### 5.2.2.3 Supporting Students' Self-Confidence:

As mentioned in Chapter Three, self-confidence can play an important role in determining students' success or failure. As far as performance and achievement in the language classroom are concerned, a great deal of attention is to be cast on supporting and fostering learners' positive beliefs about their own abilities. To ensure this, teachers can have recourse to Brophy's (2004) “causal attributions” principle. Findings proved that learners' perceptions of the very factors that contributed to their past success or failure will, to a large extent, influence their performance. Therefore, teachers can raise and reinforce their students' self-confidence and so motivation by making them attribute their success in particular areas to sufficient ability and effort.

As for discouraged students, it is worth to mention Brophy's (1986) "attribution retaining" process which invites teachers to help students to:

- Attribute their failures to insufficient effort, lack of information or reliance on ineffective learning strategies rather than to lack of ability.
- Concentrate on the tasks rather than becoming distracted by fear of failure.
- Respond to frustration by retracing their steps to find mistakes or figuring out alternative ways of approaching a problem instead of giving up.

#### 5.2.2.4 Creating a Positive Classroom Climate:

The nature of the classroom atmosphere is another important element relating to learners' willingness or reluctance to engage in classroom participation. In this specific context, a "good" teaching practice can be manifested in the teacher's role to create a positive classroom climate leading students' to optimum affective ease, and thus optimum performance.

But building up an encouraging atmosphere in the language classroom can be done through establishing what Brown (2000) refers to as "rapport". The latter consists of friendly relationships between students and their teacher built on "trust and respect". Such a rapport will lead, consequently, to enhancing students' creativity and competence. Teachers can establish such positive relationships if they:

- Show interest in each student as a person.
- Give feedback on each person's progress.
- Respect and give value to what students think and say.
- Laugh with students and not at them.
- Develop and express a sense of joy when students manage to learn something or make progress.

Teachers' positive talk to students also plays a vital role in establishing a positive classroom climate. Yet, praise alone is not sufficient. Students are to accept their teacher's constructive criticism and take profit of it. A balance, then, as suggested by Brown (2000), between praise and criticism need to be carefully established. Yet, though the effective EFL teacher will try to apply and follow all these pieces of advice, real-life situation is quite different. Overcrowded classes remain a main obstacle. Nevertheless, students' performance in the classroom depends on the teacher's awareness of the very fact that students' affectivity is to be on top of their teaching agendas.

### 5.3 The Role of L1: Towards Pragmatic Competence Development:

As suggested earlier in this chapter, recommendations as to developing students' oral proficiency in using the target language cover also the very process of pragmatic competence development. For so many practitioners, the ability of appropriately holding successful communication lies not only on mastering the rules of grammar, but also on actual awareness of the pragmatic features of the language being used. Developing students' grammatical knowledge, according to Bardovi-Harlig and Dörnyei (1997), cannot lead to a *corresponding level of pragmatic development* (Eslami-Rasekh , 2005).

Therefore, a relevant question that one can ask in this respect is how to help our students improve their pragmatic skills in the OCE classroom. As discussed in chapter 2, pragmatic competence comprises both pragmalinguistic competence and sociopragmatic competence. Yet, it is not quite necessary to explore the two latter components separately in this remedial proposal part. A focus then on the very notion of pragmatic awareness which encompasses, as a whole, linguistic and cultural issues may be rather more interesting. The implications of introducing instructions related to the two latter mentioned parameters in oral activities can manifest in better understanding, on the part of students, of the communicative functions of the target language within different socio-cultural contexts. In this respect, it is worth to quote Koike (2010) who suggests that:

*An interesting part of a language class is observing learners' reactions when they become aware of differences in sociocultural norms, which are what guide pragmatic expression and interpretation. Metapragmatic discussion centers on the linguistic level, while discussion on sociocultural norms focus on societal norms that operate as the basis for the linguistic expression.*

Koike (2010:3)

In the same line of thoughts and in an EFL teaching context, Chavarría and Bonany (2006) pointed to introducing reflection on contrastive pragmatics which stresses on exploring differences and similarities of the target language aspects and those of students' L1. They justified the need for such teaching practice by stating that students tend to transfer their L1 pragmatic norms:

*into their knowledge of English, therefore causing pragmatic failure, misunderstandings and, occasionally, conversation breakdown when interacting with native speakers of English.*

Chavarría and Bonany (2006: 134)

It is worth to mention that, as seen in the previous chapter, L1 pragmatic norms interference was quite noticeable in the present research work sample. Therefore the introduction of contrastive pragmatic activities in OCE classes can have positive effects in counteracting the mentioned issue. For instance, Chavarría and Bonany (2006) delineated a pedagogical framework for this very purpose stressing on devising classroom activities that aimed at making students practice the similarities and differences between English and their L1 (Spanish) in the realization of polite requesting forms within a context of shopping exchanges. Their framework was based on the following pedagogic assumptions:

- a) The development of socio-pragmatic competence is a key factor in the process of learning a language.*
- b) The L1 can be used in order to scaffold learners' development of a second or a foreign language (henceforth FL).*
- c) Raising language awareness and promoting explicit knowledge about language can contribute to the development of language learners' proficiency.*
- d) Developing intercultural awareness is essential for learners to become good communicators in a foreign language, able to handle communicative exchanges with native and non-native users of English smoothly and effectively.*

Ibid

Yet, for many EFL teachers the very limitation of adopting contrastive pragmatic instruction is the fact that the use of L1 is traditionally not welcomed in the EFL classroom especially within a CLT approach which focuses on the entire and sole use of English as a means to reach communicative proficiency. Therefore, one may remain quite sceptical about the validity of contrastive pragmatic practice due to the controversial role attributed to L1. However, things are much clearer for Baiget, Cots, Irún and Llurda (1998) who believe in the usefulness of L1 in the EFL class. Their pedagogic stance was based on a number of assumptions delineating the positive aspects of L1 use. These are as follows:

- a) The L1 as a facilitating element in group work, where emphasis is laid on the final product rather than the process.*
- b) Strategic use of the L1 as an element that helps to create a friendly, relaxed atmosphere for learners who feel anxious or lost when asked to perform in the FL.*
- c) The L1 as a cost-effective means to solve comprehension problems.*
- d) The L1 as a means to promote learners' motivation and interest.*
- e) The L1 as a stepping stone into potentially difficult contents (e.g. textual or cultural aspects).*
- f) The L1 as a resource that allows learners to monitor their own learning.*

Baiget et al (1998: 3) in Chavarría and Bonany (2006: 136)

Having the above discussion at hand, teachers in an OCE context can opt for the introduction of contrastive pragmatics as a means to develop their students' target language pragmatic awareness. Yet, such practice is to be handled with care so as to avoid any misinterpretation of the very objectives of the instructions by students, i.e. teachers have to make it clear that the use of L1 is confined to the exclusive aim of making comparisons of language functions in both contexts (English and L1) so as to attain appropriate pragmatic competence of the target language. Teachers can demonstrate cases where the transfer of L1 pragmatic norms into English oral use can lead to communication breakdowns or misunderstandings when interacting with native speakers. They may explain that L1 interference may cause a pragmatic failure, especially in multicultural contexts where people from different origins do not hold the same beliefs nor the same conversational principles; but share a very same context where fertile terrain is mapped for intercultural misinterpretations and worse yet negative stereotyping.

#### **5.4 Teaching Pragmatics in the EFL Classrooms:**

As it can be noticed, not only at the university level but also at the level of different English language teaching and learning contexts, the teaching of pragmatics tends to be quite far from the targeted pedagogic objectives. English has traditionally been taught through an approach focusing on syntax and semantics. The former discipline which stresses on the very arrangement of linguistic units to convey grammatically correct sentences, and the latter one which deals with the meaning that linguistic units encode (vocabulary teaching for instance) are reported to exclude all reference to the relevant element of the language user. This is what has long contrasted pragmatics with the two mentioned disciplines since it focuses mainly on:

*the relationship between linguistic forms and the users of these forms. In this three-part distinction [syntax-semantics-pragmatics], only pragmatics allows humans into the analysis.*

Yule (1996: 4) in O'Keeffe et al (2011: 137)

##### **5.4.1 Teachability of Pragmatics in EFL Classes:**

Having the above discussion at hand one may say that it is a quite easy and simple task to include pragmatics in English language instruction through adding the interpersonal aspect of pragmatics to the teaching of grammar and vocabulary. In other words, teachers can explicitly teach pragmatics through syntax and vocabulary instructions that clearly

delineate the relationship between linguistic forms and their user (speaker, writer, listener and reader). For example a grammar course can serve to teach students how to use linguistic elements to perform the speech act of requesting like: *could I borrow your book?* A vocabulary class on the other hand can introduce students to the notion of sentence meaning inference in relation to the speaker's intent like: *the floor is wet* which can be understood as *be careful of slipping*.

Yet, teaching pragmatics according to the literature is not only about the teaching of different speech acts. In fact, there is a controversial question as to the teachability of pragmatics itself in an EFL context. Williams (1988) for instance points to a relative difficulty due to the paramount number of language functions and speech acts (Bardovi-Harlig et al, 1991). He proposes as an alternative the focus on language use: "*in ongoing discourse, in a particular context, for a particular purpose, and as part of a strategy*" Williams (1988: 46) in Bardovi-Harlig et al (1991: 5). However, still another difficulty lies in covering the large number of language contexts and purposes and preparing students for every speech situation they may meet in natural conversational settings (Bardovi-Harlig et al, 1991).

Practitioners suggest that it is not necessary to intricately teach every single pragmatic function of the target language. What is important, however, is to:

*make students more aware that pragmatic functions exist in language, specifically in discourse, in order that they may be more aware of these functions as learners. We, as teachers, must know about these speech acts and their component parts to determine what is naturalistic input for our students, even though it would be impossible to impart this knowledge concerning every speech act explicitly. We believe that if students are encouraged to think for themselves about culturally appropriate ways to compliment a friend or say goodbye to a teacher, then they may awaken their own lay abilities for pragmatic analysis.*

Bardovi-Harlig et al (1991: 5)

#### **5.4.2 Brock and Nagasaka's (2005) SURE Process in Teaching Pragmatics:**

Brock & Nagasaka (2005) elaborate a teaching strategy for the introduction of pragmatics in the EFL class that they call SURE. The latter acronym stands for four distinct steps: *See, Use, Review* and *Experience* pragmatics in the classroom.

#### 5.4.2.1 See:

As for the first step, they suggest that teachers can create opportunities where students can see *language in context* and so raise their awareness of the important role of pragmatics and its applications to communication and language use. A useful practice then can be showing to students how to make polite requests in the target language or any other speech act that students can meet and use in real life conversational situations. Brock & Nagasaka (2005) propose an activity in which students are exposed to how requests can appropriately be made when using the target English. In this they follow the Brown and Levinson's (1978) work about politeness continuum which they present as follows:

As a warming up and an introduction to the activity, the teacher asks their students to brainstorm some common requests they make to each other in the classroom. After the elicitation phase the teacher presents and explains Brown and Levinson's (1978) politeness model:

Indirect: *I forgot my pencil. /My pencil's broken.*

Direct: *Lend me a pencil.*

Polite: *Could I borrow a pencil, please? /Would you mind lending me a pencil?*

Familiar: *It'd be terrific if I could borrow your pencil.*

Brock & Nagasaka (2005: 21)

After the explanation and illustration of the politeness continuum, the teacher invites their students to practice what they saw using the following activity sheet:

1. *Polite: Ask a classmate to lend you his/her ruler. Measure this paper and write the width along with the classmate's name here.*

2. *Familiar: Ask a classmate to lend you 10 dollars. Write his/her name here.*

3. *Indirect: Ask a classmate to lend you his or her pencil. Write his or her name here*

4. *Polite: Ask a classmate to sign his/her name*

(Ibid)

At the conclusion of the activity, Brock & Nagasaka (2005) suggest, the teacher can discuss issues as to appropriateness and politeness when making requests in English. Such practice is believed to raise students' awareness of how pragmatics operates when realizing a speech act like requesting.



#### 5.4.2.2 Use:

After presenting, illustrating and explaining how pragmatics operates within the communicative sphere of the target language, the teacher can move to the second step which consists in getting students practise language in use. A practical way to do this is through devising activities in which students are asked to socially interact with each other on the basis of a clearly described context. In other words, the 'Use' phase is a context-based assignment process which helps students practise the oral production of English in given situations quite similar to real-life like ones. In small groups or in pairs students can work on role-plays, simulations or short dialogues. Such practice is widely believed to enhance students' pragmatic skills. As put forward by Brock & Nagasaka (2005):

*One important opportunity for that, of course, is through small group and pair activities in the classroom. As Olshtain and Cohen (1991) and others have pointed out, using role plays, drama, and mini-dialogs in which students have some choice of what they say provides students with opportunities to practice and develop a wide range of pragmatic abilities.*

Brock & Nagasaka (2005: 22)

An illustration of the strategy in question is offered by the same authors who propose dialogues as a practical technique to practice pragmatics in language use. For instance, and with the very objective of getting students practise the realisation of the speech acts of complimenting and responding to complimenting they suggest a speaking activity which can be introduced by short dialogues like the following ones:

1. A: *I really like your handbag.*  
B: *This old thing? It's about to fall apart.*
2. A: *Wow! What a great car!*  
B: *Yeah, I love it, even if I did pay too much for it.*

(Ibid)

After the dialogues illustration, the teacher can ask the students to work in pairs and develop two short dialogues in which the first participant give a compliment and the second one responds by downplaying (5) the value of the complimented object (like in the example provided above).

However, as many practitioners suggest, other speech acts and more pragmatic features of the target language can be taught by using role-plays that, as suggested by Brock & Nagasaka (2005), require students to adjust their speech production according to

both the situation being role-played and the nature of their relationship with their interlocutors (other participants). Topics then, like terms of address, apologizing, inviting, greetings ...etc can be dealt with.

#### 5.4.2.3 Review:

At the present level the teacher needs to *review*, *reinforce* and *recycle* the very pragmatic aspects that they have already instructed their students in. One relevant way to achieve this is through the language of daily classroom management which is considered to be as an actual *readily available opportunity* (Ibid). In this respect, it is claimed that the use of L1 in EFL classes as a means to give instructions is quite detrimental since it greatly reduces the opportunity of exposing students to target language daily classroom discourse. The latter not only is a means to reinforce students' understanding and knowledge of the communicative functions of the target language in the classroom setting, but can also offer students practical illustrations of the pragmatic features of language use. In Brock & Nagasaka's words:

*Using English for classroom management takes the language out of its all-too common role as an abstract, lifeless linguistic system to study, and places it in the role of a real-life, breathing communication system. When teachers and students use English to complete common communicative functions in the classroom, such as requests, commands, openings, closing, refusals, apologies, and explanations, students' developing pragmatic knowledge can be reinforced through the common communicative events that take place daily in every EFL classroom. For example, in opening lessons and transitioning to new activities, teachers can choose from a variety of language choices, depending on the immediate context and need.*

Brock & Nagasaka (2005: 23)

The authors then maintain that the teacher's classroom management discourse can serve to teach students different instances of language use such as openings or requests by simply giving classroom instructions in English like in the following examples:

*Example Openings:*

*Indirect: It's time to get started.*

*Direct: Sit down now.*

*Polite: Would you sit down, please?*

*Familiar: Boys and girls, it would be helpful if you could take a seat.*

*Example Requests:*

*Indirect: It's cold in here./I'm freezing.*

*Direct: Close/Shut the window.*

*Polite: Could you close the window, please?/Would you mind closing the window?*

*Familiar: Be a dear and close the window./Would you close the window for us?*

(Ibid)

#### 5.4.2.4 Experience:

For a better harnessing of pragmatics instructions in the EFL classroom teachers need to help their students experience and observe the role of pragmatics in communication (Brock & Nagasaka, 2005). In this respect, it is believed that providing students with authentic language input can raise their understanding of language use in a variety of contexts. The utilisation of videos where students can observe how native speakers interact and behave in specific conversational situations is recommended by many practitioners like Çakir (2006). The latter states that such practice allows students to concentrate in detail on language features, context and on visual clues to meaning, like facial expressions and gestures. In the same line of thoughts, Derakhshan & Zangoei (2014) following Gass & Houck (1999), Stempleksi & Tomalin (1990), Dufon (2002), Dupuy (2001) and Washburn (2001) point to a number of benefits that can be drawn from using videos in the EFL classroom. These are summarised in the following points:

- Videos provide more contextual information than textbooks do.
- They help students get a complete image as to the interlocutors and the setting of their interactive activity.
- They allow students to observe politeness norms in interaction.
- They offer relevant information as to the target language culture.
- Videos help students get pragmatic as well as affective information that are carried by the speakers' paralinguistic features mainly stress, intonation and loudness.
- They enhance students' interest and motivation in the classroom.

#### **5.5 Pragmatics and Cultural Awareness in the EFL Classroom:**

A wealth of research in pragmatics (Jasone Cenoz: 2007; Alcón Soler & Safont Jordà: 2007; Bardovi-Harlig: 2001; O'Keeffe et al: 2011; Boxer: 2002; Grundy: 2008) suggests that culture is a central component of language use.

*a language is a part of a culture and a culture is a part of a language; the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture.*

Brown (1994: 165) in Rafieyan et al (2014: 114)

Therefore, any attempt to develop foreign language learners' pragmatic competence excluding the cultural aspects of the target language community may be doomed to failure. Some practitioners tend to teach pragmatics through exposing their students to a set of linguistic choices a native speaker of the target language may make in a given context; refusal forms for example (Lenchuk & Ahmed, 2013). Conversational formulas are presented to the learners who are asked after to memorize the linguistic forms they have been exposed to like: "That's out of the question!" "No way!" "I'll have to think that over" (Trappe & Tullis (2006: 65) in Lenchuk & Ahmed (2013: 85)). Yet, as Lenchuk & Ahmed (2013) suggest no call is made for conscious attention to why that speaker might prefer one expression or linguistic form over another. Such practice is believed to be insufficient if teachers are to enhance their students' pragmatic competence. Thus:

*the acquisition of pragmatic competence is facilitated by conscious attention to and critical awareness of the sociolinguistic and sociocultural variables that underlie the pragmatic behaviour of native speakers. In other words, it is hoped that learners will appreciate the pragmatic behaviour of native speakers much more once they are aware of the system of cultural beliefs, values, and norms that make such behaviour in/appropriate.*

Lenchuk & Ahmed (2013: 85)

In this respect, one may say that a pedagogy of developing students' target language pragmatic skills should tightly be linked to a serious consideration of the different cultural aspects of the target language community. Such teaching orientation may help foreign language learners to become, in an intercultural setting, effective communicators who hold a sense of understanding and acceptance of their interlocutor's linguistic behaviour, and show appropriate ability to respond suitably to specific speech events. These characteristics are part of the personality features of what Tan and Chua (2003) call *culturally intelligent individuals* who are those who:

*reflect genuineness, empathy, and warmth; the capacity to respond flexibly to a range of possible solutions; an acceptance of and openness to differences among people; a willingness to learn to work with people of different cultural backgrounds; and an articulation and clarification of stereotypes and biases and how these may accommodate or conflict with the needs of culturally diverse groups.*

Tan and Chua (2003: 263) in Lockley and Yoshida (2014: 3)

The important role of cultural awareness in the process of communicative competence development has urged many scholars and practitioners in the field of ELT to call for the integration of culture in the EFL curricula. Bedjaoui (2014) highlighting the very benefits of the practice in question at both the pedagogical and individual levels asserts that:

*At the pedagogical level, by teaching learners to understand culture in a deeper way, they will be equipped with tools that will help them interpret cultural phenomena and meet cultural challenges .Creating learning environments and intercultural experiences promotes self-awareness, positive social interactions; teaching for intercultural understanding supports teachers in educating about values in intercultural contexts. At the individual level, interculturality is concerned with developing a cosmopolitan attitude which is not just a question of cultural open-mindedness, but preoccupations with the problems of the other too. No doubt, learning about culture is a two-pronged effort: we should reflect on our own culture at the same time as we explore another culture.*

Bedjaoui (2014: 120)

In fact, the very nature of the foreign language class makes the tackling of some cultural issues related to the target language quite inevitable. In Cakir's (2006) words:

*Language teachers cannot avoid conveying impressions of another culture whether they realize it or not (Rivers,1981;315). Language cannot be separated completely from the culture in which it is deeply embedded. Any listening to the utterances of native speakers, any reading of original texts, any examination of pictures of native speakers engaged in natural activities will introduce cultural elements into the classroom.*

Cakir (2006: 157)

Yet, a relevant question one may ask in this respect is how to consciously implement the teaching of cultural factors in our classrooms. Regarding the fact that most EFL teachers do not receive special training in the teaching of cultural and intercultural issues that are relevant to the target language, the task may seem quite challenging. Nevertheless, Jerrold (2013) points to the five-dimension culture learning model highlighted by Paige in Cohen et al (2003: 53). The model groups culture into the following categories: the self as cultural, the elements of culture, intercultural phenomena (culture-general learning),

particular cultures (culture-specific learning) and acquiring strategies for culture learning. The exploration of the dimensions in question in an EFL classroom is believed to enhance learners' ability to better:

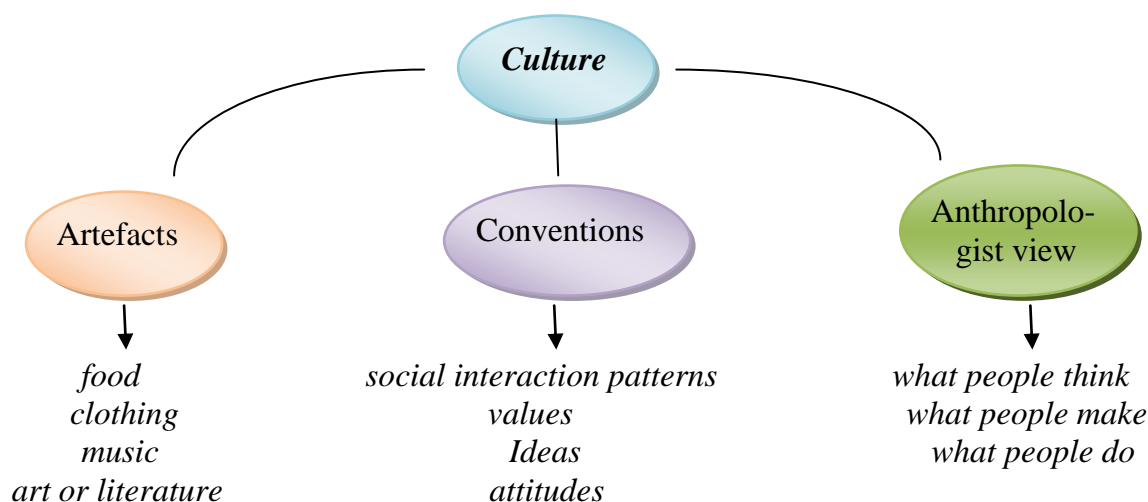
*connect to the target culture, raise their awareness of cultural differences, and improve their "intercultural communicative competence" (Byram 1997).*

Jerrold (2013: 2)

### **5.5.1 The Self as Cultural:**

It is agreed that all people belong to at least one culture which, to a large extent, influences the ways they think, interact and communicate. A better way to facilitate making connections across different cultures is to start asking and answering questions about one's own culture (Jerrold, 2013). It is the teachers' job then to help their students in such practice. The targeted objective is to make them aware of the relevant elements of their culture (Byram (1997) in Jerrold (2013)). Such learning process is called by Kramsch (1993) establishing a "*sphere of interculturality*".

Yet, before engaging students in any interactive cultural discussion, Jerrold suggests that teachers have to explain first what culture means. The following figure illustrates different views as to culture and its correlates:



**Figure 5.3: Correlates of and views on the Term Culture  
(Adapted from Jerrold (2013))**

❖ *The figure above demonstrates the main concepts and items related to culture.*

As far as endeavouring to create a sphere of interculturality is concerned, Jerrold (2013) believes that it would be a good practice to push EFL students to construct their own opinions and ideas about culture rather than spoon-feed them with readymade data as to the mentioned topic. In this respect, the following questions may be asked in an OCE class as the basis for exploring the self as cultural:

- *What behaviours reflect our culture, and how are they learned and shared?*
- *What important factors (social, religious, and economic) influence our culture?*
- *What are some important traditions that are unique to our country?*
- *What ideals and values bind our culture together?*
- *How does culture in our country function as a way for humans to live with one another?*
- *What symbols are prevalent in our culture?*

Jerrold (2013: 3)

### **5.5.2 The Elements of Culture:**

A practical explanation of the elements of culture is illustrated in the *3P* model of culture that comprises: *perspectives* (what people in a given culture think, feel and value), *practices* (the way people communicate and interact with one another) and *products* (what people create and share and eventually transmit to next generations; art, literature, food, music, etc) (Jerrold, 2013). It is agreed that the two first elements being perspectives and practices are quite difficult to be observed and recognized as they are firmly ingrained in the society, unlike products which are rather quite concrete and therefore easily identified.

In the same line of thoughts, Brooks (1968, 1997) in Jerrold (2013) differentiates between the two different constructs of “*formal culture*” and “*deep culture*”. The former

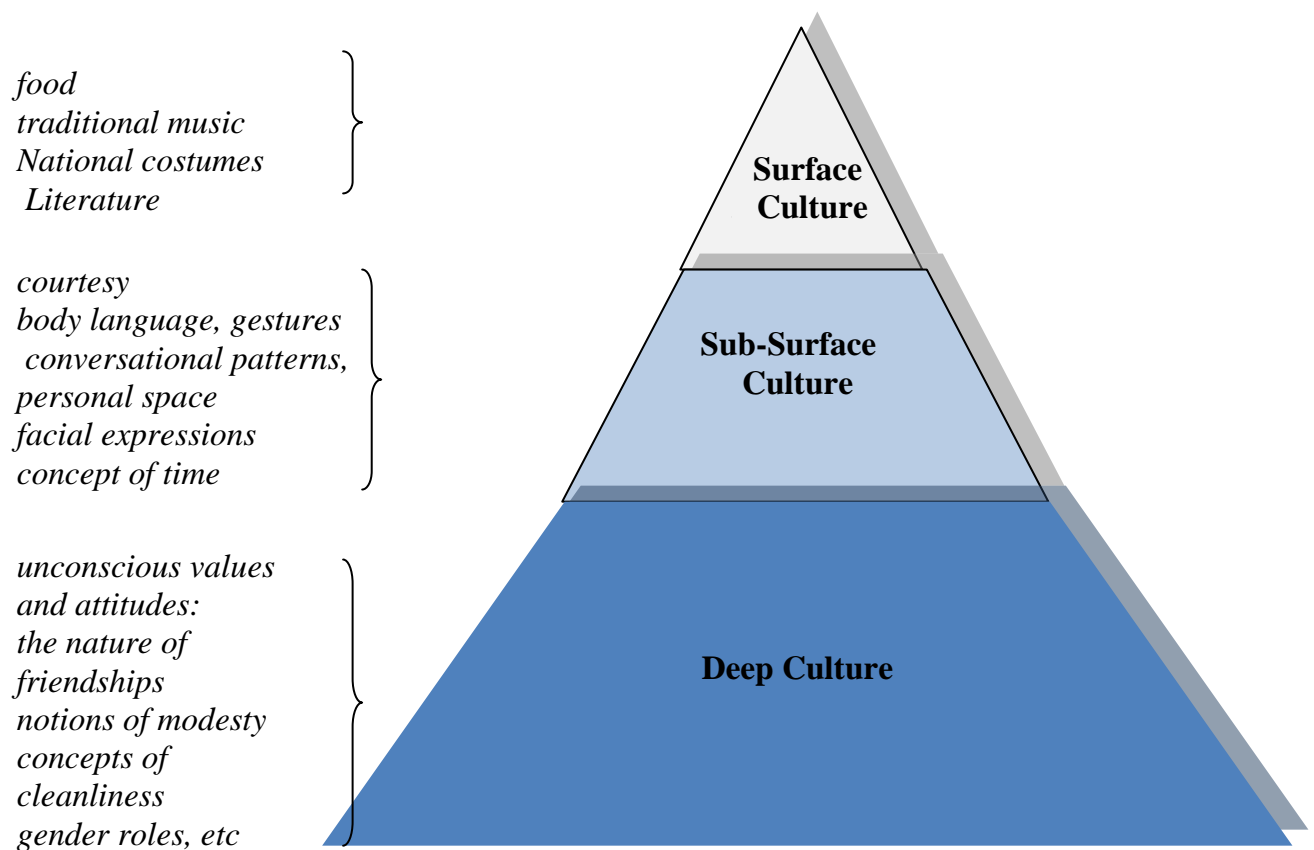
encompasses all what is linked to literature, history, fine arts and the like; while the latter comprises patterns of social interactions, values, attitudes, etc. Yet, as far as the context of the present remedial section (which revolves around cultural awareness, cross-cultural and intercultural communication) is concerned; EFL teachers need to focus more on the exploration of the concept of deep culture since it offers more insights on how unnoticed cultural orientations in an interactive situation may contribute to pragmatic failures; and worse yet negative stereotyping of the *other*. In this respect, it is interesting to quote Shaules' (2007) own definition of deep culture:

*deep culture refers to the unconscious frameworks of meaning, values, norms and hidden assumptions that we use to interpret our experiences. Cultural differences at this deep level are an often unnoticed obstacle to intercultural learning which trip up sojourners by letting them fall into ethnocentric judgments about their new surroundings.*

Shaules (2007: 2)

As suggested by Jerrold (2013) a good teaching practice that can illustrate the two different dimensions of culture ( the formal and the deep) in an EFL classroom is the presentation of Hall's (1976) "*cultural iceberg*" model.





**Figure 5.4: Hall's (1976) Cultural Iceberg Model (Adapted from Jerrold (2013))**

❖ *The figure above illustrates Hall's vision of the components of culture through his iceberg model.*

The teacher can draw the iceberg figure with its three sections on the board and elicit students' ideas as to the elements they may think of at the three different levels. While elements in the surface culture, which covers people's behaviour as a whole (Hall, 1976), can easily be guessed and thought of by students; the teacher may exemplify items in the sub-surface culture dealing with beliefs. Conversational patterns differences across cultures, for instance, can serve as a good illustration in this respect. The teacher can then, list some relevant examples as those provided by Tannen (1984) like when to talk, what to say, listenership, greetings, intonation, etc.

Yet, as far as deep culture is concerned, students may find it quite difficult to think of related items. This is due to the fact that the elements at this level are quite internal and represent subjective knowledge. For example: "*While it might seem odd for American parents to share their bed with their children, many cultures around the world view this as a normal practice.*" Jerrold (2013: 4). Another illustration of cross-cultural misunderstanding is that provided, in a business context, by Schermerborn (1993) in Köksal (2000):

*In Riyadh an American exporter once went to see a Saudi Arabian official. After entering the office he sat in a chair and crossed his legs. With the sole of his shoe exposed to the Saudi host, an insult had been delivered. Then he passed the documents to the host using his left hand, which Muslim consider unclean. Lastly he refused when offered coffee, suggesting criticism of the Saudi's hospitality. The price for these cultural miscues was the loss of a \$ 10 million contract to a Korean better versed in Arab ways.*

Schermerborn (1993: 55) in Köksal (2000: 631)

After exploring the three levels of culture, the teacher, according to Jerrold (2013), may ask their students to provide examples from their own culture and compare them with English-speaking cultures. Such instruction is believed to be a prerequisite first step for a cross-cultural interactive activity. However, as far as EFL teachers' experience is concerned, knowing enough about the target culture is not always taken for granted. Some instructors as Jerrold (2013) points could not have actual opportunities to travel abroad to discover and learn about the English culture. He suggests, then, internet as a practical alternative:

*Fortunately, the Internet is a great source of information. Conducting searches with specific questions or phrases like "Why do Americans do the things they do?" or "the culture of English-speaking countries," along with creative key word searches related to the target culture (e.g., symbols, values, social organization), will yield data that teachers can use to educate both themselves and their students.*

Jerrold (2013: 4)

### **5.5.3 Intercultural phenomena:**

Another relevant practice in the implementation of cultural issues in foreign language teaching is the exploration of the different phenomena that are engendered in an intercultural context. Since many EFL learners exhibit a genuine interest in learning English to, besides other motivational orientations, travel abroad for tourism or doing business or pursuing their studies, teachers have to prepare them for such diaspora like context. In this respect, Jerrold (2013) uses the term acculturation to refer to a significant task in EFL teaching:

*When we teach EFL, part of our job should be to prepare students for challenges they may meet when they travel or*

*move to a country where English is spoken. The process of adapting to a new culture is called “acculturation.”.*

Ibid

For Berry (2005) acculturation consists of the very process of cultural and psychological changes that occur during the *contact between two or more cultural groups*. Those changes then: *“involve various forms of mutual accommodation, leading to some longer-term psychological and sociocultural adaptations between both groups.”*Berry (2005: 699).

Echoing Brown (1994), Jerrold (2013) delineates four main steps that the process of acculturation goes through. These are *excitement, culture shock, recovery and adaptation*. During the first stage, new comers to the host country are engulfed by extreme excitement caused by the newness and freshness of the environment they moved to. As for the second stage, soon the excitement feeling turns to a growing sensation of confusion, hostility and resentment of the new culture because of some contrasting beliefs and principles that they cannot accept nor can they appreciate. This is called culture shock which is, as defined by Richards & Schmidt (2002):

*Strong feelings of discomfort, fear, or insecurity which a person may have when they enter another culture. For example, when a person moves to live in a foreign country, they may have a period of culture shock until they become familiar with the new culture.*

Richards & Schmidt (2002: 139)

Yet, through time culture shock process starts to fade away during the third stage where sojourners:

*make friends, feel more comfortable using the target language, and appreciate the differences between their own culture and the new one. Ultimately, in Stage Four, the newcomer will adapt and accept the new culture.*

Jerrold (2013: 5)

It is agreed that the most challenging stage in the acculturation process is culture shock, because individuals tend sometimes to totally withdraw. Therefore, as Jerrold (2013) suggests, teachers can help their students better apprehend and succeed in going through acculturation by making them aware of the four stages; and especially by telling them that culture shock is an inevitable but quite normal process which eventually leads to acceptance of and adaptation with the new culture.

#### 5.5.4 Particular Cultures:

The core objective of exploring particular cultures in the EFL class is to understand the various differences that each community exhibits in the field of communication. In this respect, it is very useful to refer to Hall's (1976) vision of "context" which covers the cultural background where communication happens (Jerrold, 2013). The whole idea is that in a setting where people come from different backgrounds communication may sometimes break down, because the participants may not share the same cultural beliefs and values. Hall (1976) elaborated the theory of High- Context Culture and Low-Context Culture which helps to explain how communication is strongly influenced by the very features of a particular culture. In Rutledge's (2011) words:

*In an increasingly connected and interdependent world effective communication not only becomes more important but also much more difficult. Ironically, it is often not dissimilar languages that cause the greatest problems but rather much more mundane and harder to detect cultural differences. One such difference is that of a high context culture versus a low context culture.*

Rutledge (2011: 1)

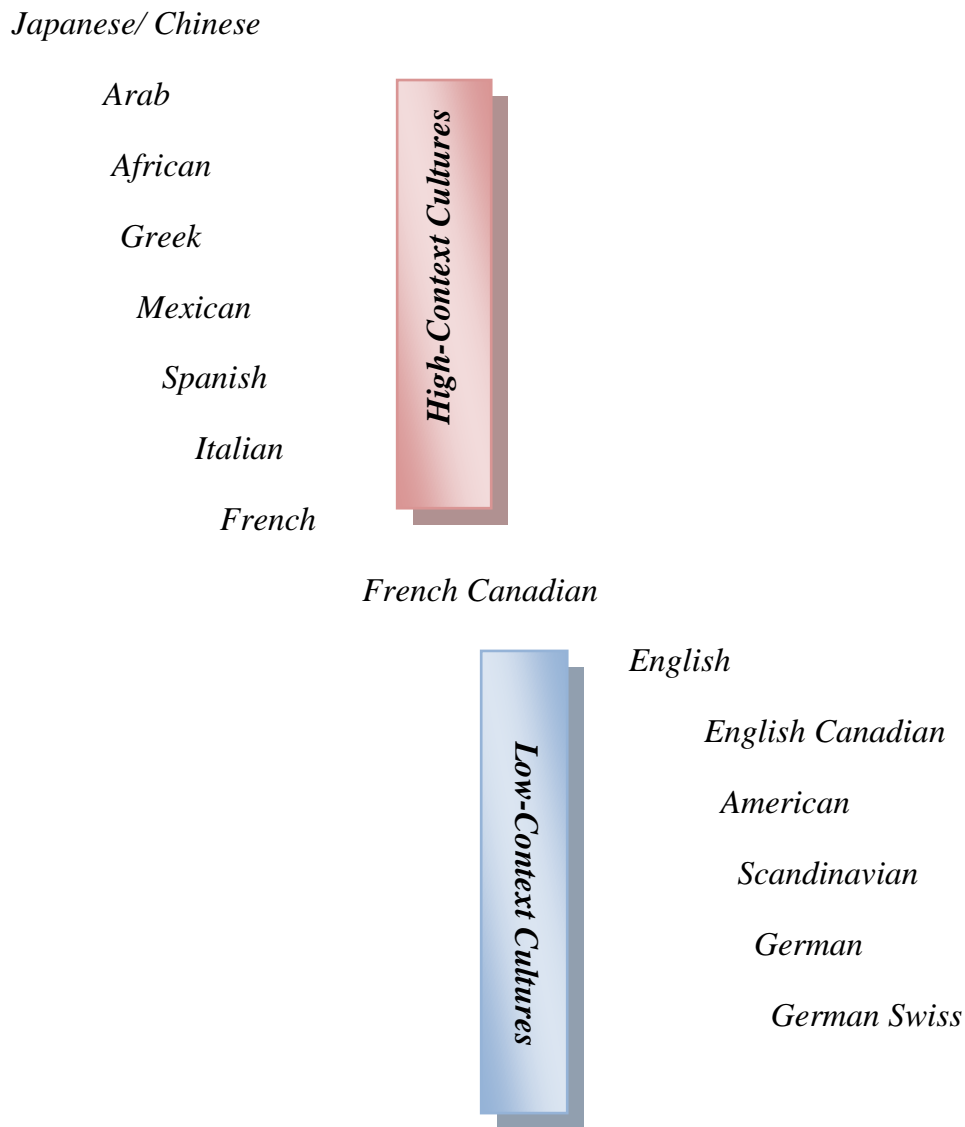
The following table displays the main differences between a High-Context Culture (HCC) and a Low-Context Culture (LCC):

<i>Communication characteristics in a HCC</i>	<i>Communication characteristics in a LCC</i>
<p>-Words are less important than a speakers' intent. People from high-context cultures generally share a high degree of commonality of knowledge and viewpoints. There is little need to spell things out, and meanings tend to be implicit or can be communicated in indirect ways (Jerrold (2013:5)).</p> <p>-High context cultures are vulnerable to communication breakdowns when they assume more shared understanding than there really is. They are strongly inclined to indirect methods of communication (Rutledge (2011:1)).</p> <p>-Interlocutors from high-context cultures depend less on language precision and may come across as ambiguous to people from low-context cultures (Jerrold (ibid)).</p> <p>-In certain situations, someone from a high-context culture may find someone from a low-context culture to be overly blunt (Ibid).</p>	<p>-Things are fully (though concisely) spelled out. Things are made explicit, and there is considerable dependence on what is actually said or written (Rutledge (2011:1))</p> <p>-Low-context cultures tend to be individualistic and goal-oriented; people from low-context cultures tend to value directness with discussions resulting in actions (Jerrold (ibid)).</p> <p>Interlocutors from low-context cultures are expected to be straightforward and concise (Ibid).</p> <p>-People from low-context cultures may feel that high-context people are secretive or unforthcoming (Ibid).</p>

**Table 5.1: Hall's (1976) HCC versus LCC  
(Adapted from Jerrold (2013) and Rutledge (2011))**

❖ *The above table shows the different characteristics and orientations of both HCC and LCC.*

The following figure displays the classification of some different world cultures on the basis of the High/Low Context parameter:



**Figure 5.5: World Cultures Classification according to Hall (1976)**

❖ The figure above displays the classification of different cultures in relation to HCC and LCC.

As a wealth of research suggests unawareness of the different cultural contexts and backgrounds the participants in a conversational task belong to may very often lead to communication conflicts; and worse yet negative stereotyping and hostility. The following example illustrates how people from HCC and LCC perceive each others' communicative contribution because they do not share the same thoughts and values:

- *Japanese can find Westerners to be offensively blunt. Westerners can find Japanese to be secretive, devious and bafflingly unforthcoming with information.*
- *French can feel that Germans insult their intelligence by explaining the obvious, while Germans can feel that French managers provide no direction.*

Rutledge (2011:1)

Having the above information at hand, presenting different peoples' cultural differences through Hall's (1976) construct of HCC and LCC in the EFL class may serve as a good teaching practice. This is because it can help students better apprehend how the cultural context influences, to a large extent, the choices and interpretation of the speakers' communicative intents in specific situations. In the same line of thoughts, Jerrold (2013) proposes a practical activity in which students are to determine which category of culture theirs belongs to. Based on Hall's (1976) classification, students are asked to pinpoint those features from a high and low- context cultures that resemble to or are compatible with those from their native culture.

Then, Jerrold (2013) suggests, the teacher may ask students, using their acquired knowledge of HCC and LCC, to figure out some situations where communication breaks down as a result of cultural dissimilarities. Such assignment in an OCE class can be a substantial opportunity to practice language use in relation to cultural considerations within the double faceted condition of instruction relevance (as to pragmatics and cultural awareness) and fun of practice (for such game- like activities trigger students' motivation and involvement).

### **5.5.5 Acquiring Strategies for Culture Learning:**

After presenting the different dimensions of the cultural instruction model, dealt with above, the concluding step consists in trying to raise students' cultural competence through a careful devising of relevant classroom activities. However, it is quite important for teachers, in this endeavour, to fully explore Byram's (1997) intercultural competence (IC) which can offer insights on how culture and language are intricately and inextricably intertwined within the very act of communication. The following features are what make the core of Byram IC:

- *a curiosity and openness to other cultures*
- *an understanding of social practices and products in both one's own culture and the target culture*
- *the ability to relate something from another culture and make it comprehensible to members of one's own*
- *the ability to use new knowledge of a culture in authentic situations*
- *the ability to critically evaluate the cultural practices and products of one's own culture and that of other countries*

Jerrold (2013: 6)

As for the very ways and means of cultivating IC among EFL students, practitioners and experts offer a number of strategies all of which focus on Byram's

delineated features of IC which cover: intercultural attitudes, knowledge of social groups, the skills to interpret, relate, discover and interact and critical cultural awareness which is the:

*Ability to evaluate, critically and on the basis of explicit criteria, perspectives, practices, and products in one's own and other cultures and countries.*

Byram et al. (2002: 13) in Nakano et al. (2011: 24)

Therefore, and regarding the very nature of the targeted dimensions of IC it seems that a primary role then is to be attributed to the individual student as an autonomous undertaker of their own intercultural journey. However, still the role and contribution of the teachers, in this context, remain of a paramount importance. Moeller & Nugent (2014) echoing Byram et al. (2002) point to creating an environment of *curiosity and inquiry* in the classroom where teachers can enhance students' IC by comparing specific examples from their own culture with those from the target culture. Yet, as it is suggested by Moeller & Nugent (2014):

*In this situation, the teacher's job is not to provide specific questions and answers in relation to the artifact, rather to pose some open-ended questions to guide learners toward independent discovery of differing worldviews based on common textual material. This places the learner in the role of active gatherer of knowledge and information, thereby minimizing judgment about the culture.*

Moeller & Nugent (2014: 5)

In the very same respect, it is worth to mention Furstenberg's (2010) approach to IC development in the language class. The latter focuses as a main practice on involving students from two different cultures in a process where they describe traditions and exchange ideas and beliefs about their own cultures. Such approach is believed to enhance *a collective, constructivist approach to learning* since it positively engages two different groups having two different cultural backgrounds in a process of shared inquiry, discovery, exploration and interpretation (Furstenberg (2010) in Moeller & Nugent (2014)). Yet, and within the context of the present study, it seems that the approach in question is difficult to apply due to the limited number of foreign students in the Algerian university. Nevertheless, still students can interact and exchange opinions about a variety of topics of common interest, as suggested by Furstenberg (2010) herself, through the use of online forums.



Another teaching practice that can help develop students' IC is that suggested by Charles (2014). It emphasizes the implementation of role-play assignments in the language classroom. Students are asked to role-play scenarios where they encounter a *cross-cultural abnormality* and are asked to deal with the problem. Yet, a preceding phase consists on showing some videos that display “*different cultures that students are expected to interact with and point out a barrier for students to overcome*”. Charles (2014: 41). After that, students are asked to figure out a solution to the issue in question and determine how differently it could have been dealt with within their own culture. The use of role-plays in such context with matters relating to cross-cultural interactions is believed to be a relevant means that may offer, to both teachers and students, a further insight into cultural awareness (Charles, 2014).

A second strategy with a similar objective is proposed by the same researcher accentuating the importance of structured group work. In this activity, the teacher divides the class into small groups where participants are to reflect on issues related to their own and other cultures. The instructions are as follow:

- *Assign groups to various cultures with each person given a specific task.*
- *One student researches the assigned culture and its associated language.*
- *Another student identifies two ways in which English has positively impacted the culture.*
- *A third student identifies two ways in which English has negatively impacted the culture.*
- *Everyone in the group work cooperatively to bring forth a resolution for the negative impacts.*

*If time permits, allow groups to compare and contrast their assigned culture with their own culture, as a means of furthering awareness of self and other cultures.*

Charles (2014: 41)

On her part, Dai (2011) points to the term “*cultural texture*” that Oxford (1994) already used to refer to the different features of culture that teachers have to introduce and present to their classes in their language teaching process. In such practice Dai (2011) recommends to consider the variation of three main parameters: information sources, activity-types and positive interactions. As far as varying the sources of data related to cultural issues, teachers can make use of plenty of material that they can select from encyclopedias, literary books, photographs, DVDs containing plays or movies, internet, newspapers and many other sources that today's advanced technology can easily provide.

Classroom activities and their very nature are another parameter that teachers need to carefully take into account. Dai (2011) stresses, in this respect, the necessity of giving clear instructions to students as to the activity as a whole and what they are exactly asked to do. Transmitting information to students then is of a paramount importance if teachers are to help their students avoid ambiguities, misunderstanding and; worse yet, communication breakdowns and apprehension during a culture-related classroom assignment. The following is a set of some activity types proposed by Dai (2011) in the context of students' cultural awareness raising process:

#### 5.5.5.1 Conducting Topic-oriented Activity:

The teacher introduces a topic dealing with *an issue where an existing element in the real world is concerned*. Students talk about the topic in relation to the values and principles of their own culture. The teacher then can adapt their students to the target culture. As suggested by Dai (2011):

*the topics of issues in discussion vary considerably across cultures. In dealing with the topics, students are instructed to cross the cultural border between their own every day world and the world of the target language and follow certain social constraints and rules during participation of classroom activities.*

Dai (2011: 1032)

#### 5.5.5.2 Taking Activity Logs:

It is a teaching practice where teachers ask their students to use a notebook in which they write everything related to their own experiences, in and out of the classroom, concerning culture learning and classroom activities. The related items in the notebook can be shared between both the students and the teacher, yet, as Dai (2011) suggests, without considering them for grading. Instead, exploring those notes may allow the teacher to better understand how students are progressing. Activity logs can be quite effective in reinforcing students' learning of culture in the classroom. However, due to the complicated nature of such course the teacher needs to provide enough instructions to students about activity logs assignments.

#### 5.5.5.3 Selecting Authentic Materials:

The selection of authentic materials displaying different aspects of the target culture is an efficient practice that is widely believed to enhance students' comprehension of cultural

matters related to the target language use. Dialogues of native speakers, in particular, can be explored in oral classes utilising the very pedagogical support made available through the different multimedia means notably data show projection of videos, movies excerpts, talk shows, plays ...etc. Yet, it is very important for the teacher to intervene and explain some cultural matters that seem to be ambiguous or conflicting for students because:

*Authentic materials can frustrate students lacking sufficient cultural and social knowledge of the target language, and therefore teachers should carefully select suitable materials to motivate their learning interests.*

Dai (2011: 1033)

Dai (2011) contends that regularly exposing students to authentic dialogues of native speakers is an actual opportunity to raise their knowledge background of the target culture as far as customs, habits, social manners and life style are concerned. Implementing listening tasks then through good sound quality equipment and visual aids contributes to creating, by means of vivid pictures and scenes, a native like cultural environment in the foreign language classroom.

#### 5.5.5.4 Employing Prediction:

Pushing students to predict, always in a cultural context, the content of the learning material is another teaching practice that can help student harness their background knowledge. Due to the nature of prediction which consists on students' use of their already existing knowledge about a particular issue to foretell the learning content, such activity can lead to better and effective assimilation of the target content. However, Dai (2011) points out that employing predictions about a subject matter does not mean *wild guessing* but rather an ability that requires *sufficient foundations*. Therefore:

*appropriate background knowledge like custom, geography, history, politics and sound awareness of cultural differences between languages can contribute to reasonable predictions. Language always occurs within a cultural and social setting of some sort, and it must be interpreted in the light of this social and cultural environment.*

Ibid.

Thus, the more students are provided with full key contextual features background information before the predicting task the better their abilities will be in constructing solid knowledge related to the target culture, and in enhancing their predicting skills as well.

As for the last parameter of the *cultural texture* process Dai (2011) asserts that positive classroom interaction is a relevant factor that can contribute to effectively approach the teaching of the target culture. Yet, the interactive process between the teacher and students should cover as many different aspects of the culture under study as possible. Focus should not be cast only upon the bright sides nor should culture be portrayed as monolithic. Teachers then need to *sell* in their classroom *different views of the culture* via the interactive medium with students (Dai, 2011). Devising interactive activities that deliberately display different contrasts within the very same culture is believed to be a good teaching practice (Cullen, 2004 in Dai, 2011). Through such pedagogical orientation in teaching culture classroom interaction can be an actual opportunity for the teacher to better understand their students' learning progress. This can help them adjust their practices according to their needs, strengths, weaknesses and expectations, within a positive classroom learning climate, and eventually better evaluate their competencies (Dai, 2011).

#### **5.6 Designing an OCE Syllabus:**

As far as teaching OCE is concerned and on the basis of the different ideas covered through the previous sections, it seems that it is quite necessary for teachers to reconsider the very practice of designing a relevant syllabus. Yet, for the latter to bring optimum learning results, teachers need to carefully select and devise some content that can meet both students' needs and the pedagogical requirements delineated by the newly introduced LMD system.

As mentioned in the first chapter, teachers do not follow a common and official syllabus for teaching the oral skills. Furthermore, and in most cases coordination between them does not seem to be one of their pedagogical priorities. As a result, students in OCE classes tend to deal with a learning content that varies, within the very same level, from a group to another. Most importantly and on the basis of the present research findings, little or almost no importance is given to the teaching of the pragmatic and cultural features of the target language in the oral classroom.

Therefore, if teachers are to help their students develop optimum oral communicative skills special attention needs to be cast upon a careful syllabus design process. Yet, some full considerations as to procedure and content are to be given in this respect.

### 5.6.1 Stages of Syllabus Design:

Before delineating the very stages that are to be taken into account in designing a syllabus, it is very important to understand what the latter means within a pedagogical context. In fact, the literature offers a variety of definitions most of which stress on the notion of content selection based on students' needs. For instance, Richards & Schmidt (2002: 532) suggest that a syllabus is: "*a description of the contents of a course of instruction and the order in which they are to be taught*". However, Breen (1984) points to a multi-faceted aspect of syllabus covering different parameters mainly language, the learning process and classroom concerns particularly pedagogic and social ones:

*Any syllabus will express—however indirectly—certain assumptions about language, about the psychological process of learning, and about the pedagogic and social processes within a classroom.*

(Breen 1984: 49) in Nunan (1988: 9)

Widdowson (1984) in his definition of syllabus stresses on flexibility and reflection as crucial elements asserting that:

*... the syllabus is simply a framework within which activities can be carried with a teaching device to facilitate learning. It only becomes a threat to pedagogy when it is regarded as absolute rules for determining what is to be learned rather than points of reference from which bearings can be taken.*

Widdowson (1984: 26) in Nunan (1988: 9)

In a syllabus, students' needs and objectives of the different activities planned for a course are, according to Yalden (1984), to be taken into account so as they can fit each other:

*[The syllabus] replaces the concept of 'method', and the syllabus is now seen as an instrument by which the teacher, with the help of the syllabus designer, can achieve a degree of 'fit' between the needs and aims of the learner (as social being and as individual) and the activities which will take place in the classroom.*

(Yalden 1984: 14) in Nunan (1988: 8)

Yet, it is also important for teachers to know about the very different types of syllabus within a foreign language teaching and learning context. Such knowledge can help them select appropriate content and methods relevant to the very nature of the classes they are to teach (OCE in our case). In this respect a distinction then is to be made

between six different types of syllabus delineated by Krahnke (1987) in Rahimpour (2010). These are:

- *Structural syllabus*: focus is on the teaching of different structures and forms of the target language mainly grammatical elements.
- *Notional/functional syllabus*: it covers the very functions that are performed when using language. A good example is the study of different speech acts like: requesting, apologizing, inviting, informing ...etc.
- *Situational syllabus*: it stresses on a language teaching content hinging on *real* or *imaginary* situations where language naturally occurs in contexts like booking a hotel room, seeing the dentist, checking in at the airport, asking directions ...etc.
- *Skill-based syllabus*: it stresses on the teaching of particular abilities that are required in language use.
- *Content-based syllabus*: teaching particular content or specific information using the target language is the main aim of such kind of syllabus. Instructions then focus on developing students' language skills necessary in learning a particular topic like civilization or mathematics.
- *Task-based syllabus*: it covers the assignment of a variety of some selected tasks that students have to carry out using the target language. Some examples of task-based instructions may include: asking for and obtaining information through using the telephone, following oral instructions to draw a map, giving orders and instructions to others ...etc (Richards& Schmidt, 2002).

Having the above description of the different types of syllabuses at hand, one may suggest, in the context of the present research work, that both functional and situational syllabuses can be used to develop students' pragmatic skills in the OCE setting. Therefore, teachers can opt for what is called a multi-dimensional syllabus which is a mixture of two or more types that are believed to fit a particular teaching objective (Howell, 2011). In this respect, OCE teachers can select some content relative to functional, situational, structural and cultural elements of the target language to design a flexible syllabus that can appropriately respond to students' linguistic and pragmatic deficiencies.

Yet, for a syllabus to be efficient, it is important for teachers when designing it to follow what Kaur (1990: 4) describes as “*a logical sequence of three main stages, that is, i) needs analysis, ii) content specification, and iii) syllabus organization.*”

#### 5.6.1.1 Needs Analysis:

Collecting information as to students’ needs, expectations desires and everything related to what they actually want or need to learn through the use of a variety of tools mainly questionnaires, tests or tasks is what makes the core of needs analysis. It is worth to mention however, that the term has often been considered to be mostly linked to learning English for Specific Purposes (ESP) contexts (Kaur, 1990). Yet, needs analysis has significant implications also for general English situations. In fact, the very initiative to consider the practice of needs analysis emanates from Munby (1978) who proposed his “*Communication Needs Processor*” (CNP), which is a model for needs analysis (Gómez García, 2008). The importance of the practice in question as the very step to be considered before going through any course design procedure was highlighted by Munby (1978), who stresses that syllabus design could take place just after getting relevant knowledge as to students’ needs (ibid).

From another parameter, needs analysis according to Richards& Schmidt (2002) explores both objective (6) and subjective (7) information related to students’ needs, and aims at obtaining some data on:

- a- the situations in which a language will be used (including who it will be used with)*
- b- the objectives and purposes for which the language is needed*
- c- the types of communication that will be used (e.g. written, spoken, formal, informal)*
- d- the level of proficiency that will be required*

Richards& Schmidt (2002: 353-4)

#### 5.6.1.2 Content Specification:

The present step consists in deciding on the very nature of the content of the syllabus on the basis of the different objectives set in the prior phase of needs analysis. Yet, content specification is in itself a practice that involves certain considerations that, according to Kaur (1990), Shaw (1976) summarises in two essential questions. These are:

- 1- How much can we teach or how much can be learnt by the learners in question?*
- 2- Which items should be included? Kaur (1990: 9)*

In this respect Shaw points to the *relative usefulness* and *relative difficulty* of the content as important criteria to be considered in content selection for which he suggests the following process:

- i. *determine previous knowledge of learners,*
- ii. *decide amount of content in general terms,*
- iii. *list items in rough order of specific frequency,*
- iv. *group for relative difficulty,*
- v. *check that both functional and notional categories are present,*
- vi. *check coverage of grammatical items.* (Ibid)

#### 5.6.1.3 Syllabus Organization:

After content is carefully selected, the last step is concerned with how to organize and present the content matter. Yet, the organisation process is not to be viewed as a simple concluding phase of the relatively demanding task of syllabus design but rather as a means to reinforce the efficacy of the syllabus and eventually promote students' learning achievement. Content needs to be arranged in a way that facilitates both teaching and learning (Kaur, 1990). Experts and practitioners then offer a number of different ways to sequencing and arranging the very items to be taught. Kaur, for instance, suggests that the syllabus may be structured through a *gradual move from the more general to the more particular*, or by starting with content revolving around the learners' home life items, then moving on to classroom situations before moving out of the school environment and going through real life like contexts such as at the post office, the restaurant, the grocery shop...etc.

In the same line of thoughts, Allen (1984) in Kaur (1990) recommends three different approaches to ordering materials in a syllabus:

- 1- Structural-analytical approach which gives high priority to *formal grammatical criteria*.
- 2- Functional-analytical approach in which aims and objectives are defined in terms of types of communicative language use.
- 3- Non-analytical, experiential, or "natural growth" approach in which focus is not upon the arrangement or pre-selection of items but rather on immersing learners in real-life communication.

Therefore, sequencing of a syllabus content depends to a large extent on the designer's views of language. For instance, within a syllabus representing language as a



formal system, a more suitable sequencing will focus on simplicity or complexity of structures (Kaur, 1990). On the other hand, in a syllabus holding a functional view of language sequencing then may give greater concern to the criteria of usefulness or frequency (Ibid).

### **5.6.2 ICT and Electronic Corpora in Syllabus Design:**

It goes without saying that the field of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is offering actual facilities and means that can usefully be adopted in the EFL teaching/learning context in general and OCE classes in particular. Both teachers and learners can get many benefits from the large amount of resources made available by the various features of ICT. One of these essential tools is computer-based information. The latter is available in the form of different programs which can supply learners and teachers with extensive pedagogical supports related to learning and teaching the oral skills.

Harmer (2010) states that computer-based technologies can be explored in the EFL classroom in three different ways, all of which can contribute to raising students' motivation and engagement in the learning process: presentation, information getting and composing.

#### **5.6.2.1 Presentation:**

Miscellaneous contents can be presented to students in EFL classes in relatively attractive ways when hooking up computers to data projectors. Teachers can then use PowerPoint program to display and illustrate particular information through a combination of texts and pictures. Yet, presentation includes also video projection of specific content such as talk-shows, documentaries, movies excerpts and so on. It is widely agreed that computer-based presentation of carefully selected language items can greatly stimulate students' interest and understanding. Video projection in a listening activity, for instance, is reported to be a reliable tool that can help students fill in, visually, background information as to the speakers' location, clothes, body movements ...etc which are relevant clues to reinforce meaning (Harmer, 2010).

#### **5.6.2.2 Information-Getting:**

Getting access to full extent information related to the target language has become an easy task for learners and teachers thanks to the use CDs, DVDs or the Internet. Computers then can offer teachers limitless sources that can be used as pedagogical supports whether

through hardware equipment or some software or programs that can be downloaded from specific Websites. Harmer (2010) highlights the utility of the web in extending students' activity of learning beyond classroom settings:

*...the information they can find on the web is extremely rich and varied, and dissolves the walls of the classroom. The possibilities are limitless.*

Harmer (2010: 255)

One way to relevantly incorporate computer information-getting process in the teaching practice is the implementation of electronic corpora in syllabus design. As mentioned earlier in chapter two, electronic corpora are computer-saved real-life linguistic information covering oral and written forms. They are designed to be used as reference databases for language study. Yet, electronic corpora in the context of the present research work can greatly help teachers to raise students' awareness of the very pragmatic features of the target language by presenting a wide range of expressions or vocabulary lists that illustrate how native speakers use language in different contexts. the BNC ( British National Corpus) which covers both spoken and written English items can be used in an OCE class to illustrate the realization of particular speech acts, or the use of address expressions and politeness norms in a variety of native speaking contexts.

#### 5.6.2.3 Composing:

Within a computer-based technology context, word processing is undoubtedly one of the most relevant forms of language composing that can enhance students' productivity inside and outside the classroom. Students can use the internet as a practical means to undertake conversational activities with their friends through emailing and chatting. In this respect, Harmer (2010) suggests that:

*Teachers can encourage students to become keypals or mousepals (i.e. using the computer as a more efficient way of having pen pals.) Here, we need to be sure that students are familiar with chatting etiquette - and the difference between computer chat and other written and spoken forms- and that initial keypal enthusiasm is not dissipated through lack of teacher support.*

(Ibid)

Therefore, it is important for teachers to supply students with adequate guidelines as to using the Internet in the most efficient ways that can help improve their target language skills rather than wasting time doing non-related activities or fruitless searching (Harmer, 2010). In a nutshell then, ICT and in particular computer and Internet use has greatly

increased the amount of information available for students in a variety of ways. Furthermore, ICT tends to offer actual opportunities for teachers to adopt relevant ideas as far as syllabus design is concerned, and to assume the new role of *facilitating students' own constructions of knowledge* rather than being simple instruction providers (Seifert & Sutton, 2009).

### **5.7 The Oral Skills: a Matter of Priority:**

The present part is an attempt to reconsider the teaching of the oral skills in relation to the two criteria of sequencing and frequency. In other words, the researcher tries to delineate the importance of carefully taking into account the amount of students' exposure to both skills of speaking and listening and their respective sequencing within the teaching process of the OCE.

As it is already mentioned in chapter one, students are exposed to the oral skills through the OCE unit where they learn listening and speaking in an alternate process. Yet, and as it is pointed to in chapter three; the amount of exposure to the receptive skills of listening is not quite sufficient for students to get enough and appropriate language input. In this respect, it is important to call attention to the Time-on-Task Principle which suggests that: *"The more time you spend doing something, the better you are likely to be at doing it"*. Nation & Newton (2009: 2). Yet, getting students spend more time doing listening will enhance not only their listening skills but also their speaking abilities, since the two skills in question are intertwined and the development of the productive one depends substantially on the reinforcement of the receptive one.

Being guided by the above discussion, one may suggest that it may be a good practice to delay the teaching of speaking at least during the first and second semesters, and expose students to more listening tasks as many experts and practitioners suggest. In this respect, Nord (1980) maintains that:

*Some people now believe that learning a language is not just learning to talk, but rather that learning a language is building a map of meaning in the mind. These people believe that talking may indicate that the language was learned, but they do not believe that practice in talking is the best way to build up this "cognitive" map in the mind. To do this, they feel, the best method is to practice meaningful listening.*

Nord (1980: 17) in Nation & Newton (2009: 38)

A growing body of research has focused on casting more attention upon listening the teaching of which should take priority over that of speaking. Such orientation is guided by the fact that listening is believed to be the practical and efficient means by which language can be learned for:

*It gives the learner information from which to build up the knowledge necessary for using the language. When this knowledge is built up, the learner can begin to speak. The listening-only period is a time of observation and learning which provides the basis for the other language skills.*

Nation & Newton (2009: 38)

Yet, there are more other benefits of delaying the teaching of speaking and focusing instead on listening that Gary and Gary (1981) in Nation & Newton (2009) have described. These benefits can be classified as follows:

*A/- Cognitive Benefit:*

Less skills to be emphasised on.

*B/- Speed of Coverage:*

Receptive knowledge grows faster than productive knowledge. Listening is a shortcut to maximum language learning.

*C/- Motivational Impetus:*

Dealing with realistic communicative listening activities triggers students' motivation and involvement in the learning process.

*D/- Affective Comfort:*

The listening class exhibits a reduced level of stress, unlike conversation classes where overt performance creates a debilitating stage anxiety.

*E/- Autonomy Enhancement:*

Listening independently (at home) to recordings may foster a sense of autonomy in learning among learners.

Therefore, and in the context of our research work, one may say that a well balanced OCE course gives priority to the listening skill at an early stage of learning. The more time students spend doing listening, the better they are likely to be at speaking. Delaying then the practice of speaking in S1 and S2 doesn't mean a frightening passivity, but a preparation for an actual and consistent oral productivity.

## 5.8 Conclusion:

To conclude with, this chapter has been devoted to offering some practical suggestions and recommendations as to the approaching of OCE teaching in relation to linguistic, affective, pragmatic and cultural considerations. It has attempted to delineate how the former parameters can appropriately be integrated in OCE classes through specific teaching strategies so as to help students effectively use the target language in the very oral communicative context.

The first section then has covered the introduction of ‘*Small Talk*’ and Task-based Language Teaching as reliable teaching practices that can counteract the effects of students’ low linguistic competence in conversational tasks, and enhance both fluency and accuracy. The psychological dimensions in the learning process, however, have been emphasised through delineating some affective teaching strategies that are believed to reduce students’ discomfort and inhibition in the oral class. Quite central to the remedial proposals offered through the present chapter is the very concern of pragmatics instructions in OCE classes. After pinpointing the controversial opinions as to possibilities and challenges of teaching pragmatics in EFL classes, the researcher has illustrated four different strategies through which teachers can help their students see, use, review and experience the different pragmatic features of the target language.

Quite fundamental to instructing EFL students in the target language pragmatics is the very process of cultural awareness raising. Since culture and language are inextricably intertwined, it is necessary for students to be exposed to instances of cultural issues in relation to language use. Cross-cultural and intercultural communication along with other concepts like cultural intelligence, intercultural communication and high/low-context culture have been described before suggesting some related classroom activities that aim at fostering students’ communicative abilities in the context in question.

From another parameter, part of the remedial practice suggested through the present chapter has called attention for careful syllabus design procedures that *should* take into account the integration of ICT and electronic corpora. The concluding section then has attempted to delineate the different benefits behind delaying the practice of speaking at early stages of learning and giving priority to listening so as to ensure a rather *well* balanced OCE course and optimum speaking abilities among students.

## Notes to Chapter Five:

(1): Hunter (2011) calls such practice ‘*coaching*’ which usually takes place during the last 10 minutes of the class.

(2): The very nature of ST pushes students to practise their oral skills in a less-stressed environment where they can use and try different speech functions and communicative strategies in an utterly autonomous way.

(3): A positive feedback may be in the form of positive speech addressed to students telling them that they are valuable members of the learning community and that they can achieve positive results.

(4): Intensive competition between students may generate a debilitating anxiety.

(5): It is common in the United States that someone answers to a compliment simply by devaluing the item being complimented (Brock & Nagasaka, 2005).

(6): Objective needs involve: “*target needs*”, *what learners need to do in the target situation- i.e. language use, and “learning needs”, what learners need to do in order to learn -i.e. language learning.*

Hutchinson and Waters (1987:54-63) in Gómez García (2008: 2)

(7): Subjective needs consist in students’ affective needs mainly preferences, wishes, interests, expectations ...etc (Gómez García (2008) echoing Nunan (1988)).

## **GENERAL CONCLUSION**

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This study tried to explore the notion of pragmatics in teaching the oral skills at university level with the one aim of developing students' communicative competence when using the target language in and out of the EFL classroom environment. While miscellaneous teaching approaches and methods, and in particular CLT, have endeavoured to enhance students' oral abilities with regard to fluency and accuracy concerns, graduate and post-graduate students at the Department of English- University of Saida still tend to exhibit inappropriate speech production. Furthermore and in front of such a deficiency, instructions in pragmatics within the different oral syllabuses seem to be given *derisory* importance. This is in spite of the fact that most OCE teachers are quite aware that the very objective of an oral course is to make students able to *appropriately* use the target language in different communicative situations.

Being guided by the concerns of the contradicting edges of the oral skills situation described above, the researcher has set to closely examine second year students' pragmatic skills in different spoken discourse contexts. Fundamental to such inquiry was the analysis of the effects of introducing pragmatic instructions in OCE teaching. Another related preoccupation relevantly linked to the present research orientation was attempting to find out about some practical teaching practices that can help foster *adequate* pragmatic competence among students. Within this three-fold investigative context, the researcher hypothesized the following:

Firstly, second year students of English do not have appropriate pragmatic competence when participating in oral communicative activities. Secondly, instructing students in pragmatics within OCE classes through specific task-based activities can contribute to raising positive affective predispositions which can lead to optimum awareness of the target language pragmatic features. Thirdly, classroom assignments based on the use of authentic English language materials revolving around its various functional aspects can foster appropriate pragmatic competence among students.

The analysis of the main data obtained through the multi-source research instruments utilized in this study has allowed to draw some relevant conclusions as to students' target language pragmatic abilities, specific task-based instructions and affect



interference and teachers' stances and perspectives on OCE teaching in general and students' pragmatic awareness raising strategies in particular.

The study then has confirmed that second year students of English at the University of Saida exhibit a lack of pragmatic competence. Such a deficiency, which was clearly noticeable in their oral contributions to conversational tasks, proved to be responsible for students' inadequate mastery of the functional features of the target language. Difficulties were patently manifested through an ill-formulation of some speech acts, mainly those of apologizing, inviting and complaining. It is important to point then that the communicative inability in question relates to a low pragmalinguistic competence among students who tend to lack the linguistic items necessary to formulate efficient and extended speech acts strategies. Yet, and from another parameter the sample's limited pragmatic competence registered through the analysis of the DCTs covers also the related construct of sociopragmatic competence. Based on a reference model of native speakers speech acts realisation strategies, students' responses in the apologising DCT revealed a relative lack of the social appropriateness norms.

However, the pre-pragmatic instruction phase investigation, the results of which proved the sample's pragmatic weakness, has also indicated that second year students of English have a significant low mastery of the basic grammatical features of the target language. Such a deficiency, in addition to other related factors, mainly limited exposure to English and less practice of its communicative functions through well devised teaching instruction have negatively contributed to undermining students' pragmatic abilities. With regard to this respect, one may question the reliability of the very approaches followed in teaching the oral skills. CLT then or even an eclectic orientation does not seem to bring much, as far the present research context is concerned, to the development of students' pragmatic skills in oral communication. Yet, questioned also is the relevance or validity of the different OCE syllabuses contents designed for teaching speaking at university level. However, and due to the very nature of the oral skills which most of the time exposes the foreign language learner to overt performance, one may relate students' communicative deficit to negative affect which triggers a relatively debilitating psychological discomfort that eventually results in conversational uneasiness.

Yet, and although the affective explanation has a significant relevance in EFL learning situations, the present study revealed that students' communicative difficulties

are not directly caused by negative affect. On the contrary, the results of the post-pragmatic instruction phase showed that students were interestingly involved and quite motivated after being instructed through task-based assignments targeting pragmatic issues. Their speaking performance was reported to be strengthened by a noticeable feeling of enthusiasm and self confidence. This is particularly in role-playing activities where participants were asked to model different real-life like situations such as celebrity guests meetings, business meetings and other free topic conversational contexts involving speech acts realisation. Furthermore, the nature of the activity addressed to students in the oral class was not the only one factor that contributed to nurturing positive psychological conditions. The time allotted for the preparation of each task was judged sufficient by the majority of students who felt less anxious knowing that they have more time to work on their topics. In addition, the continuous assistance the teacher frequently gave to his students while rehearsing their plays reinforced their self-confidence and fostered a stress-free classroom environment. These results confirmed then the first part of the second research hypothesis stipulating that integrating pragmatic instructions through task-based activities may generate optimum psychological comfort among students.

Yet, the positive affective factors combination resulted by the introduction of interesting pragmatic oriented tasks and instructions did not contribute to improving students' pragmatic skills. These results then did not corroborate the second part of the hypothesis. The analysis of data obtained from both the observational sessions and the audio recorded role-plays during the post-pragmatic instruction phase indicated that students tend to exhibit the same communicative deficit registered in the pre-pragmatic instruction stage. Participants in the different oral activities were reported to have impeding difficulties in speech production as a whole. More precisely yet, weaknesses were registered at both structural (linguistic) and functional (pragmatic) levels. As far as the pragmatic dimension is concerned, students' spoken discourse was marked by inadequate conversational skills which were reported to be not complying with the Gricean Cooperative Principle. In this respect, students' interactional contributions were frequently characterized by incomprehensible and sometimes *ambiguous* discourse on one hand, and by either too short or wordy expressions, on the other hand. These communicative shortcomings reflect students' *violation* of the conversational maxims of

manner and quantity respectively and therefore give more evidence of a pragmatic competence deficit.

Having the above discussion at hand, one may question the efficacy of the pragmatic instructive process undertaken within the present study. Admittedly, accompanying functional task-based instructions by affective teaching strategies fostered favourable psychological learning conditions but still developing students' pragmatic skills was not attained. Yet, it is important then to point to the fact that for the integration of pragmatics in OCE teaching to bring the desired results one can suggest that other criteria need to be reconsidered in tandem. One relevant element that the researcher wants to stress in this respect is the notion of the time-on-task principle which did not tend to help meet the intended objectives of the instructional process. A two-OCE session per week frequency during almost two semesters was utterly insufficient to expose students to and teach the various pragmatic characteristics of the target language. Furthermore, effective instruction requires continuous learning practice which in its turn demands a certain amount of time that *should* appropriately be enough to guarantee students' optimum assimilation of the skills in question.

From another angle, results in the present research helped know about teachers' stances as to their students' learning behaviour and effective practices and methods in OCE classes that can aid ameliorate students' oral communicative abilities with regard to the pragmatic dimension of the target language. The information obtained through the questionnaire indicated that, in a more or less broader sense, students of English at the University of Saida seem to lack the *appropriate* pragmatic skills necessary for engaging in actual conversational activities in a variety of contexts. This is in spite of the fact that the teaching of the main interactive functions of the target language has been given much attention in OCE sessions.

On a more basic level, most teachers showed a high degree of awareness as to the necessity of implementing specific instructions with the very purpose of harnessing students' pragmatic skills. They stressed, in this respect, the importance of role -play activities revolving around modelling realistic situations and a number of life style topics. However, students' exposure to authentic target language is another crucial element that most OCE teachers called for. The significance of such a practice lies on the fact that it permits the provision of actual illustrations of how the English language is used in

different communicative contexts. In the same line of thoughts, *authentic* spoken discourse when frequently used, through audiovisual tools, as a model in the oral class can help students learn not only the functional features of the target language, necessary for pragmatic competence development, but also other related aspects, mainly pronunciation and intonation. OCE teachers pointed also to the very benefits of task-based assignments in raising students' awareness and assimilation of the communicative functions of particular linguistic forms like those employed in speech acts realisation.

The questionnaire results have also provided relevant data highlighting the teachers' common ground as to OCE syllabus design. Taking into account students' communicative needs then was stressed as a first step for the selection of appropriate content that can meet pragmatics-oriented pedagogical objectives. In the same respect, the teachers made reference to some criteria they believe are quite important in syllabus design process. These subsume frequency of exposure, sequencing and learnability of the subject matter content. However, devoting some room for actual teaching of pragmatics when designing an OCE syllabus is an issue that most teachers agreed on. They urged for a content selection that *should* take into account the incorporation of pragmatic knowledge and cultural information through topics stressing the various language functions, on the one hand, and sociocultural issues on the other hand.

On the basis of these findings, the present thesis offered a range of some practical suggestions hinging upon a combination of reflective pedagogy, pragmatics and affective concerns within OCE context. It seems *true* that much has been done to promote EFL students' oral communicative skills; yet still teaching practices need to be reconsidered in some cases and reinforced in others, notably instructing students in the various communicative functions of the target language. The notion of pragmatics in language use then is to be carefully explored if we are to prepare EFL students for adequate use of their conversational skills in different contexts and situations. Task-based language teaching targeting the realisation of specific communicative acts for instance can serve as an effective practice that may boost students' pragmatic abilities. However, such a remedial practice can serve another correspondingly useful purpose, i.e. task-based assignments require students to express meaningful communicative needs through making in practice their grammatical knowledge, fostering ultimately their linguistic competence. Therefore, OCE sessions with a task-based orientation can ameliorate students' oral proficiency in

terms of both accuracy and fluency. Yet, the *authenticity* of the language used in these tasks is emphasised so as to guarantee appropriate learning habits of pronunciation as well as intonation.

On the affective level, the recommendations emerging from the last chapter urge for a careful handling and consideration of students' psychological dimension when it comes to learning the oral skills. Motivation then is a significantly relevant element in the learning achievement the degree of which can be increased by the selection of interesting content meeting students' needs and aspirations. However, language anxiety which is very often associated with overt oral performance and classroom tasks with an evaluating nature can be counteracted by ensuring a positive classroom climate. Other teaching practices like positive praise, for instance, can help raising students' self-confidence and therefore optimising their learning involvement and contributions.

A quite fundamental concern discussed within the remedial practice section is the very issue of teaching pragmatics in EFL classes as a step towards raising students' communicative competence. The need for such a pedagogical orientation can be justified by the fact that instructions in pragmatics not only can stimulate the assimilation, among students, of actual language use features like conversational implicature and speech acts formulation, but also provides an opportunity to explore the target language cultural dimensions, the understanding of which is a prerequisite for effective communication. In fact, the notion of culture has been given special attention in the present thesis stressing the importance of cross-cultural and intercultural understanding in conversational activities. The suggestions provided in this study tried to reason the fact that language and culture are two intricately linked items that have a significant relevance to communicative performances. Yet, due to its important role in communicative competence development cultural awareness raising needs to be given full consideration while teaching the oral skills. In this respect, it is necessary to equip our students through meaningful activities with appropriate tools that may help them better interpret the cultural phenomena involved in language use; and therefore allow them to successfully undertake social interactions in a variety of contexts.

With regard to the above scope of concerns, one may reiterate the call for *authentic* language use as basic scaffolding for building and reinforcing students' knowledge of not only the pragmatic features of the target language, but also its correlated cultural

elements. Such a practice can be supported by the very facilities that ICTs can provide, mainly computer connected audiovisual materials, electronic corpora and social media networks. Both teachers and students may draw optimum benefits from a wealth of information, made available on the Internet at least, about the target language culture with extensive details as to lifestyle, traditions, foods, proverbs, values and beliefs. The OCE class then may turn to a veritable opportunity for a pedagogical practice stressing linguistic, communicative, cultural and affective criteria at once. Yet, if teachers are to *successfully* explore the mentioned areas, a *relevant* OCE syllabus needs to be *carefully* designed taking into account students' needs, content selection and organization and the *suitable* audiovisual aids that can be of a *pertinent* significance as far as the content presentation is concerned with.

To conclude with, the present research work is hoped to have offered some new insights as to learning and teaching the oral skills with reference to pragmatics and affect. The researcher, though could not exhaustively tackle the mentioned concerns, attempted to illustrate the importance of combining *carefully* devised instructions with *appropriately* set pedagogical objectives in developing students' communicative competencies at university level. Still yet, more research is to be undertaken in the field of oral communication teaching, particularly with regard to teacher special training in pragmatics and intercultural understanding so as to better approach the OCE instruction process. Although one cannot predict the actual course this analysis might take at graduation and post-graduation contexts, the researcher expects that it will draw much attention for the integration of pragmatics in the different EFL curricula to be taught as a whole subject matter in lieu of a subdivision in the linguistics syllabus.

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## APPENDIX 1: Discourse Completion Task of Apologising

*You are kindly requested to fill in the present DCT of apologizing which is part of a 'doctorat' research study on pragmatics and English language learning and teaching. Thanks to all participants.*

1. Your friend lent you his/her laptop for a while. When you were about to give it back to him/her you stumbled and the computer fell on the floor and broke into pieces. What would you tell your friend?

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

2. You were walking in the street when you saw a friend of yours walking on the other side, so you waved at him/her to drive his/her attention. But, the sudden and quick movement of your hand frightened an old lady who was passing by. What would you tell her?

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

3. You had an appointment with your friend to revise at the library, but you forgot about it and you did not go. You met him/her the day after and he/she was angry about what you did. What would you say?

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

4. In a warm spring day, you accepted your neighbour's invitation for a cup of coffee at his/her garden. But, while you were on your way to sit at the table, you discovered that you had trodden in his/her most favourite flowers. What would you say?

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

5. You came late to the class and you felt that you disturbed the teacher because you interrupted him/her by knocking at the door and getting in. What would you say?

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

6. Your little brother has torn the handout you borrowed from your classmate who called you to ask you to give him/her back the documents. What would you answer him/her?

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

7. Your friend told you a very personal story that you unintentionally divulged to a bunch of friends. He/she got very angry. What would you tell him/her then?

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

## APPENDIX 2: Discourse Completion Task of Requesting

*You are kindly requested to fill in the present DCT of requesting which is part of a 'doctorat' research study on pragmatics and English language learning and teaching. Thanks to all participants.*

1. You are studying in your room and you hear loud music coming from a room down the hall. You don't know the student who lives there, but you want to ask him/her to turn the music down. What do you say?

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

2. You are talking to your friend after class. You missed the last class and you want to borrow your friend's notes. How do you ask for help in this case?

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

3. There is a test in class in two weeks, but you will miss class that day because you have to go to an out-of-town wedding. Class has just ended, and you want to ask your professor whether you can take the exam on another day. How do you go about doing so?

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

4. A friend from out of town is visiting you at school, and you are showing your friend around the campus and city. You want someone to take your picture together. You see a man dressed in a suit carrying a briefcase and you want to ask him to take your picture. What do you say?

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

5. Next week there is a test in a class that is difficult for you. The student you usually sit next to – not a friend but rather an acquaintance – seems to understand the course material better than you. You happen to see this person outside of class a week before the test, and you want to ask him/her to help you get ready for the test. How do you go about doing this?

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

6. You get on the bus to go home and you are carrying a lot of books. You are tired and you want to sit down. At first glance, it seems that there are no seats left, but then you notice that a student is taking up two seats. How do you ask this student to move over so you can sit down?

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

7. You are having dinner with your friend's family. The food is delicious, and you want to ask your friend's mother/father for more. What do you say?

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

8. You go to the library to return a lot of books, and your hands are full. There is a man who looks like a professor standing near the door of the library. How do you ask him to open the door for you?

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

Adapted from Rose, K. (1994)

### APPENDIX 3: Jefferson Transcription System Notation

Symbol	Name	Use
[ text ]	Brackets	Indicates the start and end points of overlapping speech.
=	Equal Sign	Indicates the break and subsequent continuation of a single interrupted utterance.
(# of seconds)	Timed Pause	A number in parentheses indicates the time, in seconds, of a pause in speech.
(.)	Micropause	A brief pause, usually less than 0.2 seconds.
. or ↓	Period or Down Arrow	Indicates falling pitch.
? or ↑	Question Mark or Up Arrow	Indicates rising pitch.
,	Comma	Indicates a temporary rise or fall in intonation.
-	Hyphen	Indicates an abrupt halt or interruption in utterance.
>text<	Greater than / Less than symbols	Indicates that the enclosed speech was delivered more rapidly than usual for the speaker.
<text>	Less than / Greater than symbols	Indicates that the enclosed speech was delivered more slowly than usual for the speaker.
°	Degree symbol	Indicates whisper or reduced volume speech.
ALL CAPS	Capitalized text	Indicates shouted or increased volume speech.

underline	Underlined text	Indicates the speaker is emphasizing or stressing the speech.
:::	Colon(s)	Indicates prolongation of an utterance.
(hhh)		Audible exhalation
? or (.hhh)	High Dot	Audible inhalation
( text )	Parentheses	Speech which is unclear or in doubt in the transcript.
(( <i>italic text</i> ))	Double Parentheses	Annotation of non-verbal activity.

### **Jefferson Transcription Notation in J. Atkinson and J. Heritage (1984)**

Downloaded from:

[www.cogsci.ucsd.edu/.../JeffersonianNotation.doc](http://www.cogsci.ucsd.edu/.../JeffersonianNotation.doc)

#### APPENDIX 4: Transcription of the Audio Recorded Plays

❖ *SPR* stands for: Student playing the Role of .....

❖ *SH1* stands for: Student Host One.

❖ *SH2* stands for: Student Host Two.

##### - Play 1:

- *SPR Joelle*: How are you khadidja ?

-*S HI*: Fine (.) and you ?

- *SPR Manal El Aalam*: Oh Imene (.) how are you?

-*SH2*: How are you?

- *SPR Manal El Aalam*: Ça va (.) (h)

- *SH2*: I miss you.

-*SPR Manal El Aalam* : Your phone eh make me (.) your phone make sur (.) make me (.) surprise.

-*SH2*: Really?

-*SPR Manal El Aalam* : I miss your eh face in eh (.) Imène.

-*SH2*: (h)Thank you Manal (.) how are you?

-*SPR Manal El Aalam* : Fine

-*SH2*: And your work?

-*SPR Manal El Aalam* : Fine

-*SPR Joelle*: Thank you for your invitation (.) that's what I was waiting for because I enjoy your meeting and eh (.) and eh (.) you know I (.) because I (.) because I decrease decrease all the all the pression of work you know.

-*SH1*: ok eh you are welcome eh Joelle eh in any time (.) eh Ahlam eh how are you?

-*SPR Ahlam Mostaghanemi*: Fine thank you.

-*SH1*: I found your eh new book eh on eh net eh (.) eh black suits you eh really it was eh very interesting eh (.) congratulation.

-*SPR Ahlam Mostaghanemi*: Thank you it's pleasure for me and by the way I prepared for a new book for eh [

-*SH1*: eh hum.

**-SPR Ahlam Mostaghanemi:** yeah for next year (.) and there is a competition and I want to participate in this eh competition (.) so I eh I hope eh [

**-SHI:** Good luck.

**-SPR Ahlam Mostaghanemi:** yeah thank you and if I win eh of course Manal you will eh make some caki cookies for us.

**-SPR Manal El Aalam :** Yes of course just ( )

**-SPR Ahlam Mostaghanemi:** yeah thank you (.) I will.

**-SHI:** Manal I'm one of your eh fan (.) I like (0.2) Manal el Aalam I'm eh one of your eh fans I always eh (h) I like your eh (.) your program on TV eh when you cook you make me hungry I eh wish I eh I will eh near to you to eh to taste your delicious plate.

**-SPR Manal El Aalam :** Oh thank you so much.

**-SPR Ahlam Mostaghanemi:** Me too I wish it (.) I wish it and by the way how you (.) can you tell us how you how you start in this domain of eh.

**-SPR Manal El Aalam :** Before that in this occasion your tea need eh some plants like eh minit (.) (h) yeah.

**-SPR Joelle:** Mint .

**-SPR Ahlam Mostaghanemi:** May be (.) have the right.

**-SPR Manal El Aalam :** Nice eh as you know eh my eh story with this art started when eh when I was eh six year (.) when I was six year eh and eh after eh my mother discover eh this eh talent when I was eh thirteen thirteen years eh this eh (.) ee she she discover this eh creation in the eh decoration of the ( ) and sweets and the eh the new ideas eh for me and of course eh my family tel eh encourage me to he he (.) to go and eh eh to eh my father tell tell for me eh if I want eh I can (.) eh (.) this is the eh the sto (.) eh it's eh in the first it's eh so hard but eh it will be easy.

**-SPR Ahlam Mostaghanemi:** It's eh great and you succeed in your work because you always eh prepare eh delicious dishes [

**-SHI:** Yes [

**-SPR Joelle:** Yes [

**-SPR Ahlam Mostaghanemi:** And (.) eh Joelle (.)[

**-SPR Joelle:** Yes [



**-SPR Ahlam Mostaghanemi:** Eh (.) as as you know my eh my marriage is eh soon and I want to shave my hair under your hand [

**-SPR Joelle:** With pleasure [

**-SPR Ahlam Mostaghanemi:** I mean eh (.) if you want I eh I eh know that you have a good style and I ehw I'm sure that I will look so so beautiful.

**-SPR Joelle:** With pleasure Ahlam I have a new style for two thousand and fourteen and don't worry (.)[

**-SPR Ahlam Mostaghanemi:** Yeah thank you [

**-SPR Joelle:** You will look so beautiful.

**-SPR Manal El Aalam :** Eh Joelle in this occasion eh I want to know eh your story with this eh (0.2)

**-SPR Joelle:** Eh the story was eh from eh my childhood and eh I want to to eh I was eh (.) ( ) want to eh to make some flowers on the hair of my mother then eh (h) then I eh I want to chair an eh an institute of eh of this art of hair style and eh and I take my diploma eh so my ehf my father's eh friend eh suggests eh if I I can eh open eh a sho a shop for this hair style and I agree (.) then eh the work develop until I eh I open an eh a very famous eh famous shop [

**-SPR Ahlam Mostaghanemi:** Congratulation you are so famous.

**-SPR Joelle:** Eh thank you thank you

**-SPR Manal El Aalam :** I'm so happy in this eh in my eh in my work because eh I eh I found it eh very enjoyed and eh I help my neighbours and eh my family to eh prepare something in the marriage and partying and eh partying of eh [ graduation [

**-SPR Ahlam Mostaghanemi:** You will be present in my marriage already [

**-SPR Manal El Aalam :** Of course just eh just with eh a big or a large kitchen and let me alone (h) I mix.

**-SPR Ahlam Mostaghanemi:** (h) Of course I will don't worry (h)

**-SPR Manal El Aalam :** I want to tell you next time eh next time eh come to me (.) I invite you [

**-SPR Joelle:** In your kitchen in your ( ) [

**-SPR Ahlam Mostaghanemi:** Yes of course (.) I will [

**-SPR Manal El Aalam :** Yes in my home not in my eh work or in my eh programme no.

**-SPR Ahlam Mostaghanemi:** No with dishes (.) you have to eh prepare some dishes for us and we'll [

**-SPR Manal El Aalam :** Yes I have a new plate and new eh new sweets I want to eh (.) to eat from eh this [ eh

**-SPR Joelle:** We will be present.

**-SPR Ahlam Mostaghanemi:** Yeah we will be.

**-SPR Manal El Aalam :** Sorry I'm eh (.) Yeah of course because I have eh (.) I have eh.

**-SPR Ahlam Mostaghanemi:** A mission on TV.

**-SPR Manal El Aalam:** Yes of course as you know [

**-SPR Ahlam Mostaghanemi:** I know I know (.) I know that it's the time of your mission I know.

**-SPR Manal El Aalam:** Yes thank you.

**-SPR Joelle:** Ok take care of yourself.

**-SPR and SH2:** Thank you (h).

## **- Play 2:**

**-SH1:** I can't believe (.) you're here.

**-SPR Will Smith:** Yeah.

**-SH1:** Oh my God

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** How are you? [

**-SH2:** Fine thanks (.) and you? Please come in [

**-SH1:** Sit sit [ ( )

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** Sure why not.

**-SPR Shia LaBeouf:** I see you have bring some cakes.

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** The Arabian tea (.) oh

**-SH1:** YEAH (.) do you want?

**-SH2:** Do you want some?

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** Yes [

**-SPR Will Smith:** You made this tea? [

**-SPR Shia LaBeouf:** A cup of tea please [

**-SH2:** Yes she made it.

**-SPR Shia LaBeouf:** Thank you

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** I am really in love with ( ) Arabian tea [

**-SPR Will Smith:** You made it? [

**SPR Shia LaBeouf:** Actually I introduct my eh [

**-SH1:** JOHNNY DEPP oh my God I can't believe [

**-SPR Will Smith:** Yes believe.

**-SH1:** Oh my God (.) Will Smith [

**-SPR Shia LaBeouf:** Yes believe it [

**-SH1:** Oh I can't believe [

**-SH2:** Shia LaBeouf here [

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** Sit down sit down [

**-SH2:** You're welcome here (.) any time.

**-SPR Shia LaBeouf:** Thank you (.) thank you my friend.

**-SPR Will Smith:** I think your dream has eh realized [

**-SH2:** Yes (.) it's an honour to us.

**-SPR Will Smith:** Thank you it's all my pleasure too.

**-SPR Shia LaBeouf:** Thank you for your hes hospitality.

**-SH2:** You're welcome.

**-SPR Will Smith:** And believe me you have a nice house [

**-SPR Shia LaBeouf:** Actually I want to taste this eh (.) you made it from eh your eh [

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** ( ) I want to taste them for people you know (.) I like ( ) [

**-SH1:** Yes eat eat.

**- SH2:** Thank you thank you [

**-SPR Shia LaBeouf:** Take with [

**-SPR Will Smith:** Thank you yes [

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** What's that?

**-SPR Shia LaBeouf:** It eh look delicious [

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** Oh give me more

**-SPR Will Smith:** Hum

**-SH1:** Yes (.) she made it

**-SPR Shia LaBeouf:** This remember me the old days (.) do you remember?

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** Remember what? (0.2) let me eat because this kind of eh (0.2) cookies you can't find it there [

**-SPR Shia LaBeouf:** Ok ( ) forget forget (.) forget [

**-SH1:** You are funny hein [

**-SH2:** Oh my God I have my ( ) I have (.) I really like (.) ha I really like eh movies (.) every film [

**-SH1:** Yes (.) we are big fans (.) of your works.

**-SPR Shia LaBeouf:** We really appreciate that.

**-SH2:** Wow wow.

**-SPR Will Smith:** That's our purpose I eh I guess.

**-SH1:** Yes.

**-SPR Shia LaBeouf:** Actually [

**-SH1:** Shia LaBeouf (.) [ Johnny Depp (.) [Will Smith

**-SPR Shia LaBeouf:** Yes [

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** Yes[

**-SH2:** And Will Smith (.) Will Smith I remember your film the seven pounds (.) and I got so much [

**-SPR Will Smith:** Yes (.) It's a good film [

**-SH1:** It makes me (.) IT MAKES ME CRY TILL NOW (.) like a little girl[

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** WHAT ABOUT my movie?

**-SH2:** And Johnny Depp (.) I like it I like it [

**-SH1:** Yes we know you're a great man

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** BUT WHAT my ( )

**-SH2:** What I like more ( ) the passage where there were eh Calipso was eh caa (.) catch by eh by the other Carabbians and [

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** Yes Yes Carribbean yes yes [

**-SH2:** It was very interested (.) oh my God [

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** Yes it just eh room like that with eh a scree with eh background (.) a green one just eh ( ) but eh [

**-SPR Will Smith:** Yes don't forget I'm the best of ( ) [

**-SH1:** But I think you are eh a funny eh character in your movie (.) you make people laugh (.)

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** You know eh (.) I love doing my work eh (.) and I like to be eh (.) to have a character eh a funny character (.) and eh I'm in love with with her in movies

**-SH2:** And you find it very (.) amazing you like your job as eh?

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** Yes of course who doesn't like famous?

**-SH2:** Oh my God oh my God and you your film transformers ( )

**-SPR Shia LaBeouf:** Yes actually eh it began eh firstly I was eh sitting in at home until I eh received a call from eh Michael Bay he is a director (.) he is great director he eh produced yes he produced planet of apes (.) have you seen it? ( ) a great work so I eh received his call he told me that eh the scenario is ready you have to read a scenario it's a good movie (.) he said that eh we need you in the scene (.) instantly (.) so (.) I accept his eh invitation and I saw the scenario (.) I like it very much and I saw the effects the engineers (.) all the group (.) all the producers (.) I met my friends I met eh Megan Fox that she was my girlfriend in the movie (.) not outside [

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** You are lucky man [

**-SH2:** YEAH (h) yes lucky man (h)

**-SH1:** And you did a great job ( )

**-SPR Shia LaBeouf:** but I need it I need it in the movie

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** I'm trying to work with Megan fox but ( ) [

**-SPR Shia LaBeouf:** I I worked with her in TWO MOVIES in two movies (.)  
transformers one and two (h) [

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** you are the best eh ( ) [

**-SH2:** But in transformers (.) when I see the cars every ( ) we can see technology action  
motivation (.) I really like it (.) YES also with Will Smith (.) in his film (.) oh my God the  
robots ( ) yes [

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** I'm working with his (.) I'm working [

**-SPR Shia LaBeouf:** Yes I robot (.) EVEN me I like it [I watch it many many times (.) [  
with my friends actually yesterday we ( ) on it [

**-SH2:** You like it also? Oh my God

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** Will eh it's eh a famous and eh a cinema icon you know I'm  
working with him in a new movie eh of eh [

**-SPR Will Smith:** Don't tell eh our secret yes (.) let it surprise ( ) come on.

**-SPR Shia LaBeouf:** ACTUALLY actually he will release eh bad boy three (.) with his  
friends in two thousand and ( ) look to his smile look to his smile (h) you can see he is  
CHARMING he is charming (h)[

**-SH2:** Swear (h) (h) Yes I can see (h) I can see [

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** And I'm working with him (.) at this moment eh at new movie eh  
two deh dirty cops (.) you know just selling marijuana and you know ( ) [

**-SH2:** I CAN I can also see that in his movie eh Will Smith he has eh (.) for example  
you you follow your ( ) and your children also follows you (.) your two your two childrens  
(.) tha there is one who sing eh and eh one also who follows you in your career [

**-SPR Will Smith:** Yes eh my eh kids [

**-SH2:** I think it's very good (.) they like eh (.) yes yes [

**-SH1:** Yes (.) it's a cool think [

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** Jaden Jaden Smith just his father.

**-SPR Will Smith:** And I'm very proud of eh my son it's eh like eh like my eh [

**-SH2:** YEAH like you he isn't like you (.) yes [

**-SH1:** A hire (.) he is your hire (*meaning heir*).

**-SPR Will Smith:** Yes he is [

**-SH2:** He is your hire oh my God (h) oh my God.

**-SH1:** So eh guys I want to ask you eh a question (.) what is the most embarrassing (0.2) thing that happen happened to you (.)

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** In my life eh? (.) embarrassing thing ? there is a lot of embarrassing thing eh like eh [

**-SH1:** come on [

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** Come on (.) you will TELL THE PRESS (.) I WILL not tell you (h)

**-SH2:** ( ) You can tell us why you didn't get marry even eh (.) until now he didn't he didn't get marry until now (0.2) he didn't he didn't get marry until now (.) I don't know why but (.) GIRLS LOVE YOU (h) why?

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** NO ( ) I don't know what (.) kind of eh freed of marriage [

**-SH2:** Okay [

**-SH1:** She single man (h)

**-SH2:** Don't tell don't tell that don't tell that (.) it's between you and me (h) [ oh my God (h)

**-SPR Will Smith:** Come on let's eh one time it's eh [

**-SH2:** Ah it's unbelievable (.) I can't believe I can't believe what I'm seeing here (.) oh my God (.) Oh my God (.)

**-SPR Will Smith:** Yeah it's our pleasure

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** A while ago a while ago (.) I worked with eh George Clooney in same movie (.) and you know eh [ (0.2) he put eggs in eh (0.2) I know ( ) crazy man [

**-SH2:** Do you need some cakes? some cakes?

**-SPR Shia LaBeouf:** Actually I like it very much (.) thank you very [

**-SPR Will Smith:** You made this cake? You made this cake?

**-SH2:** YEAH I made it (.) I made it [

**-SPR Will Smith:** It's very delicious.

**-SH2:** Yeah yeah thank you thank you (.) thank you.

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** Eh tell me about you (.) what are you doing? you got a big character you need to eh to be an actor an actress or something.

**-SH2:** Oh (.) you know I like yeah (.) I like I like eh I like being actor but eh I have also [

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** I found you eh(.) a place in eh you know in our kind of Opra.

**-SH2:** OH MY GOD I CAN'T BELIEVE (.) I like to be with you (.) OH my God [

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** NO NO (.) not with me (.) in a programme ( ) [

**-SH2:** YES (h) (.) YES I'm talking about the programmes (h) (.) yes (.) yes (.) in your film (.) ( )

**-SH1:** Did you see? (.) I told you she is single (h) [

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** No (.) let me tell you thing (.) you are the next Opra (.) that's all.

**-SH2:** Swear.

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** Yeah.

**-SPR Shia LaBeouf:** You look like her exactly (.) actually.

**-SH2:** OH MY GOD oh my Go (.) I I want to drink something [

**-SH1:** Yes (.) that's true (h).

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** DON'T SHOCK give her water [

**-SH2:** It's okay (.) it's okay (h).

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** you want my signature or something ?

**-SH2:** No (.) it's okay (.) oh my God (.) you really invite me to eh[ (.)

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** Yes yes

**-SH2:** Oh my God oh my God

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** We need eh to put Badro (*meaning SH1*) in some place eh [

**-SPR Shia LaBeouf:** No just you two just eh [

**-SPR Will Smith:** I just remember eh one of the most embarrassing eh moment in my life (.) one time eh I go eh to my to my cliffs to my home and eh I start to eh sing with my



ugly voice and eh heh (h) without knowing that eh without knowing that my eh cousin is my cousin and his nephew in the eh the house it was very embarrassing [

**-SH2:** YEAH Oh my God horrible horrible () it was horrible.

**-SH1:** So guys eh thank you (.) thank you very much [

**-SPR Shia LaBeouf:** Well thank you for your hospitality (.) I think will met again

**-SH2:** We are very we are very happy to see you here and eh [

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** Ok this is my card and call me don't eh [

**-SH2:** OH (.) THANK YOU he GAVE ME HIS CARD HE'S GAVE ME HIS CARD (.) I can't believe [

**-SPR Will Smith:** Yes we we decided to eh to eh invite you to cinema in eh our (.) to our movie the (.) two thousand fifteen [

**-SH2:** My God (.) kind we will be there we will be there.

**-SH1:** Thank you (.) thank you guys.

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** AND YOU give me the number of ma Megan Fox (.) please

**-SPR Shia LaBeouf:** No I can't (.) excuse me

**-SH2:** No it can't be ? why you can't give him () (h)

**-SPR Shia LaBeouf:** I can't it's my girl it's mine[ WHEN I FINISH with her you can (.) go (.)

**-SH1:** I told you that he is funny.

**-SH2:** (h) You are so funny.

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** You are selfish man (.) you know you will not go anywhere with this character [

**-SPR Shia LaBeouf:** I like her

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** He doesn't like her (.)

**-SH2:** Ok do you want us to eh if you eh like we want you to eh (.) to visit eh some place.

**-SPR Will Smith:** Yes eh it's eh it eh gonna be (.) yes it's a good idea (.) why not.

**-SH2:** Would you like to do it with us?

**-SPR Johnny Depp:** Sure why not[

-*SH2*: Ok you are ready now?

-*SPR Will Smith*: Yes we are ready

-*SPR Will Smith*: Okay we can go (h).

-*SPR Shia LaBeouf*: I take it too with me.

- **Play 3**:

-*SH1*: Carmen (.) oh my God (.) welcome (.) how are you? we miss you (.)

-*SPR Carmen Sulimane*: Fine (.) thank you.

-*SH1*: Oh my God Carmen.

-*SH2*: Carmen Sulimane (.) she is an Arab idol [

-*SPR Carmen Sulimane*: Oh don't don't (.) don't say that.

-*SH1*: Yes (.) (.) in eh in eh Arabic word (h) how are you Carmen we miss you and we didn't see you for eh [

-*SPR Carmen Sulimane*: Fine (.) and how are you too? how is your family?

-*SH1*: Yes↑ you forget about us↓

-*SPR Carmen Sulimane*: No (.) you know the work and eh [ eh the parties [

-*SH2*: She is busy (h)

-*SH1*: Yes you are always busy yes (.) but you have a cell phone you can call us and eh ask us about our health and eh [

*SPR Carmen Sulimane*: DON'T embarrass me please (h)

-*SH2*: She starts ↑

-*SPR Carmen Sulimane*: I told you (.) I just I eh when I eh received your invitation I was just coming from eh London because I 'd it was eh [

-*SH1*: Oh↑

-*SPR Carmen Sulimane*: Yes [

-*SH2*: COME ON↑

-*SH1*: Sorry↓ (.) don't care about that

-*SPR Carmen Sulimane*: eh (h) I come back from eh my cousin's party (.) eh↑ my cousin's party yes he eh (.) he's eh she is making her eh [not marriage no she she hates to be married eh (.) her birthday.

-*SH2*: ah okay↓ happy birthday for her

-*SH1*: Okay (.) happy birthday to her

-*SPR Carmen Sulimane*: Thank you.

-*SH1*: How are you?

-*SPR Carmen Sulimane*: How are you Wahiba?

-*SH1*: Fine thank you I'm fine.

-*SPR Carmen Sulimane*: The family the babies (.) I know that you have a new baby (.) Why didn't you invite me?

-*SH1*: I don't I didn't eh have time to invite you (h) sorry (h).

-*SPR Carmen Sulimane*: Never mind never mind (.) I'm just joking.

-*SH1*: Yes I know.

-*SH2*: Oh Carmen (.) I can't believe that I'm seeing you after all this eh years you forget about us (.) but eh okay (.) I was so happy when you eh win on the eh Arab idol (.) and eh by the way I vote for you↑ [SO MUCH (.) you have to pay to me (h) [

-*SPR Carmen Sulimane*: Thank you↑

-*SH1*: CONGRATULATION.

-*SPR Carmen Sulimane*: Thank you↑ it's (.) I am so proud (.) because of it (.) it was a dream being true I eh I can't I didn't believe that I win (.) I think that it was it will be eh Dounia Dounia Batma my eh (.)

-*SH2*: yes she's a good singer

-*SPR Carmen Sulimane*: from Morocco (.) you know her?

-*SH1*: Yes

-*SH2*: Yes

-*SH1*: You look very beautiful.

-*SPR Carmen Sulimane*: Thank you so↑ much thank you

-*SH2*: Yes (.)Arab idol change you↑ oh my Good.

-*SPR Carmen Sulimane*: No I AM ( ) no I'm just Carmen the eh from the childhood I stay Carmen I can't change (.) it's eh the fame is hard (.) to be famous but eh I am trying to be the same and doesn't eh I am not eh to to make the fame change me you know because eh the fame is eh so dangerous to be famous.

-*SH1*: Yes.

-*SH2*: Yes.

**-SH2:** And how is the life of eh how eh yani (*Arabic word*) it mean that eh you are now eh you are famous you are famous you are a singer how eh do you live this eh life of eh famous and journalists are after you (.) taking eh photo asking you questions about your special life (.) private.

**-SPR Carmen Sulimane:** They didn't they didn't give us any eh (.) any piece of private or space to I am just eh from eh (.) when I was eh at the airport the journalist come to me please please I want just an interview I ca I tell him I am wearing my eh (.) my eh casquette (*French word*) (h) and I am (.) my cap and I was running eh (.) and he was after ME until until I eh was eh it came eh a girl eh a little girl and she told me please I love you so much I want to take a photo with you so I eh (.) they she stopped me [

**-SH2:** They obliged you (h)

**-SPR Carmen Sulimane:** Yes they obliged me to [

**-SH1:** Next time put a mask.

**-SPR Carmen Sulimane:** (*laughing loudly*) It will be so useful yes.

**-SH2:** Did you fi find it funny? eh the eh did you enjoy this eh field of singing and do you↑ have time to eh for for yourself don eh without eh working did you find eh (.)

**-SPR Carmen Sulimane:** It's so hard to eh to to have time to have eh private time eh now the work te took all my eh my eh take all my time and eh because I'm preparing eh for a new album.

**-SH1:** Ah Ok congratulation (.) what about you personal life? any news?

**-SPR Carmen Sulimane:** No (h) I am just (.)[

**-SH2:** You are still single

**-SPR Carmen Sulimane:** (h) I am still single yes I didn't find the perfect man to eh (.) who eh deserve to be with him

**-SH2:** Okay (.) are you still in contact with your friend because I ( ) your surprise he's from Iraq (h) I want to eh (h) to see him.

**-SPR Carmen Sulimane:** Eh yes he eh still calling me and I'm calling him you know eh (.) now I am eh I am eh (.) preparing for eh the new album so eh he he all the album make me busy (.) all the time.

**-SH2:** Okay. Carmen Carmen Carmen↓

**-SH1:** Any parties? any (0.2) festivals or eh?

**-SPR Carmen Sulimane:** Eh Yes eh (.) this eh we are we are eh (.) eh the summer is eh ( ) so eh I am preparing for some parties.

**-SH2:** But eh Carmen did eh the eh m eh the eh situation and the case in eh Egypt influence you maybe you eh can't eh go to Egypt or eh make eh parties there for your fan

**-SPR Carmen Sulimane:** Yes yes I am eh so so sorry about what is happening eh in Egypt eh we are all eh brothers you know eh that eh president can't eh DOESN'T WANT TO LEAVE↑ the eh people want him to leave and he is stick there (h).

**-SH2:** Okay okay.

**-SH1:**We are very happy we are very happy to see you again.

**-SH2:** We are so happy to see you and to remember our eh (.)[ childhood

**-SPR Carmen Sulimane:** Me too eh you can't eh imagine how eh how eh how I was when eh I eh receive your invitation (.) I was eh [

**-SH1:**Yes we know that [

**-SH2:** And me too (.) I was so happy(.) >Carmen Sulimane she is coming ? I can't believe I didn't sleep all the night< Carmen Sulimane is coming? (h).

**-SPR Carmen Sulimane:** OH THANK you don't embarrass me (h) it's eh (.) I am famous?

**-SH2:** Yes you are so famous.

**-SH1:** Yes believe it you are famous.

**-SPR Carmen Sulimane:** Yes eh (.) anything?

**-SH2:** talk about talk about [

**-SPR Carmen Sulimane:** About myself? eh it's eh it's ey it all everything is at eh in news[

**-SH2:** What do you think about the next Arab idol? eh Mohamed Assaf he is from Palestine.

**-SPR Carmen Sulimane:** Yeah he is eh he is [

**-SH2:** Did you contact with him? do you do you [

**-SPR Carmen Sulimane:** Eh not so much eh but I hope to eh to have a deal with him (.) he's eh a real singer I love his eh last songs yes he's a real singer I hope (.) for him all the best.

**-SH2:** Carmen you didn't eat cake (.) take some.

**-SPR Carmen Sulimane:** No thank you↓

-*SH2*: Ah you are in diet.

-*SPR Carmen Sulimane*: I am I am in diet.

-*SH1*: YES (h)

-*SH2*: Okay (.) okay

-*SH2*: Okay we want to eh to go to play and our eh (.) what we were playing in our childhood and doing some eh practice.

-*SPR Carmen Sulimane*: yes (.) you can eh you can eh run? (.) YOU CAN RUN? You are look so old (h)

-*SH2*: Yes yes can we now?

-*SPR Carmen Sulimane*: Yes.

-*SH2*: So let's go.

#### **- Play 4:**

-*SH1*: Welcome Amina eh to our sweet home and welcome eh (.) Khadidja.

-*SPR Amina (Algerian News Presenter)*: Thank you

-*SPR Khadidja Ben Guenna*: Thank you so much for your invitation.

-*SH2*: How are you Khadidja?

-*SPR Khadidja Ben Guenna*: Fine (.) thank you (.) I'm good↓

-*SH2*: You are welcome.

-*SPR Khadidja Ben Guenna*: Thank you thank you so much.

-*SH2*: What you drink? Coffee or eheh tea?

-*SPR Khadidja Ben Guenna*: Eh tea.

-*SH2*: Okay (.) and eh Amina? (h) yes↑

-*SPR Amina (Algerian News Presenter)*: And me no (h) (.) you didn't have coffee for me? (h)

-*SH2*: Yes (.) you're eh you are welcome

-*SPR Amina (Algerian News Presenter)*: Thank you thank you.

-*SH2*: Tea?

-*SPR Amina (Algerian News Presenter)*: As you like.

-*SH1*: Amina I have eh some question to ask to you (.) eh your eh (.) the the job of journalist do you choose it or eh just eh job like that to earn money and eh.

**-SPR Amina (Algerian News Presenter):** No journalist for me I like it eh when I was child (.) because I eh (.) I eh (.) I know that eh always eh give to eh to the other ne news and eh always in the in the time eh and I eh (.) I like it I choose it for eh for eh job not foe money (.) also the money have eh (.) have something↓

**-SH1:** Oh yes (.) and eh what do you think about eh Aljazeera channel? do you think [

**-SPR Amina (Algerian News Presenter):** Aljazeera it's eh it's a good but eh I didn't find it (.) I start from eh Algeria and I didn't have eh any eh invitation for eh from Aljazeera or eh another eh channel (.) so I stay eh in Algeria.

**-SH1:** So eh do you eh you don't try eheh (.) eh a European news channel or newspaper or eh something like that.

**-SPR Amina (Algerian News Presenter):** If I find I eh we'll go why not (.) it's better than eh here.

**-SH2:** (.) Why?

**-SPR Amina (Algerian News Presenter):** (0.2) It's eh change the way of eh change the country change the eh (.) you see new eh (.) new thing↓

**-SH2:** Okay.

**-SH1:** What about you Khadidja? Eh we have heard that you are classified as eh first eh journalist in eh Algeria.

**-SPR Khadidja Ben Guenna:** Yes eh this in Algeria yes but eh our eh (.) I am in eh I'm a journalist in eh Aljazeera now [ now

**-SH1:** But how me (.) how many eh years you have eh worked in [

**-SPR Khadidja Ben Guenna:** I spent eh I think eh fifteen years in eh in (.) Algerian channel but eh now I'm in Jazeera channel.

**-SH2:** How many child eh you have eh Khadidja?

**-SPR Khadidja Ben Guenna:** I have two girls.

**-SH2:** Ah two girls (.) two?

**-SPR Khadidja Ben Guenna:** Yes.

**-SH2:** I heard that your eh neighbour is eh Hafid Derradji (.) it's true?

**-SPR Khadidja Ben Guenna:** Yes this is true my neighbour is eh Hafid Derradji and eh we share the same nationality.

**-SH2:** Ah okay (.) good (0.2) what about eh your eh your work?

**-SPR Khadidja Ben Guenna:** In eh yes it's so so good yeah (.) I find↑ all my eh eh (.) condition to work eh (.) yes this is (.) yeah↓.

**-SH2:** Okay↓

**-SPR Amina (Algerian News Presenter):** Jour journalist in general not easy but eh in the same time it's eh good for eh the other for you [

**-SH2:** You eh you love this eh work?

**-SPR Khadidja Ben Guenna:** Yes journalist is my dream (.) yes and I eh (.) I eh SUFFER fo for eh REALISE this eh dream.

**-SH1:** So so you two as famous journalists do you have any eh projecsh project in eh future?

**-SPR Khadidja Ben Guenna:** Eh (.) in that time no (.) I'm just a journalist.

**-SPR Amina (Algerian News Presenter):** I also no (.) we eh take it for the time.

**-SH2:** Are you married eh Amina?

**-SPR Amina (Algerian News Presenter):** Yes and I have two child Aya and eh Abderrahmane.

**-SH1:** So thank you to eh (.) to eh to accept our invin invinta invitation to our sweet home thank you very much.

**-SPR Khadidja Ben Guenna:** This is a pleasure for us (.) thank you so much.

**-SPR Amina (Algerian News Presenter):** Thank you.

**- Play 5:**

**SH1:** All things are ready (.) today is my sister's birthday and I have surprised I want to surprise her (.) okay (.)

**-SH1:** Hi darling↑

**-SH2:** Hi↑ (.) how are you?

**-SH1:** Fine?

**-SH2:** Fine.

**-SH1:** Okay hey (.) stop stop (.) I have a surprise for you (.) close your eyes.

**-SH2:** Okay (.) I know about a little bit about it.

**-SH1:** Come with me (.) yeah (0.2) open↑ your eyes

**-SH2:** Oh my little darling sister (.) thank you thank you [



-**SH1**: Happy birthday [

-**SH2**: I thought you forget me (.) but you didn't actually.

-**SH1**: Best wishes for you ( )

-**SH2**: Thank you my dear thank you [

-**SH1**: I have↑ a second surprise [

-**SH2**: Ehein

-**SH1**: But you should (.) get ( ) the door.

-**SH2**: Okay (.) special guests?

-**SH1**: Yes ↑ okay?

-**SH2**: Oh my God I can't believe this (.) oh Mr. Bean (h) (.) how are you?

-**SH1**: Have a seat please (.)

-**SH2**: Oh my God I can't believe this.

-**SH1**: Have a seat.

-**SH2**: Oh my God.

-**SPR Mr. Bean**: How are you?

-**SH2**: I can't believe this (.) how are you doing? ( )

-**SPR Opra**: Fine (.) and you?

-**SH2**: You are so elegant as usual.

-**SPR Opra**: Thank you (.) you too.

-**SH1**: So this is my sister eh which I eh already (.) tell eh told you about it (.) sho so eh today is eh her birsday birthday [

-**SPR Mr. Bean**: She is so beautiful by the way.

-**SH2**: Thank you thank you so it's a kind of pleasure to meet you here (.) ( ) the eh our house is honoured you know [

-**SPR Mr. Bean**: Thank you (.) my pleasure.

-**SH1**: So ( ) surprise (.) your best celebrities eh Mr. Bean (.) yes Mr. Ardogan and this is Opra Free.

**-SH2:** How are you? (0.2) How are you Opra?

**-SPR Opra:** Fine and you?

**-SH2:** Fine.

**-SH1:** You've already met I suppose [

**-SPR Rejeb Tayib Ardogan:** Not me it's eh the first time.

**-SH1:** ( ) meet her.

**-SPR Rejeb Tayib Ardogan:** No I didn't thi this is the first time.

**-SH1:** Hum (.) okay (h).

**-SPR Mr. Bean:** It is coming but I eh I eh met Opra.

**-SPR Rejeb Tayib Ardogan:** I watch her on the television (.) that's all (.) I didn't met meet her I didn't meet her [

**-SPR Mr. Bean:** For me I me I met I meted her (.) once (.) yes (.) we are best friends.

**-SPR Rejeb Tayib Ardogan:** You already invited him in your show (.) Mr. Bean?

**-SH2:** Of course↑ ( ) show she invited Mr ( ) I↑ have a problem with telling you Mr Orway Atkinson because I prefer saying Mr. Bean if you don't ( ).

**-SPR Mr. Bean:** Yes it's common eh I mean all eh all people are saying it eh on the street call call me Mr. Bean when I met eh when I meet [

**-SPR Rejeb Tayib Ardogan:** Actually I don't know eh your real name.

**-SPR Mr. Bean:** It is Rowan Atkinson.

**-SPR Rejeb Tayib Ardogan:** I eh (.) yeah (.) I know you as Mr. Bean (.) that all.

**-SPR Mr. Bean:** Yes sir it's common (.) in eh in the street they always call me eh Mr.

Bean (.) no one eh knows my real name actually no one eh (.) when I say no one not a lot of [

**-SH2:** Just I eh I have been all the time wondering how could make people laugh without spelling a word I mean how did you discover the face that (.) are funny face (.) you know.

**-SPR Mr. Bean:** It's bizarre actually (.) I eh think eh I was about eh twenty I had eh I left eh my university with eh an eh a degree in electronic and electrical engineering (.) and I eh I arrived to Oxford I just arrived to eh at Oxford university (.) and eh (.) and eh during towards my the the eh the end of eh my first month there I eh (.) I eh I attended [ no no I attended a show (.) eh a man which is eh who who was staging at the eh (.) in one-man

show and they eh I think eh they heard that eh I eh (.) I was eh eh interesting in eh (.) in theatre and eh and they told and they asked me if I could do something eh as sketch or eh something like that (.) and I am like eh (.) yes eh it was the first time that I eh do stage I eh I stand eh (.) eh face to face in a mirror [

**-SH2:** Hum okay (.) interesting [

**-SPR Mr. Bean:** I eh and I eh be I eh I began to eh stretched my face and twict it and eh just have fun with it (.) yes I had fun with my eh and I eh keep the eh the paper (.) I eh I've no eh I I've written nothing you know (.) in my eh real life (.) so [

**-SH2:** Okay (.) so would you like drink some tea?

**-SPR Mr. Bean:** Yes.

**-SPR Rejeb Tayib Ardogan:** Yes (.) if you want.

**-SPR Mr. Bean:** Some juice if you want.

**-SH2:** Okay (.) tea Mr. Ardogan?

**-SPR Rejeb Tayib Ardogan:** Yes if you want.

**-SPR Mr. Bean:** I think we forget one member (.) my kiddie↑ (*holding a small brown bear doll*) [

**-SH2:** Okay.

**-SPR Mr. Bean:** Just take a seat (*talking to and seating the bear doll*).

**-SPR Opra:** You take it you take it with him [

**-SPR Mr. Bean:** Do you drink a juice or eh eh (.) or tea? (*asking the bear doll*)

**-SPR Opra:** You take you take it with you everywhere (h)?

**-SPR Mr. Bean:** yes yes.

**-SPR Opra:** You cannot move without him?

**-SPR Mr. Bean:** No I can't (.) actually he is (.) he is my favourite friend I mean eh I can't eh do meeth meeting without him eh [

**-SH2:** I mean there is a love story actually between you and your bear [

**-SPR Mr. Bean:** Yes yes ( ) place in my personal life even eh [

**-SH2:** Both try to keep your life eh very eh I mean [

**-SPR Mr. Bean:** Some juice for him please.

**-SH1:** He is a little (h) (.) just this (h).

**-SPR Mr. Bean:** Ok I will give him a tea and eh (.) don't you have eh don't you have cups or eh (.) would you bring us eh cups please (.) no no no this (.) please (.) just eh (.) come on would you give him for me a cup (*uttered very lowly*) no eh I wanted some juice for me [

**-SH2:** And some tea for your (Sandy).

**-SPR Mr. Bean:** Yes (.) do you like to eat eh some sweets or eh.

**-SH2:** He love juice? He drinks juice?

**-SPR Mr. Bean:** No eh he drinks eh tea I eh it's me who will eh drink eh [

**-SH2:** Okay.

**-SPR Mr. Bean:** What about you? you didn't eh told us about your childhood and eh.

**-SPR Rejeb Tayib Ardogan:** Actually eh talking about my childhood (.) I grew up in a poor family (.) so it's obvious that my father couldn't take care of our family (.) so for this reason I decided to help him by eh I eh start buying eh lemon and eh cake in the street (.) so you can say that [

**-SPR Mr. Bean:** You were selling them eh on the street?

**-SPR Rejeb Tayib Ardogan:** Yes eh in order to eh ha to obtain eh money and help my father to take care of our family and eh you can say that I felt the feeling of the responsibility sin since I was a child (.) I eh I learnt the Koran by heart [

**-SH2:** Hum impressive [

**-SPR Rejeb Tayib Ardogan:** I eh studied eh policy (.) that's all↓.

**-SPR Opra:** Like me (.) I birth in a poor family but my mother was eh house keeper and my father was a hair dress I decide to study and help my families [

**-SPR Mr. Bean:** Actually I know a little about your life eh Opra [

**-SH2:** But you agree that always poor people who har who succeed in their lives I mean eh [

**-SPR Rejeb Tayib Ardogan:** It wasn't eh that easy so so difficult (.) [

**-SH2:** Yeah I know but see you eh finally eh you're you're eh (.) first ministry and she's the fir she is eh one of the stronget strongest women in the world [

**-SPR Mr. Bean:** Yes (.) we know that [

**-SH2:** She's been through really hard ah circumstances when she was eh little girl

**-SPR Rejeb Tayib Ardogan:** Though it was eh so eh difficult eh t to us but we achieve our goal (.) we are eh

**-SH2:** I mean I have a question for you if you don't mind eh little embarrassing but I found that you about your entries in the jail (.) right?

**-SPR Rejeb Tayib Ardogan:** Yes it was because of the eh I wrote a poem which was eh about eh Islam (.) and it was against the governing system of Turkey [

**-SH2:** Yes Turkey that time they had trouble with Islam yes.

**-SPR Rejeb Tayib Ardogan:** I eh I supposed to be there for eh ten month but fortunately I stay I stayed there only for three month and eh I became free.

**-SH2:** It is it is the first step when you ( ) first step to you to success because you were eh [

**-SPR Rejeb Tayib Ardogan:** Yes eh nor [(.) yes normally (.) eh getting in the eh the jail it's eh an end but for me it was just the beginning [

**-SH2:** You are you were active in the jail (.) politically active

**-SPR Rejeb Tayib Ardogan:** Yes (.) I eh I read books which help me to find ways and eh I built some theories in order to help my eh country to eh to move from the worst to the best and once I eh became free I eh applied all my theories which I built in the jail (.) and eh now you ca (.) like everybody knows eh (.) Turkey is one of the most powerful country in the world [

**-SH2:** And what is impressive is that you are so eh eh generous and you are so eh modest I mean I saw your pictures when you were eh when you were ( ) you were staying out in the front of I mean at the at the door when the eh mosque was full (.) and you are the first minister I mean you supposed to eh be eh the first eh ( ) a really good example (.) I really appreciate that.

**-SPR Rejeb Tayib Ardogan:** Yes (.) thank you.

**-SH2:** But↑ Mr. Bean is or Mr. Atkinson is though he is funny but we don't know nothing about your personal life your eh you preserve it I mean [

**-SPR Mr. Bean:** That's eh a little embarrassing eh (.)[

**-SPR Rejeb Tayib Ardogan:** Something↑ personal (.) I think [

**-SPR Mr. Bean:** I don't I don't mix between the eh personal li my personal life and eh my work I mean eh the personal is personal I keep it as a secret (.) even my eh (.) my neighbours doesn't know what 's what's what's going on in my house eh you know[

**-SH2:** But why? the reason?

**-SPR Rejeb Tayib Ardogan:** what's the reason?

**-SPR Mr. Bean:** Eh I think I love being serious (.)

**-SH2:** There is an anecdote that we maybe when I eh heard that in two thousand and one and eh (.) [

**-SPR Mr. Bean:** And one [

**-SH2:** Yes you you eh you were in eh small plane with your family and the eh pilot passed away I mean I don't know he wa and you↑ took↑ control↑ of the plane right ? [ and you saved your family [

**-SPR Mr. Bean:** Eh he he was eh he faint (.) he faint yes eh I didn't know anything about piloting but eh that time weh I was eh I don't know eh (.) it was just eh It came just like that [

**-SH2:** Really just control like that? okay

**-SPR Mr. Bean:** Yeah I controlled eh I guided the plane and I eh till he eh he woke up eh (.) I eh so so I saved my family once (.) I am I am proud of that [

**-SH2:** Yes (.) thank you.

**-SH1:** So eh it's a big honour for us to share with us this eh ( )

**-SPR Rejeb Tayib Ardogan:** Thank you (.) it's our pleasure (.) in fact

**-SH2:** I really appreciate (.) thank you sister to bring me ( ) eh this eh giants this icons and eh [

**-SPR Mr. Bean:** She's lovely your sister [

**-SH2:** Yes I love her though she makes me angry sometimes but eh (h).

## ***APPENDIX 5: Teachers' Questionnaire***

### **Reconsidering the Teaching of the Oral Skills**

***You are kindly requested to fill in the present questionnaire which is part of a 'doctorat' research study on pragmatics and English language learning and teaching. Thanks to all participants.***

Please tick where appropriate and provide answers where needed.

#### **I- Teachers' Profile Information:**

1- You are teaching at the university as:

- a.  full-time teacher                       assistant professor (maitre assistant)  
 senior lecturer (maitre de conferences)
- b.  part-time teacher

2- Your post-graduate field of specialism is:

- a.  applied linguistics  
b.  didactics  
c.  literature  
e.  linguistics  
f.  other :

.....

3- How many years have you been teaching oral expression?

.....

4- Have you done any training in teaching oral expression?

a.  yes

b.  no

5- Do you like teaching the oral skills (listening and speaking)?

a.  yes, because.....

b.  no, because.....

**II- Teachers' Perspectives on their Students' Oral Production :**

1- Your students' motivation and involvement level in the classroom is:

a.  high

b.  average

c.  low

2- Your students' performance in the oral class is?

a.  good

c.  average

b.  satisfying as a whole

d.  bad

3- What are the problems you notice in your students' oral production related to?

a.  fluency

d.  pronunciation

b.  accuracy

e.  intonation

c.  vocabulary

f.  other:

.....

4- What do you think your students' reticence or inappropriate oral performance is caused by?

a.  insufficient knowledge about the topic



- b.  foreign language anxiety
- c.  lack of vocabulary
- d.  psychological discomfort
- e.  other: .....

5- Which activities your students are most likely to feel at ease with?

- a.  discussions and debates
- b.  role-plays
- c.  games
- d.  Presentations and talks
- e.  story telling
- f.  other:

**III. The Oral Skills in relation to Culture and Pragmatics :**

1- Which type of speaking do you focus on most in teaching oral expression?

- a.  Interaction
- b.  Transaction
- c.  Performance

2- How do you rate your students' abilities in each corresponding type of speech?

- *Interaction:*
  - a.  high
  - b.  satisfying
  - c.  average
  - d.  low
- *Transaction:*
  - a.  high
  - b.  satisfying
  - c.  average
  - d.  low
- *Performance:*
  - a.  high
  - b.  satisfying
  - c.  average
  - d.  low

3- In speech as interaction activities, which topic do you usually focus on?

- a.  exchanging greetings
- b.  opening and closing conversations
- c.  engaging in small talks
- d.  recounting personal experiences
- e.  other: .....

4- How do you rate your students' awareness of the socio-cultural aspects of language use?

- a.  high
- b.  satisfying
- c.  average
- d.  low

5- How do you rate your students' pragmatic competence in conversational activities?

- a.  high
- b.  satisfying
- c.  average
- d.  low

**IV. Suggestions:**

1- Which teaching methods do you think are most appropriate to enhance students' oral communicative competence?

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

2- How can oral comprehension and expression teachers develop their students' target language pragmatic skills?

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

3- Do you think that syllabus designers should take into account the introduction of pragmatics in teaching the oral skills?

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

*Thank you very much*

P.S: Here are some definitions to help you answer the questions.

**Speaking as interaction:**

It refers to people’s everyday conversations which serve social functions. Exchanging greetings, engaging in small talks, recounting personal recent experiences etc...are what individual speakers do with the main aim of being friendly and establishing “a comfortable zone of interaction with others” (Richards, 2006). What counts here is the way speakers wish to present themselves to each other and not the message they want to convey. Such social interactive activity can be casual or formal according to the pragmatic contexts the individual speakers are in.

**Speaking as transaction:**

It stands for the content of the message the individual speakers convey to each other. The central focus here is the message of the speech and the extent to which the speaker is accurate and understood, and not the social interactive work of individuals. Talk as transactions encompasses two main types: one being contexts in which information are given and received without paying attention to accuracy as far as the content of what is said is understood (asking for directions in the street for instance). The second type consists of talks through which individuals wish to obtain services or goods (exp: telephoning to book a room in a hotel).

**Talk as performance:**

It consists of talk through which an individual speaker delivers information before a particular audience (speeches, presentations, giving a lecture, giving reports, conducting a class debate etc...). It is worth to mention, however, that a talk as a performance is closer to written language than conversational one, and is evaluated on the basis of its effectiveness and impact it leaves on the audience taking into account, in addition to meaning, both form and accuracy which are emphasised on more than in the case of talk as interaction or transaction (Jones, 1996 and Richards, 2006).

**Pragmatic Knowledge:**

Pragmatics describes the relation between language and its contexts of use, including the purposes for which language is being used. It also includes the notion of speech acts which is a communicative view which holds that when someone says something, they are also *doing* something. Requesting, apologizing, inviting, complimenting, greetings are some examples of speech acts.

## **SUMMARY**

This thesis is an attempt to explore the notion of pragmatics in relation to affect within the EFL learning context, focusing in particular on the teaching of the oral communicative skills at university level. It analyses 2<sup>nd</sup> year students of English, University of Saida, pragmatic competence in oral comprehension and expression classes. It also tries to explore the effects of the introduction of pragmatic instructions in the oral class with regard to affective considerations. From another angle, the researcher endeavours to find out about specific teaching practices that can develop adequate pragmatic skills among students. The results indicate that 2<sup>nd</sup> year students of English have a relatively low pragmatic competence, and that instructing students in pragmatics proves to enhance positive affect among them. However, the nurtured interest and involvement of students is not sufficient to improve their pragmatic skills. The thesis provides a number of suggestions stressing the need for integrating pragmatics teaching within the EFL curriculum in general and the oral comprehension and expression syllabus in particular. Hence, it seems important to adopt some teaching practices that prioritise sufficient exposure of students to the linguistic, communicative and cultural features of the target language.

**Keywords:** pragmatics, affect, oral skills, pragmatic competence, culture.

## **RÉSUMÉ**

Cette thèse est une tentative d'explorer la notion de la pragmatique par rapport à l'affect dans le contexte de l'apprentissage de l'anglais comme langue étrangère, en se concentrant en particulier sur l'enseignement des aptitudes communicatives orales au niveau universitaire. Elle analyse la compétence pragmatique des étudiants de la 2<sup>ème</sup> année anglais, Université de Saïda, et essaie d'étudier les effets de l'introduction de la pragmatique dans l'enseignement de l'oral en relation avec l'affect. D'un autre côté, le chercheur essaie d'explorer des pratiques d'enseignement spécifiques qui peuvent développer des compétences pragmatiques adéquates des étudiants. Les résultats indiquent quela motivation optimale des étudiants, nourri par l'introduction d'instructions en pragmatique, ne suffit pas à améliorer leurs compétences pragmatiques. La thèse fournit un certain nombre de suggestions en soulignant la nécessité d'intégrer l'enseignement de la pragmatique dans les programmes d'enseignement de l'anglais en général et ceux de la compréhension et l'expression orale en particulier. Par conséquent, il semble important d'adopter des pratiques pédagogiques qui privilégient une exposition suffisante des étudiants aux caractéristiques linguistiques, communicatifs et culturelles de la langue cible.

**Mots-clés:** pragmatique, affect, compétences orales, compétence pragmatique, culture.

### **ملخص:**

هذه الأطروحة هي محاولة لدراسة مفهوم البراغماتية (Pragmatics) بالموازاة مع مفهوم العاطفة (Affect) في إطار تعلم الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، مع التركيز بالخصوص على تلقين كفاءات التعبير الشفهي على المستوى الجامعي. حيث تحلل الكفاءات البراغماتية لطلبة السنة الثانية - جامعة سعيدة- وتحاول دراسة آثار إدماج البراغماتية في تعليم مقياس التعبير الشفهي على الجانب العاطفي للمتعلم، وكذا كفاءاته التواصلية. من جهة أخرى يحاول الباحث استكشاف الممارسات التعليمية التي يمكن لها تطوير المهارات البراغماتية للطلبة. تشير النتائج، إضافة إلى محدودية الكفاءات البراغماتية للطلبة، أن عامل الحافز (motivation) والاهتمام الناتج عن إدماج تمارين وتعليمات البراغماتية غير كافية لتحسين قدراتهم البراغماتية. تقدم الأطروحة عددا من التوصيات التي تركز على ضرورة إدماج البراغماتية في برامج تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية بصفة عامة وبرامج تعليم التعبير الشفهي بصفة خاصة. كما تؤكد على ضرورة اعتماد ممارسات بيداغوجية عملية تعطي الأولوية إلى تعريض وتعريف الطلبة بالخصائص اللسانية، التواصلية والثقافية للغة المدروسة (الإنجليزية).