

University of Memphis

University of Memphis Digital Commons

---

Electronic Theses and Dissertations

---

12-12-2014

**A Study of the Integration of Communicative Competence (Cc) Features in Teaching the Oral Skills (Listening and Speaking) to English Majors at the Department of English, University of Benghazi/ Libya**

Issa Amerife Bldiar

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.memphis.edu/etd>

---

**Recommended Citation**

Bldiar, Issa Amerife, "A Study of the Integration of Communicative Competence (Cc) Features in Teaching the Oral Skills (Listening and Speaking) to English Majors at the Department of English, University of Benghazi/ Libya" (2014). *Electronic Theses and Dissertations*. 1102.

<https://digitalcommons.memphis.edu/etd/1102>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by University of Memphis Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of University of Memphis Digital Commons. For more information, please contact [khggerty@memphis.edu](mailto:khggerty@memphis.edu).

A STUDY OF THE INTEGRATION OF COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE (CC)  
FEATURES IN TEACHING THE ORAL SKILLS (LISTENING AND SPEAKING) TO  
ENGLISH MAJORS AT THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH, UNIVERSITY OF  
BENGHAZI/ LIBYA

by

Issa Amrife Bldiar

A Dissertation

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Major: English

The University of Memphis

December 2014

Copyright © 2014 Issa Amerife Bldiar

All rights reserved

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicated this work to the souls of my parents

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It is time to acknowledge some of those who made this work possible. My acknowledgment goes to my wife, whose support, patience and encouragement assuaged much of my strain and agony and made this work possible. I extend my thankfulness to my children for the time my study and dissertation writing took me away from them. Their love has made all difficulties worthwhile. My appreciation goes to my major professor, Dr. Teresa Dalle, for her encouragement and the valuable feedback she provided throughout the doctoral program. I am especially indebted to the members of my dissertation committee. Dr. Emily Thrush for her insightful feedback and discussions on my work, Dr. Verner Mitchel who guided me through the early stages of this work, Dr. Charles Hall, who extended my knowledge on applied linguistics and encouraged me to research the realm of teaching and learning. I consider myself especially fortunate to have been able to have such a great team without whose guidance and administration I would never have crossed the finish line. I would like also to render my acknowledgement to the teaching staff at the English Department/ applied linguistics, University of Memphis who has been a source of great education and novel knowledge in the field of theoretical and applied linguistics. I must acknowledge my major professor, Dr. Teresa Dalle, and the director of the Intensive English for Internationals, Lisa Goins, for giving me the opportunity to put my knowledge into effect by teaching English to internationals at the Intensive English for International , University of Memphis.. I am also indebted to the participant teachers and students who spared time and effort to provide data for this study. It is the joint venture of these family members, educators and administrators that made this work possible.

## ABSTRACT

Bldiar, Issa Amrife, Ph.D. The University of Memphis. December, 2014. A study of the integration of communicative competence (cc) features in teaching the oral skills (listening and speaking) to English majors at the department of English, university of Benghazi/ Libya. Major Professor: Teresa Dalle, Ph.D.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the inclusion, teaching and testing of the features of the notion of communicative competence (CC) in teaching the oral skills to the English majors. Since its advent in the 1970, the notion of communicative competence has a tremendous influence on English language teaching (CLT) trends, theories, models and paradigms (Gillett, 2005). In addition, this study investigated the instructors and the students' perceptions of CC features when teaching and learning the oral skills. The study investigated the teaching and learning of four characteristics of CC, namely, linguistic, sociolinguistic, strategic and pragmatic. These four characteristics were clearly identified using pedagogical criteria extracted from prominent CC frameworks (Bachman, 1990; Bachman & Palmer, 1996 ; Celce-Murcia, 1995, Celce-Murcia, 2007; Hymes, 1972). Though the debate on the notion of CC has spawned various models, it is generally defined by these frameworks as the set of skills in the target language that enable learners to interpret and enact appropriate social behaviors through active classroom participation and through the learners' involvement in meaningful input and output processing. SLA researchers have also suggested that successful second language teaching and learning cannot be based on acquiring the grammatical competence alone; rather, second language acquisition must embrace knowledge of appropriateness and rules of language use (Bardovi-Harling, 2001; Félix-Brasdefer, 2008; Fraser, 1978; Koike, 1992). In addition to these frameworks, this study used CC pedagogical specifications recognized by the Common European Framework of

Reference (CEFR). The data showed though the instructors and the students perceive the high importance of teaching the different characteristics of CC in the oral skills course, the focus of the teaching material, teaching practice and test content is on the linguistic competence and very little was done to promote pragmatic, strategic and sociolinguistic competences. It was also evidenced by the data that none of the international standards for language teaching and testing were adopted as descriptive framework of objectives, content and methods. Finally, the students' competence self-descriptive can- do- statements showed that the students have high control over linguistic competence descriptors and low control on the pragmatic, sociolinguistic and strategic competence descriptors that could be indicative of the teaching material and teaching methodology.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vii
LIST OF TABLES.....	14
LIST OF FIGURES.....	16
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	18
Background.....	18
The Emergence and Development of the Notion of CC in ELT.....	20
Foreign Language Instruction in Libya from 1930 To 1950.....	26
Foreign Language Instruction in Libya from 1950 To 1980.....	28
Foreign Language Instruction in Libya from 1980 to Current.....	30
Rationale for the Study.....	33
Purpose of the Study.....	36
Methodology.....	37
Theoretical framework.....	38
Practical framework.....	39
Material evaluation.....	40
Common European framework of reference for languages learning, teaching, assessment.....	41
Questionnaires.....	42
The Head of the Department Questionnaire.....	42
Instructor questionnaire.....	42
Student questionnaires.....	43
Students' self-assessment grid/descriptors.....	43
Questions of the Study.....	44



Expected Findings of the Study .....	45
Application of the Findings .....	46
Chapter 2: Literature Review .....	47
History and Development of the Notion of CC .....	47
Incorporating CC in Applied Linguistics: Paradigm Shift .....	51
Models of Communicative Competence in Applied Linguistics .....	58
Canale and Swain model (1980), formulated Canale (1983).....	58
Bachman (1990), Bachman and Palmer (1996).....	59
Language competence.....	60
Strategic competence: assessment, planning, and execution. ....	61
Psychophysiological mechanisms.....	61
Celce-Murcia, Dornyei, and Thurrell (1995) Model. ....	62
A proposed revision of the 1995 models, Celce-Murcia 2007 Model.....	64
Discourse competence .....	65
Linguistic competence. ....	65
Formulaic competence .....	67
Interactional competence .....	68
Strategic competence .....	69
Characterization of CC in ELT .....	71
CC in theories of second language acquisition (SLA .....	80
Mediation by symbolic Artifacts .....	90
CC and Teaching the Oral Skills .....	92
Approaches to Teaching the Oral Skills .....	98
The direct approach.....	98
The indirect approach. ....	98
The indirect plus approach.....	99

Conclusion .....	101
Chapter 3: Methods and Research Design .....	103
The Study Setting.....	103
The university. ....	103
The English Department. ....	105
Methodology .....	106
Theoretical framework.....	106
Practical Framework .....	109
Instruments of Data Collection .....	111
Material evaluation .....	111
Criteria for material evaluation .....	114
Student self- assessment descriptors.....	118
Head of the department questionnaire .....	123
Instructor questionnaire .....	123
Construction of the instructor questionnaire.....	126
Student questionnaires. ....	127
Construction of the student questionnaires .....	128
Test analysis.....	131
Data Collection Timeline .....	131
Chapter 4: Coding, Analysis and Data Display .....	133
Data Analysis Strategies .....	133
Qualitative data analysis .....	133
Quantitative data analysis .....	134
Pedagogical Framework for Data Analysis .....	135
Linguistic competence .....	136

Sociolinguistic competence. ....	137
Pragmatic competence. ....	137
Data Coding .....	139
Coding the head of the department survey .....	139
Coding the instructor survey. ....	140
Coding student survey.....	141
Coding student self-assessment grid/ descriptors. ....	142
Coding and analyzing documents. ....	144
Coding the syllabus.....	144
Coding the textbooks for evaluation .....	144
Coding and analyzing the test.....	145
Coding criteria. ....	146
Holistic coding.....	147
Process coding .....	148
Value coding .....	148
Evaluation coding. ....	149
Hypothesis coding.....	149
Protocol coding .....	149
Data Display.....	153
Matrix displays.....	156
Chapter 5: Data Analysis and Findings .....	160
Research Questions Restated .....	160
The respondents' profile .....	161
Findings: Research Question 1 .....	162
Standards for teaching the oral skills .....	164
Syllabus alignment with the course objectives. ....	166

Teaching Material .....	168
Findings: Research Question 2 .....	172
Instructors' perception of linguistic competence.....	173
Instructors' perception of strategic competence.....	174
Instructors' perceptions of pragmatic competence.....	174
Instructors' perceptions of sociolinguistic competence.....	175
Instructors' Oral skills Teaching Practices .....	176
Findings: Research Question 3 .....	180
Students' perceptions of linguistic competence.....	181
Students' perceptions of linguistic competence.....	181
Students' perceptions of pragmatic competence.....	183
Students' perception of strategic competence.....	185
Findings of Research Question 3.a .....	187
Linguistic fossilization.....	188
Sociocultural fossilization.....	188
Communicative ability in real-time communication .....	189
Students' motivation .....	189
Pragmatic communicative ability.....	190
Students' monitor system.....	190
Importance of speaking with Excellent accent .....	191
Findings of Question 3.b.....	194
Students' self-evaluation of their pragmatic competence.....	194
Students' self-evaluation of their linguistic competence.....	195
Student self-evaluation of their strategic competence.....	196
Student self-evaluation of their sociolinguistic competence .....	196

Comparing Student Self-Evaluation Results .....	197
Findings: Research Question 4 .....	198
Students' reaction to the teaching material.....	198
Instructors' reaction to the teaching material.....	201
Findings: Research Question 5 .....	202
Teaching communicative competence.....	202
Textbook Evaluation Results .....	207
Course background .....	207
Date of publication.....	207
The introduction claims .....	208
The table of contents.....	208
Sample unit for evaluation from the textbook: speaking .....	211
Sample unit for evaluation from the textbook: listening. ....	214
Incorporating cc features in the textbooks .....	216
Test Analysis.....	220
Chapter 6: Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations .....	229
Recognizing Standards for Teaching Communicative Competence .....	229
Recognizing Standards for Teaching Communicative Competence .....	231
Instructors' Pedagogical Tenets and Teaching Philosophies of CC .....	234
Students' Perception of the High Importance Learning CC .....	235
Students' Negative Reaction to the Teaching Material .....	239
Differences between Students Perception of Learning the Oral Skills during and After the Course .....	240
Lack of Communicative Competence Enhanced Hesitancy and Awkwardness .....	241

The Program Did Not Meet Students’ Learning Expectations .....	242
The Instructor Depend On the Textbooks to Teach the Oral Skills.....	244
Self-Evaluation Descriptors Revealed Learners’ Low Oral CC .....	244
Problems with Integrating and Teaching the CC .....	247
Indications of the Testing Material .....	253
Practical Implications.....	254
Limitations .....	259
Conclusion .....	260
Future Research .....	262
References .....	264
Appendices.....	280
Appendix 1: Head of the English Department Survey.....	280
Appendix 2: Instructor Questionnaire.....	282
Appendix 3: Students’ Questionnaire (during the semester) .....	287
Appendix 4: End of Term Student Questionnaire.....	290
Appendix 5: Student Self-Assessment Descriptors (CEFR).....	293
Appendix 6: Institutional Review Board Approval .....	295

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Libyan Job Market Need for English.....	31
Table 2 Comparing the Course Description and the CEFR Proficiency Levels Descriptors .....	121
Table 3 Demographics of the English Department Instructors.....	124
Table 4 Data Segmenting and Coding .....	151
Table 5 Data matrix Display .....	157
Table 6 Instructors' Perception of Linguistic Competence .....	173
Table 7 Instructors' perception of Strategic competence .....	174
Table 8 Instructors' Perception of Pragmatic Competence .....	175
Table 9 Instructors' Perception of Sociolinguistic Competence.....	176
Table 10 Teaching the Features of Communicative Competence .....	177
Table 11 Teaching the Features of communicative competence .....	177
Table 12 Teaching the Features of Communicative Competence .....	178
Table 13 Teaching the Features of communicative competence .....	178
Table 14 Instructors' Perceptions of Integrating the Non-Linguistic Features in Teaching the Oral Skills .....	179
Table 15 Students' perceptions of Linguistic competence .....	181
Table 16 Students' Perceptions of Sociolinguistic Competence .....	183
Table 17 Students' perceptions of Pragmatic competence .....	184
Table 18 Students' Perceptions of Pragmatic Competence .....	186
Table 19 ANOVA Analysis of the Students' Percetpion of CC .....	187
Table 20 Students' Perspectives on the Instructors' Focus on English Varieties .....	188

Table 21 Use of English Variety in Teaching the Oral Skills.....	191
Table 22 Students' Perception of their Speaking Ability .....	192
Table 23 Students' Believes about What Makes up Communicative Competence.....	193
Table 24 Students' Role in Choosing the Teaching Material .....	193
Table 25 ANOVA Analysis of the Student' Competence Self-Descriptors Can-Do- Statements .....	197
Table 26 Students' Reaction to the Teaching Material.....	199
Table 27 Students' Perspective on the Teaching Material and Resources .....	201
Table 28 English for Academic Purposes: Speaking.....	209
Table 29 English for Academic Studies: Speaking Table of contents.....	210
Table 30 English for Academic Studies: Speaking Table of contents.....	210
Table 31 English for Academic Studies: Speaking Table of contents.....	211
Table 32 Skill Distribution in the Listening Textbook .....	217
Table 33 Skill Distribution in the Speaking Textbook .....	218
Table 34 Students' Evaluation of the Testing Process.....	222
Table 35 Oral Skills Rubric Used by Instructors .....	227
Table 36 Oral Skills Rubric Used by Instructors .....	228



## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 Schematic Representation of CC in (Celce-Murcia, Dornyei, ..... 63	63
Figure 2 Representation of Communicative Competence (Celce-Murcia, 2007, p. 45)... 67	67
Figure 3. Independent and Potential Learning Zones (Corden, 2000, p. 9)..... 88	88
Figure 4. Proficiency Levels in the CEFR. .... 122	122
Figure 5. ATLAS.ti Network View: Teaching the Features of Communicative Competence..... 154	154
Figure 6. ATLAS.ti Network View : Students' Perception of Communicative Competence..... 155	155
Figure 7. ATLAS.ti Network View: Student Survey: Learning The Features Of Communicative Competence ..... 155	155
Figure 8.ATLAS.ti Display: Head of Department Responsibility for Teaching the Oral Skills ..... 162	162
Figure 9 Atlas ti Display: Responsibility of the Course Coordinator for Teaching the Oral Skills ..... 163	163
Figure 10. Atlas.Ti Display: Criteria for Assigning Oral Skills Course Instructors..... 164	164
Figure 11. Instructors' Training in Teaching the Oral Skills ..... 164	164
Figure 12. ATLAS.ti Display: The English Department's Priority in Teaching the Oral Skills ..... 166	166
Figure 13. ATLAS.ti Display: Instructors' Use of Supplementary Material..... 168	168
Figure 14. ATLAS.ti Display: English Department Follow up Policies of Oral Skills Teaching..... 169	169
Figure 15: The Importance of Teaching CC in the Oral Skills Course ..... 170	170

Figure 16. ATLAS.ti Display: Main Components of the Teaching Material ..... 205

## Chapter 1: Introduction

### Background

This study is designed to examine the inclusion of the notion of communicative competence in teaching the oral skills to advanced Libyan learners of English. Instructors of English as a foreign language have always struggled with developing what (Hymes, 1971) called communicative competence (CC) in their students. With the advent of the tools of globalization such as the media, Internet and travel, English has been given the status of a “lingua Franca” (LF) in 90 of the world’s 193 countries. It became the language of information, education, science, commerce, medicine, aviation, media, diplomacy and international relations (Canagarajah, 2006; Crystal, 1992, 2002, 2003). Learners of English as a foreign language outnumber its speakers as a second language and its native speakers combined (Crystal, 2005). Educational policy makers recognize the potential power of developing the learners’ ability to communicate verbally in English; hence, English teaching theories and practices have been updated several times since the advent of the notion of CC in the 1970s. This was to ensure that learners not only develop their linguistic competence, but also are also able of conducting and surviving social interactional events in the target language. Introducing the notion of CC to the language-teaching framework brought about the idea that the ability to function in the target language should be cultivated in the language teaching content and methodology.

A theory of CC has been accepted as the underpinning of communicative language teaching approaches as well as their objectives. Though the notion of CC has spawned various models, it is generally defined as the set of skills in the target language

that enable learners to interpret and enact appropriate social behaviors through active classroom participation and through the learners' involvement in meaningful input and output processing (Canale & Swain 1980; Celce-Murcia, Dornyei, & Thurrell, 1995; Hymes, 1972). This concept of CC has been widely accepted by applied linguists, second language acquisition (SLA) researchers and educationalists as an underpinning theory of second language acquisition, the objective of the communicative language teaching approach (CLT) and as a measurement of the learner's proficiency (Canale & Swain, 1980; Kunschak, 2004; McKay, 2002).

CLT has endorsed a proficiency-based language teaching content and methodology to develop the language learners' skills by addressing linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse, strategic and pragmatic competences as sub-components of CC (Davies, 2005; Hedge, 2000). Language learning was not only redefined as the learning of communicative competence, but also "the expression, interpretation and negotiation of meaning between two interlocutors or between a text and its readers" (Kramsch, 2006, p. 36). The re-contextualization of the notion of CC in CLT promoted new international sets of target language proficiency guidelines. The American Standards for Foreign Language Learning (1998) with their five Cs: communication, cultures, connections, comparisons, and communities, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR) (1996) updated (2001) and the Common Asian Framework of References for Languages in Learning, Teaching, and Assessment (CAFR) emphasized that successful language learning should target learner's communicative competence. Additionally, proficiency-based approaches focused on teaching for language ability and on measuring learners' competence in terms of the different

components of CC ( Omaggio-Hadley, 2001). In this charge, learners' language abilities were specified as knowing Hymes' principles of appropriateness: "when to speak, when not, what to talk about with whom, when, where, in what manner" (Hymes 1972, p. 277).

In Libya, English as a foreign language has been given the important status as an lingua franca since the 1950s, a point discussed in detail in the historical background in this chapter. Since then, English in Libya has been regarded as a key factor in the country's development and in its amalgamation in globalization with a focus on the oral skills. The Libyan educational system has passed through all the stages regarding the different approaches to ELT, ending up with adopting the CLT approach with all its previously mentioned specifications and entailment. This qualitative / quantitative study examines the inclusion, teaching and learning of the notion of CC to the Libyan English majors with a focus on the oral skills. The present study tapped into the teachers' beliefs and teaching philosophies with regard to the features of CC and will also explore the learners' attitudes and perceptions of learning the oral skills in a foreign language setting and how they, as English majors, perceive the ultimate goal of learning to speak English.

### **The Emergence and Development of the Notion of CC in ELT**

Prior to the 1970s, traditional language teaching approaches emphasized learners' mastery of grammatical competence. Behaviorism as a theory of second language acquisition and structuralism as a theory of language analysis formulated and shaped traditional approaches through the Audiolingual Methodology (ALM). With the advent of functionalism in theoretical linguistics that viewed language as a set of functions and cognitivism in psychology that viewed acquisition as information processing in the 1970s, language was viewed as a means of communication mapped through "form-to-

function and function-to-form relations” (Bardovi-Harling, p. 2008). SLA research also investigated these functional views and endorsed that SLA includes not only the features of grammatical competence but also functional features. Functional approaches recognized multiple levels of speakers’ abilities to speak a language rather than one state that in the functional approaches “there is no formal separation of the traditionally recognized subcomponents in language, i.e. morphosyntax, semantics, and pragmatics” (p. 198). The functionalists’ conception of language as communication broadened the scope of applied linguistics beyond the formal boundaries of structuralism and generative linguistics. The idea of a homogeneous speech community and the idealized native speaker lost primacy in language teaching in favor of approaching language as a tool of social interaction that functions in a heterogeneous speech community. As a result, applied linguists had to develop approaches that would account for everyday features of the language as it is encountered by its users to perform speech acts.

This interest in a social rather than in a formal account of language brought about an interdisciplinary input to the field of SLA and second language teaching. Fields such as linguistics, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, conversation analysis, pragmatics and ethnolinguistics contributed to shifts in our understanding of second language acquisition and teaching. Shifts in our understanding of second language acquisition and teaching were caused by contributions from fields such as linguistics, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, conversation analysis, pragmatics and ethnolinguistics. Most of these disciplines provided different accounts and explanations of how we acquire and develop non-primary languages. Some of these accounts faded away such as the behaviorists-

Structuralists' account and some others have achieved dominance and contributed to reorientations in language teaching and learning practices.

Ethnolinguistics, “the study of the interrelations between language and the cultural behavior of those who speak it,” (Encyclopedia Britannica) is one of those disciplines that provided ethnographical ideas that echoed with functional views in language teaching and learning. Ethnolinguistics promoted the idea that language is not context-free, converse to what was proposed by traditional linguistic approaches. Ethnolinguistic studies as developed by Hymes (1967, 1972) put forward the notion of CC to add a wide array of competences and sub-competences to the already recognized grammatical competence. These competences are collectively responsible for the acquisition and development of non-primary languages. Hymes (1971) coined the term “communicative competence” and proposed “rules of using language appropriately in context” (Celce-Murcia 2007, p. 42). Soon, SLA research showed increasing interest in investigating the acquisition and development of the features of CC in the language classroom (Fraser 1978; Koike 1992; Bardovi-Harling, 2001; Félix-Brasdefer, 2008). These SLA researchers have suggested that successful second language teaching and learning cannot be based on acquiring the grammatical competence alone; rather, second language acquisition must embrace knowledge of appropriateness and rules of language use, an issue that will be discussed further in the literature review chapter.

Simultaneous to these developments in SLA research and ethnolinguistics, applied linguists, educationalists and pedagogues were divesting themselves from the traditional ALM approach and developing the communicative language teaching (CLT) paradigms. CLT theories and practices took the notion of CC as a point of departure and

as an end-product of the language teaching process. The fundamental shift in CLT was that language teaching and learning was viewed as the teaching and learning of aspects other than the traditional grammatical competence. The components of the notion of CC (pragmatic, sociolinguistic, discourse, strategic) became part of both second language acquisition syllabus and methodology. Embracing the notion of CC in CLT contributed largely to delineating its content and to resetting its goals. In this vein, applied linguists, language pedagogues and researchers agreed that the objective of CLT was to develop the learners CC. Though the grammatical competence continued to play an important role as an assessment tool of learners' language proficiency, the interest in teaching the newly introduced notion of non-linguistic competences that reflected the sociocultural and sociolinguistic norms of the L 2 community continued to gain dominance from the 1970s onward.

Because of its social and functional dimensions, CLT became the pervading influence in second and foreign language teaching practices and syllabus design around the world today. As opposed to the traditional methodology, that focuses on the learner's grammatical competence, CLT "sets as its goal the teaching of communicative competence" (Richards, 2006, p. 3). In addition to the grammatical competence, CC entails a wider range of competences needed by the speaker when engaged in real time communication. According to Richards, second language acquirers need to:

- ❖ Know how to use language for a range of different purposes and functions
- ❖ Know how to vary [their] use of language according to the setting and the participants (e.g., knowing when to use formal and informal speech



or when to use language appropriately for written as opposed to spoken communication)

- ❖ Know how to produce and understand different types of texts (e.g., narratives, reports, interviews, conversations)
- ❖ Know how to maintain communication despite having limitations in one's language knowledge (e.g., through using different kinds of communication strategies).

CLT goals correspond to the different frameworks of CC suggested by numerous applied linguists who developed Hymes' primary ideas in his ethnography of communication into a more pedagogical realization. These models will be addressed in more details in the literature review; however, a brief account of the main assumptions will be stated in this introduction.

Savignon (1972) contended that real time communication is not just a language. Effective communication is the product of social interactional functions rather than sole linguistic features. Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983) recognized grammatical, strategic and discourse competences as different constructs to the broader CC framework. Celce- Murcia's (2007) model of CC contains sociolinguistic competence, linguistic competence, formulaic competence and interactional competence. The discourse competence acts as catalyst to these components under the general umbrella of the strategic competence. Bachman and Palmer (1996) based their model of CC on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). They provided a comprehensive analysis of the components of CC in test-taking situations including cultural, linguistic, sociolinguistic, interactional and cognitive features. So far, one can argue that an

educational system that is adopting the CLT approach to language teaching is also adopting teaching for building up language learners' communicative competence. The pervasive influence of CLT in ESL and EFL programs around the world today is attributed, in large part, to the integration of the features of CC in CLT. Despite efforts made by applied linguists to delineate the features of CC, incorporating and teaching these features in second language teaching material in general and in material intended to teaching the oral skills in particular are not straightforward processes. They involve a pedagogical specification of the different features of CC, the content and methodology to teach them and the context in which these features are to be taught and used by the learners. Additional problems may arise from the peculiarity and complexity of the oral skills.

Teaching the language skills has been fluctuating between focusing on teaching one single skill to integrating the four skills in one single activity. The American version of ALM promoted the primacy of speech over reading and writing to develop the speaking skills of the language learners through drilling structural patterns. Conversely, the British pedagogical practice was a continuation of the pre-world war II ELT practices. Much of the British pedagogical efforts was directed towards teaching English school age children in the colonies, thus, much emphasis was put on reading and writing (Howatt, 2004). However, the American and British ALM versions differed in their focus on the learning skills; the underpinning theory of language that formulated their pedagogical assumptions was structuralism. The CLT theorists and practitioners called for integrating the four skills to resemble natural language use; however, Widdowson (1978) was the first to propose integrating the four language skills in instruction to promote learners'

communicative competence. Savignon (1990) argues that the integration of the four skills led to important advancements in CLT such as interaction-centered and task-based instructions. With regard to the oral skills, CLT strives to teach the language skills in their social context to account for the sociocultural and sociolinguistic features of the speaking and listening skills since in everyday communication speaking and listening are perceived as the most vibrant skills that would best reflect the sociocultural and sociolinguistic aspects of communication. To achieve this goal, a pedagogical manipulation is needed to contextualize the communicative function in a teachable and learnable context. With a focus on the oral skills, CLT was reacting to the research findings that language learners prioritize their oral skills and take them as a measure of their foreign language mastery. Furthermore, the main objective of the majority of the world's learners of English as a second or foreign language is to achieve a proficiency in the speaking skill. (Richards & Renandya, 2002),

### **Foreign Language Instruction in Libya from 1930 To 1950**

The history of English Language teaching in Libya has been influenced by the aforementioned major pedagogical changes in the realm of language teaching and learning. The need for English as a foreign language of interaction in Libya increased after the collapse of the Italian colonization which lasted from 1911 to 1945. The Italian language was the primary language of education and official communication in that period and Arabic was officially relegated to a second language. Around 150,000 Italian colonialists were brought to Libya between 1911 and 1939 to raise the number of the Italians in Tripoli, the capital, to 37% and in Benghazi, the second biggest city, to 31% of the total population (Capresi, 2009). By 1943, Italy lost Libya and the Allied Forces

divided Libya into three provinces. Cyrenaica and Tripolitania were put under the trusteeship of Britain and Fezzan was under the trusteeship of France. This new sociopolitical situation produced new linguistic orientation in the country's educational priorities. Most of the Libyan population, as did the Italians, concentrated on the northern Mediterranean coastal line (Cyrenaica and Tripolitania), thus, English in these two provinces was substituted for Italian. The British used English as a second language to Arabic in their administrative activities in a vast part of Libya. French achieved some dominance in the south being connected to the French colonies of Chad, Algeria and Tunis. ([http://www.mongabay.com/reference/country\\_studies/libya/HISTORY.html](http://www.mongabay.com/reference/country_studies/libya/HISTORY.html))

After the Libyan independence in 1951, the three provinces united under the United Kingdom of Libya where Arabic was recognized as the first language and English continued to achieve some dominance. A report on "The Existing English Language Training Facilities in Libya and some Recommendations for the Long Range Improvements", submitted to The International Cooperation, Washington DC, January 19, 1958, categorized the groups of Libyans who might need English in the course of their work as:

1. Government officials who work with English speaking people in Libya, either whose native language is English or those who use it as a common second language
2. Government officials who represent Libya abroad in areas in which English is the native language or the common second language
3. Students who are sent overseas to universities and to technical schools in which the language of instruction is English

4. Students in Libyan educational institutions whose work requires what they read English language publications.
5. Army officials who are in contact with English speaking people.
6. Businessmen who travel abroad in areas where English is used
7. Businessmen and merchants who import goods and equipment from countries in which English is used as a commercial language, and import equipment for which the accompanying technical data is written English
8. All people working in the field of international communication.
9. People owing and working in establishments frequently visited by English speaking people. This would include the proprietors of hotels and shops
10. People working in the rapidly developing tourist industry who have occasion to deal with foreign visitors to Libya who use English
11. Editors, publishers , and writers in newspapers and journals
12. All teachers above the elementary level, but particularly English teachers
13. (International Cooperation Administration, 1958, pp 2-3)

Based on these communicative needs, English continued to achieve dominance in Libya as a lingua Franca. During this period (1950s), English language teaching was dominated by the grammar translation and direct methods.

### **Foreign Language Instruction in Libya from 1950 To 1980**

According to the UNESCO report on the English language teaching in Libya, 1968, “the old system was teaching of a series of 5 books and their companion volume The Modern Readers . The teaching was by the translation method that emphasized the acquisition of vocabulary through reading” (p. 2). The report stated, “Between 1964 and

1968 the speed of industrial, economic and social development has been such that quite unforeseen demands for teachers and for an improved quality of English teaching [due to the discovery of oil in 1958] have been and are being made.” These demands have expanded ELT in Libya and in order to improve its quality the ALM was adopted. The introduction of the series *English for Libya*, by Mustafa Guisba in 1966, marked a shift from the translation method to the ALM practices. The UNESCO report described the new syllabus as based on structural language teaching approach. “The new (English for Libya) series being introduced however requires quite a different type of teaching from the Modern Readers. It is designed primarily to build language skills and emphasize the learning of basic sentence patterns, rather than vocabulary, by the direct method” emphasis from the source. The ALM approach dominated English language teaching in Libya until the 1990s. However, in 1976, the ministry of Libyan Education outlined the following objectives regarding English language teaching in high schools and teacher training colleges in Libya:

1. to train the students to the point where they can understand ordinary, non-specialized English, as it is spoken by the average educated native speakers, up to the general level of vocabulary taught, where they speak the language sufficiently well to be understood by the same average listener.
2. To acquaint the students with contemporary English usage, and with the literature which has vitalized the English language (Fenish, 1981, pp. 7-38).

Despite this call for a focus on the interactional skills in Libya, the CLT approach was not adopted until later.

## **Foreign Language Instruction in Libya from 1980 to Current**

The CLT approach was introduced into the Libyan foreign language teaching programs in the 1990s under the growing need to use English as a language of international communication and to achieve the above-mentioned objectives. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the English language is increasingly becoming part of the globalization trend, serving as a Lingua Franca (LF). In modern Libya, too, English is the principle foreign language taught and employed to communicate with foreigners, with a focus on oral interactions. To serve this purpose, Libyan educational authorities have adopted and introduced the CLT approach to teach English from grade 5 to the university level (Orafi & Borg, 2009; Shihiba, 2011). The new social media triggered by globalization produced new ways of interactions between different communities. The world of today even passed into what Canagarajah (2006) calls *postmodern globalization* that has its new rules and tools that promote English as a means of communication represented by the Diaspora Groups means, including the Internet, travel, transactions, and mass media. As a result, languages, communities, and cultures have become hybrid, shaped by this fluid flow of social and economic relationships. Libya is not an exception of such fluid flow. Modern Libya job markets recognize a mastery of the oral communication skills in English as a prerequisite to most of the well-paid jobs. In this vein, English language learning in Libya has its socioeconomic and sociocultural impacts. People who interact with foreign workers from Anglophonic Africa and commonwealth Asia, foreign doctors, oil engineers, and tourists usually need high proficiency in the oral skills. Another category includes businessmen, internet users, and workers in the tourist industry, engineers and workers in the oil industry, teachers of English, and students of colleges that instruct in

English are just small samples of the Libyan groups who need to use English for everyday communicative purposes with a proficiency level in the oral skills. In order to explore the current need of English in the Libyan job market, the author of this project conducted a survey of the job vacancies posted on one of the most prominent Libyan websites covering the period from January the 1<sup>st</sup> to January the 15<sup>th</sup>, 2012.

<http://www.libyaninvestment.com/libya-jobs.html>. Table (1) shows the results of this survey.

Table 1

*Libyan Job Market Need for English*

Jobs posted	Timeline	Reading- Writing - peaking	Writing	Arabic
103	January 1 <sup>st</sup> – 15 <sup>th</sup>	70%	10%	20%

The results showed that 103 jobs were posted of which 70% required a proficiency level of the English speaking, reading and writing skills, 10% required English reading and writing skills and the rest 20% required Arabic skills. The outcome of this survey showed that modern job market in Libya requires a mastery of the four skills rather than focusing on one single skill.

To meet these demands for English proficiency, Libyan educational policy makers have created English Departments within the major universities in the country. Among them is the Department of English affiliated with the University of Benghazi with a 3,400 student population in the academic year 2012/2013. The oral skills are taught as a subject on its own under the title “Listening & Speaking” in the department. Many efforts



have been made to guarantee students' proficiency of this skill. Students majoring in English are required to take A, B, and C courses of listening and speaking. The following lengthy quotation states the course description and objectives:

Listening and speaking skills are closely intertwined [to resemble] the interaction between these two skills in real time communication. [The objective is] “developing the students' ability to understand real-life spoken English in both academic and social contexts, to understand different speaking styles and to develop speaking skills that help students take part in academic and everyday language. [Course] A's objective is “to develop students' communication skills. Learners will be exposed to topics on university life, culture, art, literature, careers, and any other topics that enhance students' ability to understand and comprehend ideas and thoughts as members of a larger community. (Course description, p. 3)

Course B builds on course A and exposes the learners “to varieties of natural occurring spoken English through listening exercises that are intended to develop strategies for comprehending connected spoken English as used in narrative, descriptive or argumentative texts. Course B is expected to move the students' “communication skills outside the classroom by negotiating and discussing issues as well as situations that resemble real life language use. Thus, students should be taught how to interact, in the target language, with other people in any of the many situations they may find themselves in. The highest and last course is listening & speaking C. According to the course description:

It is aimed at a higher level of language acquisition. By the end of the course, students are expected to have reached the level of practicing critical thinking

skills in their foreign language and the course aims at introducing the students to a more complex language type and interactive material. Attention is to be paid to both accuracy and fluency... by the end of the course students are expected to have reached the level of proficient language users

(Listening Speaking course description, p. 1).

Though the terms CLT and CC are not referred to in the department's course description, the specifications of the course objectives can be matched with the different features of the notion of communicative competence since the objective is to teach language as a means of communication rather than a system of forms. This research project investigates the integration and the implementation of the CC features, as the point of departure and the end product of CLT, with regard to teaching the oral skills (listening and speaking) to the Libyan English majors at the department of English, University of Benghazi, Libya.

### **Rationale for the Study**

My overriding motivation for researching the integration of the features of CC in the oral skills came from a number of factors. First, it came from several personal observations on the English language learners at the English department where I taught courses of English Grammar, applied linguistics and phonetics from 2005 to 2008. Students from different levels in this department expressed their dissatisfaction with their speaking skills despite the density of the listening and speaking courses in the department and despite the aforementioned objectives set in the course description. Studies on students' perceptions on EFL speaking skill development reported that the students and the society alike measure the success of foreign language acquisition by the degree a

learner can communicate in the speaking skill (Bunkart 1998; Richards & Renandya 2002). Second, it came from reviewing a wealth of research in second language acquisition that reported the failure of second language teaching programs around the world to build up the learners' communicative competence, especially at the oral skill levels, despite the adoption of the CLT approach. Several studies reported this failure in the Libyan context too. Studies on ELT in the Libyan high schools have reported that though both the syllabus designers and the teachers claim that CLT is the general framework of ELT, the actual ELT practices are controlled by traditional methodologies (Balhouq, 1981; Fenish, 1981; Lilly 1976 as cited in Ashiurakis, 1987; Moghani 2003 ; Shihiba 2011). However, no studies are available in the current literature that explored how the features of CC, being the objective of CLT, are incorporated in teaching the listening and speaking skills to the English major Libyan students.

Third, it came from the fact that thousands of graduate and undergraduate international Libyan students seek admissions in universities in many English speaking countries each year. According to the Canadian Bureau of International Education (CBIE) that sponsors Libyan students in North America and Canada, there are 2000 graduate and undergraduate Libyan students studying in the USA and 500 in Canada in the academic year of 2012/2013. <http://www.cbie-bcei.ca/what-we-do/student-portal/libya/>

Among the requirements for such students' admissions the USA, Canadian, British, Australian, New Zealand and some European universities is to achieve a proficiency score in one of the most difficult standardized tests: the TOEFL or its British equivalent the IELTS, in both of which the speaking skill plays an integral part. Since

2005, the TEOFL iBT (Internet Based Test) included four tasks of the listening skill and six tasks of the speaking skill that test academic, instructional and pragmatic competencies in the two skills. Research on international standardized tests, particularly on TEOFL, has reported that the test makers take as their starting point Canale and Swains' (1980) framework of communicative competence, modified by Canale (1983) when they set up these tests, e.g., (Chapelle, Grabe & Berns 1997; Sarwark, 1995; Savignon, 1985) . Fourth, it came from the widely expressed notion in both theoretical and applied linguistics of the primacy of speech and that the primary function of language is communication. Learning a foreign language is primarily learning to speak that language. Pragmatically, the need for a speaking mastery in English is expressed worldwide today. English is the language of communication in 85% of international organizations (Crystal, 2003). Though they vary in some details, the common purposes and objectives of ELT in different contexts are to prepare the learners to be global citizens by expanding their horizons (Graves, 2008). A large majority of EL learners learn English for global purposes (Richards & Renandiyas 2002).

The prioritization of the speaking skill as a measure of the learners' proficiency is a reflection of the societal tendency to prioritize speaking as the principle medium of interaction over the other language skills. This social feature of language use makes "speaking the most complex and difficult skill to master" (Hinkle, 2005, p. 485).

Undoubtedly, these students need to achieve an acceptable level of proficiency in writing and writing too. However, in common perspectives on CLT language curricula, teaching reading is typically connected to instruction on writing and vocabulary, teaching writing can be easily tied to reading and grammar, and speaking skills readily lend themselves to

teaching listening, pronunciation, and cross-cultural pragmatics (Hinkle, 1999, 2001). Integrated language instruction engages learners in real time tasks that enable them to function in the target language effectively (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Numerous models of integrated instruction are available in the realms of language teaching such as content-based (sometimes also called theme-based), task-based, text-based (also called genre-based), discourse-based, project-based, network-based, technology-based, corpus-based, interaction-based, literature-based, literacy-based, community-based, competency-based, or standards-based.

Recognizing that the teaching of the listening and speaking skills to the Libyan English major students is of a high importance, it is significant to study and evaluate the status quo of the teaching material, teaching methods and testing techniques used in the English Department to manipulate these skills to see whether or not the status quo meets the real needs of ELT in Libya.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is twofold. First, it aims at exploring the integration of the features of the notion of CC, which is the objective of CLT, in the teaching material intended to teach the oral skills (listening & speaking) course C, to the fourth year English major Libyan students at the Department of English, Benghazi/ Libya. The study also aims at investigating which of the components of the learners' CC, sociolinguistic, pragmatic, strategic or grammatical, has the most emphasis in both the teaching material and classroom practice. The study also investigates the instructors' perceptions of the features of CC with regard to these skills. It is also the endeavor of this study to tap into the learner's attitudes and perceptions of the features of CC and into what they expect

from their instructors, the teaching material and on what they expect from learning the speaking skill as students of English specialization. Using the students' self-evaluation descriptors, the study aims at exploring the students' abilities to carry out certain communicative functions in the different areas of communicative competence (pragmatic, sociolinguistic, linguistic, and strategic)

Although some attempts were made to develop a criteria for ELT material evaluation, e.g., (Allwright, 1981; Cunningsworth, 1995 ; Nunan, 1991; Swales, 1990) one important issue in second language acquisition instruction and syllabus design is the lack of pedagogical criteria that is specially developed to evaluate the integration of the features of communicative competence in the teaching material with regard to the oral skills. The second purpose of this study is to develop such evaluative criteria that specifically evaluate the integration of the features of communicative competence in teaching the oral skills to the ESL and EFL learners. This study used The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment (CEFR) as a pedagogical standard to extract and develop these criteria. Only the references and standards that deal with the oral skills were employed in this study. This will be discussed in more details in the following methodology section

## **Methodology**

The methodology in this study comprises two parts, the theoretical framework and the practical process of data collection. More details are presented in Chapter 3: Methods and Research Design; however, the following sections provide a brief account of the methodology of this study.

**Theoretical framework.** The formulation of the notion of communicative competence in language teaching is the result of the works of CC framers such as Canale and Swain (1980), Swain (1983), Bachman (1987), Celce-Murcia (1985, 1987, 2007), Bachman and Palmer (1996) and Savignon (1983). This study focuses on the notion of communicative competence as specified in these models with regard to teaching, learning and testing the oral skills in order to investigate the integration, teaching and testing of the features of the notion of communicative competence. These different models collectively recognize four main components of communicative competence that acquirers should master to survive second language communication. First, sociolinguistic competence includes knowing appropriate sociocultural rules of language use and of discourse. Second, pragmatic competence, pedagogically defined as “the study of language from the point of view of users, especially for the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interactions, and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communications” (Crystal, as cited in Kasper, 2001, p. 2). The third component of communicative competence recognized by ESL and EFL pedagogy is the strategic competence. In spoken discourse, it is the ability of the second or foreign language speaker to maneuver with language to compensate for lack of knowledge (Cohen, 1996; Celce- Murcia 2007; Savignon, 1983). The fourth component of the CC is the grammatical or linguistic competence that connects the aforementioned competences. Grammatical competence “from a learner’s perspective, is the ability both to recognize and produce well-formed sentences in an essential part of learning a second language” (Thornbury, 1999, p. 3). A detailed account of the pedagogical manipulation of the notion of CC is presented in chapter three.

**Practical framework.** This study uses a qualitative/quantitative approach to obtain data on the integration, teaching and testing of the features of the notion of communicative competence regarding the oral skills. This study used integrated qualitative / quantitative approach to collect and analyze the data. Mixed methodological designs in research enable the researcher to maximize the process of data analysis by increasing the level and scope of analytical tools. Mixed methods are a third option to get results based on both numbers and words (Collins, Onwuegbuzie & Jiao, 2006; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Greene, Caracelli & Graham (1989) list five rationales for integrating a qualitative / quantitative approaches in research:

- ❖ Triangulation: Seeking convergence and corroboration of results from different methods and designs studying the same phenomenon
- ❖ Complementarity: seeking elaboration, enhancement, illustration, and clarification of the results from one method with results from the other method
- ❖ Initiation: discovering paradoxes and contradictions that lead to a re-framing of the research question
- ❖ Development: using the findings from one method to help inform the other method
- ❖ Expansion: seeking to expand the breadth and the range of research by using different methods for different inquiry components ( p. 259)

Mixed methods in social science research are defined as a technique that “mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study” (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004 p. 17). The mixed approach is more relevant to this study since the main purpose was to evaluate,



describe and report the pedagogical manipulation of the CC features in a foreign language teaching environment.

This study employed different evaluative tools to collect data about the subject under study:

- ❖ Material evaluation
  - Teaching material content
  - Test content
- ❖ Questionnaires
  - Head of the department questionnaire
  - Teacher questionnaires
- ❖ Student questionnaires
  - Student self-assessment grid/descriptors

**Material evaluation.** Evaluation in language teaching and learning settings is usually threefold, serving three purposes, viz, accountability, also called summative evaluation by Genesee (2001). Formative evaluation aims at curriculum development; and illuminative evaluation which aims at increasing teacher's knowledge about teaching and/or learning process. In this study, the evaluation process was formative, dealt with material in process. It aimed at individualizing the inclusion of notion of CC in the oral skills by looking into the teaching material, instructors' practices and the students' perceptions and attitudes as sources of information to bring about betterment to teaching the notion of CC in the oral skills. The evaluation in this study was also summative. It aimed at giving evaluative judgments on the outcomes of teaching and learning the

notion of CC. Summative evaluation included test analysis and analyzing students' self-assessment grid / descriptors.

In addition to McDonough and Shaw's (2003) criteria for textbooks and material evaluation (see Chapter 3), specific criteria will be developed for this study to evaluate the content of the speaking course. The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR) will be used as a reference and general guideline for specifying and developing criteria for evaluating the integration of the features of CC, guided by the study's question:

Are the features of CC integrated in the material and teaching practices used to teach the English oral skills for the fourth year English major Libyan learners?

**Common European framework of reference for languages learning, teaching, assessment (CEFR).** In its own words the CEFR subcategorizes second language acquirers' communicative competence into three components: linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic (CEFR, 2002, p. 13). Strategic competence is the product of the mastery of these three competences. The framework also described what any learner of any language can do at six specific levels: Basic users (A 1 & A 2), independent users (B 1 & B 2), and proficient users (C 1 & C 2). The course description for teaching listening and speaking skill C in the English Department at the University of Benghazi states that "by the end of the course students are expected to have reached the level of proficient language users."

( course description, p. 3) This study referred to the integration of the features of communicative competence in the teaching and learning process with regard to what language learners need to acquire to achieve proficiency in the oral skills. (see Appendix

1) In this vein, the CEFR pedagogical specifications of the features of the learners' communicative competence in a second/ foreign language will be used as the guidelines and input to the evaluative criteria to investigate the teaching material, teaching methodology and teacher-learner interaction (see Appendix 6). The aforementioned theoretical communicative competence framework will also guide the textbook evaluation process.

### **Questionnaires.**

*The Head of the Department Questionnaire.* A separate questionnaire was administered to the head of the English department to explore her attitude and perception of teaching the oral skills in the department and get information on her management of the teaching process and teaching material. The head of the department survey was conducted via "online asynchronous email exchange" (Meho, 2006). The researcher exchanged several emails with the head of the department between August 2012 and July 2013 to determine what responsibilities the instructors of the oral skills have on top of their teaching assignments, in addition to exploring the department's policies, perspectives and attitudes towards teaching the oral skills. Furthermore, the data provided by the head of the department were compared to those provided by the instructors to check the consistency and/or discrepancy between the department's policies and the instructors' management of teaching and testing the features of CC with regard to the oral skills (see Appendix 2).

*Instructor questionnaire.* The instructors questionnaire taps into their perceptions of the relevance and importance of integrating and teaching the features of the notion of communicative competence in the ESL listening and speaking class. The

survey is constructed to gather information about how the instructors select and implement their teaching materials and explores the instructors' knowledge on CLT and its connections to CC. It also investigates the instructors' teaching philosophy and pedagogical tenets with regard to integrating CC in the ESL and EFL listening and speaking classes (See Appendix 3). The questions of the teachers' and the head of the department questionnaires are tailored to seek answers to the study's question: How are current ESL instructors integrating the features of CC in their language teaching practices and how do they test these features in the learners' output?

**Student questionnaires.** The students' questionnaire comprises two parts. The first part is administered during the course to serve informative evaluative purposes. It explores the students' perceptions of what makes up their communicative competence and their attitudes, expectations and impressions about the teaching material, teaching methodology and their instructors' practices in teaching the oral skills (see Appendix 4). The second part of the students' questionnaire is administered to those students who have finished listening and speaking C to investigate their attitudes towards the teaching practices and the type of teaching material to explore their perceptions of their performance after they have completed four years of studying the oral skills (see Appendix 5). In this study, the end of program questionnaire serves summative purposes to find out the outcomes of an extended period program.

**Students' self-assessment grid/descriptors.** Additionally, this study used the CEFR student self-assessment descriptors (see appendix 1) to tap into the students' perceptions of their oral communicative competence after having finished the course requirements. The end of program CEFR students' self-assessment grid/ descriptors

served summative evaluation purposes to explore the outcomes of an extended period program. The descriptors are represented by the ‘can do’ phrase that characterized the action-oriented approach of the CEFR. Chapter 2 of the CEFR presented a generalized statement about the learners’ competences, contexts, conditions and constraints that control the process of language use (see chapter 3 for detailed account) In general, the two students’ questionnaires and Students’ self-assessment grid/descriptors are constructed to answer study research question four.

### **Questions of the Study**

The study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. Do the head of the department, the course coordinator and the university instructors at the English department/ Benghazi University recognize any standards for teaching the notion of CC in the oral skills?
2. How do Libyan University instructors perceive the notion of CC: What are their pedagogical tenets, teaching practices and philosophies with regard to the notion of CC?
3. How do Libyan ESL students perceive the importance of learning the features of CC in their listening and speaking classes?
  - a. What are the students’ perceptions of their listening and speaking skills during and after they have finished the courses?
  - b. How do the students evaluate their oral competence on learns’ self-descriptors can do statements?
  - c. What are the students’ reactions to the oral skills teaching material and teaching methodology?

4. What are the instructors and the students' reactions to the oral skills teaching material and teaching methodology?
5. Are the features of CC integrated in the material and teaching practices used to teach the English oral skills for the fourth year English major Libyan learners?

### **Expected Findings of the Study**

The ultimate objective of this study is to explore the teaching of one of the most important and complex skills in ESL and EFL teaching and learning, listening and speaking. Promoting an advanced level of English speaking mastery to meet modern Libya's English language demands is the main objective of creating English major departments within the Libyan universities. A discontent with the level of English major students' mastery of the speaking skill is expressed among different circles in the Libyan society. Parents, students, educators, and language inspectors and researchers have stated their dissatisfaction with the English major Libyan students' speaking performance after they had spent four years in the English specialization. The researcher conducting this study hopes to get pedagogically founded explanations for the low students' performance in this skill by checking the current teaching practices in the Department of English against current dominant theories of communicative competence. The anticipated results would inform educational decision makers, pedagogues, syllabus designers, and academia of the advantages and disadvantages of the current approach adopted in teaching the listening and speaking skills in the Libyan English departments. It is also the hope of the researcher to add to the current accumulating literature on teaching and learning the different features of the notion of communicative competence, particularly,

the integration of this notion into the EFL and ESL oral skills teaching material and practices.

### **Application of the Findings**

This study will add to the research on teaching the communicative competence in an ESL and EFL environments especially to integrating the features of CC into teaching the oral skills. It also contributes significantly to the literature on skill-teaching through exploring the relation between the non-linguistic aspects of CC (pragmatic, strategic and sociocultural) and the speaking skill. The study has pedagogical practical relevance to syllabus design, teacher education and testing with regard to the different components of CC. The study provides insights and guidelines into CC specifications in EFL and ESL curricula in general and in Libya in particular.

Chapter 3 of this study details the methodology and research design and provides an extensive description of the participants of the study, the types of surveys the their content, in addition to providing background knowledge on the evaluation process and methodology.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

### **History and Development of the Notion of CC**

The ability of language users to reach their communicative goals in life is largely controlled by the level of their communicative competence. As was mentioned in the introduction to this project, the notion of CC was introduced by Hymes in a series of works (1967, 1974, and 1972) as a counter movement to the long lasting conception that knowledge of grammatical rules is adequate to perform any communicative act. Theorists of CC on both sides of the Atlantic questioned the structural and formal approaches that advocated the efficiency of linguistic competence to speak a language.

In England, Firth (1930, 1964) suggested that a broader sociocultural context that accounts for the language users' behaviors and beliefs, the objectives of their linguistic discussion and their word choices should be part of any language teaching approach. The work of Halliday (1989) on functional linguistics and Halliday, and Hassan (1978) on systematic functional linguistics also contributed to the development of a theory of CC. Halliday (1978) argued that both structural and transformational linguists preoccupied themselves with the formal aspects of language, whereas a theory of language should account for the form and the context of situation where it is used. Accordingly, the unit of functional linguistic analysis should be speech acts and discourse since language functions can only be revealed through an account of patterns of language in use. A functional approach would balance the interaction between form and meaning by focusing on all of the components involved in the interaction process (pp. 145-150). The key term in Halliday's approach to CC is "context of situation." Savignon (1983) stated that both Halliday and Hymes borrowed this term from Malinowski (1923, 1935).



Malinowski used the term in anthropological studies on problems of translations in primitive languages. According to Savignon (1983), Firth (1930, 1937) also developed the term ‘context of situation’ to account for discourse in both its spoken and written forms. While Malinowski restricted the term ‘context of situation’ to primitive languages, Firth used it to delineate the non-linguistic features that can affect the interpretation of particular communicative acts such as word selection, people involved, and behavioral patterns.

In America, the conjunction of Chomsky’s *Syntactic Structure* (1957) and Hymes & Gumperz (1972) *Directions in Sociolinguistics: The Ethnography of Communication* featured how language users’ abilities should be defined. While Chomsky assumed that linguistic competence is universal and shared by native speakers of any language, Hymes contended that linguistic competence is constrained by patterns of use other than the Chomskyan formal structural paradigm. Chomsky’s formal approach to linguistic competence was pivotal to subsequent developments in his syntactic theory, but not to any theory of language performance. Chomsky’s abstract linguistic competence did not account for real time communication constraints. Hymes argued that Chomsky’s approach is monological, addressing only the grammatical component, whereas the communication process involves many others, such as the semantic, social and cultural components. The interdependence of these components provides for and “makes mutuality of understanding possible” (Habermas, 1970, p. 140).

As has been mentioned in this discussion, Hymes (1972) coined the term “Communicative Competence” to refer to the spectrum of abilities, other than the grammatical that acquirers of a language need to know to function effectively in that

language. The fundamental difference between Chomsky and Hymes is that while Chomsky introduced competence and performance as a dichotomy of two separate concepts, Hymes perceived performance as one observable side of the coin, whereas competence is the other inferred side. Hymes (1972) further explained that competence and performance should be the focus of more empirical studies in order to reveal four main parameters that govern the system of rules that underlie speech acts:

- ❖ Whether and to what degree something is formally possible.
- ❖ Whether (and to what extent) something is feasible in virtual implementation.
- ❖ Whether (and to what extent) something is appropriate in relation to context.
- ❖ Whether (and to what extent) something is in fact done, actually performed and what doing entails. (p. 281)

These four parameters correspond respectively to linguistic, psycholinguistic, socio-cultural and idiosyncratic features of interaction. Hymes also defined his conception of CC as “when to speak, when not . what to talk about with whom, when, where, in what manner” (p. 277).

The work of Saville-Troike (1989) echoed ethnographically with Hymes’ notion of CC, though it is more pedagogically inclined. She contextualized CC in a second and foreign language-learning framework. She believes that learners acquire three types of knowledge: linguistic, interactional and knowledge of the cultural schemata. First, linguistic knowledge roughly corresponded to the traditional grammatical competence; however, Saville-Troike believes that the interaction between the linguistic form and the

intended social meaning in the message is pivotal to any communicative act. She quoted her Japanese English language learner's misuse of the phrase "and all that clap" to mean "etc." as an evidence of the failure of her student to acquire the correspondence between certain linguistic variations and certain social meanings. These variations pose a great deal of challenge and form a real area of difficulty even to the more advanced language learners. Saville-Troike argued that knowledge of the linguistic forms that communicate socially coded information should be part of the language learners' CC. Second, the interactional skills that refer to the knowledge and anticipation of the social conventions and norms of the target language. The third component of Saville-Troike CC model is knowledge of the cultural schemata of the speech community. This construct of CC corresponds to Hymes concept of "rules of appropriateness." Gumperz (2001) employed Goffman's (1981) "interactional order" that relates specific discourse functions to specific order of use and argued that speech production is context-sensitive. He further stated that talk is more than "just a matter of individuals' encoding and decoding of messages" (p. 218). In this charge, Gumperz represents the view of many others in interactional sociolinguistics, e.g., Durante and Goodwin (1992), Cicourel (1992), and Schegloff (1992) who situated language in its social interaction. In any communication process, conversationalists strive to get messages across in order to achieve communicative goals, and simultaneously, perform a social act, and they do this as part of their CC. Gumperz (2001) viewed competence as a matter of individual ability, but functions within the domains of social interaction and context appropriateness. This goes in line with both Hymes' and Saville-Troike's constructs of the notion of CC and rules of appropriateness. There is a consensus among linguists and interactional sociolinguists on

the notion that CC is more than knowing the grammatical coding of a language; rather it entails a wide range of competences. These developments in the theory of CC have their impact on ELT theories of teaching and of learning that reformulated views to the teaching and learning processes.

### **Incorporating CC in Applied Linguistics: Paradigm Shift**

The debate in ethnographical studies on the notion of CC has a profound influence on ELT applied linguistics research and literature. The dominant grammar-controlled paradigm for both ELT studies and practices was already under serious revision in the 1960s. Theoretical linguistic studies were simultaneously shifting focus from structuralism to functionalism to account for language as a means of communication. The newly emerging views in functional linguistics were immediately adapted in applied linguistics and the originally ethnographical notion of CC was re-contextualized as an integral element in the process of incorporating functional and social theories into the ELT schemata. In this sense, the realization of CC in applied linguistics was attributed to a series of works such as that of Austin (1962), McIntosh and Stevens (1964), Hymes (1971), Halliday (1973, 1975), Widdowson (1978), Savignon (1972), and Corder (1973). Thus, the notion of communicative competence in ELT worked as an “anchor for various versions of CLT that appears in a vast array of ELT teacher training programs and teaching materials” (Leung, 2001). In this charge, applied linguists were interested in the epistemological implications of the notion of CC that would account for a continuum of language acquires’ abilities other than the grammatical. The paradigm shift in applied linguistics from researching and teaching language code towards researching and teaching language function was fundamentally

driven by Hymes' (1972) remarks that there are non- linguistic rules of language use “without which the rules of grammar would be useless” (p. 287). This shift led to considering context, culture, discourse, and the social aspects of language as integral components of the ELT paradigm. Functional applied linguists endeavored to formulate and integrate a theory of language in use to react against the structural based ELT practices of the 1950s and 1960s.

Hymes' (1972) holistic view of speech as a unified communicative activity that employs not only the language code but also a community of language users shifted linguistic studies to more empirically oriented approaches through observation and research. Applied linguists had to reorient their approaches to study the code in the context of social interaction. This reorientation marked a departure from the traditional specified dichotomies in theoretical linguistics that depicted the components of the speakers' apparatus of the language ability. As for De Saussure, the dichotomy that describes the language faculty is *langue* and *parole* and for Chomsky it is competence and performance. Nevertheless, the terms *langue* and competence appeared in two different times and theories, and they both accounted for the mental and psychological properties of the language faculty. However, Chomsky is more specific in his account by attributing competence to the ideal native speaker- listener interaction, as such; competence is the corpus for any linguistic studies, whereas performance is the corpus of social sciences. The initial reaction of applied linguists to the Chomskyan conception of competence and performance was that though the dichotomy may match the language-teaching dichotomy of “language knowledge” and “language use,” competence is viewed as an abstract conception beyond observation and empirical research.

Nevertheless, Selinker (1972) coined the term “interlanguage” to refer to the second language acquirers’ temporary competence. Other applied linguists such as Corder (1967) and Nemeser (1971) described the learner’s linguistic system as a competence of its own right that resembles neither first language (L 1) nor second language (L 2) competence. Thus, the notion of interlanguage sets the L 2 learner a part from the Chomskyan notion of native speaker’s competence. In applied linguistics, learner’s competence develops systematically and it is rule-governed and follows a predictable route. The interlanguage theorists strived to interpret learners’ breach of the language code as a naturally driven developmental process of second language acquisition. Like the Chomskyan notion of competence, interlanguage as specified by Selinker (1972) sought psychological and mental explanations for the learner’s linguistic ability. Learners’ interlanguage competence, though similar to first language competence in process, L 2 learners are rarely completely successful to achieve a native speakers’ competence. An exception to this failure is the 5 % framers who may achieve absolute success. According to Selinker, the majority of second language acquirers’ competence fossilizes at some point short of the native speakers’ competence. Selinker believed that second language acquirers go through two routes, employing two different devices. First, he coined the term ‘latent language structure’, which is similar to Chomsky’s language acquisition device (LAD) to refer to an ability in the mind employed by the lucky 5% of L 2 learners to achieve a native-like competence in their language acquisition. The second device is “‘psychological structures’ also latent in the brain [and] activated when learners attempt to learn a second language, but different from the latent language device” (p. 215).

Applied linguists of the 1960s through the 1970s endeavored to describe second language acquirers' competence in the light of Chomsky's description of the ideal native speaker- listener's competence. They sought to utilize linguistic theories to formalize statements about second language acquisition process. However, applied linguists of the 1980s onward rejected the traditional linguistic notion of dichotomizing competence and performance. Tarone (1983) and Ellis (1985) agreed that competence or 'capability' is not homogenously responsible for all language performance .Each specific type of competence drives instance of language performance in real communication. In practical terms, the context of situation drives L 2 acquirers' performance, especially at the time of their speech production. Other applied linguists such as Ellis (1985) shifted focus from studying Chomsky's dichotomy of competence and performance towards studying and researching performance variability in particular speech situations

Neither Hymes in his ethnographical studies nor the applied linguists of the 1980s maintained Chomsky's theoretical conception of competence and performance. Taking Hymes ethnographical observations on CC to their pedagogical arena, applied linguists of the 1980s were more interested in researching the type of second language acquirers' competence that would reflect their performance. Thus, applied linguists under the impact of Hymes' views reversed the Chomskyan paradigm that competence is inferred through performance, instead, they proposed that a second language acquirer's ability profile is the product of inter-languages and capabilities constrained by Hymes' context of situation. This trend was represented by Douglas & Selinker (1985, Ellis(1985),Tarone (1983), and Tarone (1985) , who supported the use of the term "ability" instead of "competence" to serve more practical language learning purposes. These researchers

developed what was known as the variable competence model. In this model, they attempted to break the learners' communicative competence down into a number of competences converse to the dominant views in theoretical formal linguistics that attributed the notion of language ability solely to the grammatical competence in both language acquisition and production. What Chomsky and other theoretical linguists believed that the applied linguists did not was that language is rule governed self-contained system free from any social or contextual variables.

As was mentioned in this discussion, the debate between theoretical and applied linguists intensified in the 1970s and 1980s around the conceptions of competence and performance and their roles in a theory that would explain the human language faculty. While theoretical linguists, led by Chomsky, advocated that a definition of competence should not include the notion of ability for use, applied linguists assigned rather situational and sociolinguistic meanings to the notion of competence. However, Chomsky (1980) recognized pragmatic competence as a supplement to the grammatical competence. Ironically, the notion of competence was coined in theoretical linguistics, redefined in ethnographical studies, filtered in applied linguistics and re-modified in theoretical linguistics. Chomsky (1986) split the single term competence into I-language, referred to as "the system of knowledge [in] the transition from the initial to the mature state of the language faculty" (p. 26). I- language substituted LAD and accounted for the natural development of language acquisition. The second component of Chomsky's modified view is the E-language. He introduced it to refer to both natural and artificial language propositions. E-language substituted the use of performance that previously used to refer only to knowledge of natural language. Equally, the use of I-language



instead of or sometimes along with competence, added more confusion to the already abstract and vague term, competence. Chomsky introduced I-language as a technical term that indicates language as a state of the mind, while the parallel term competence continued to serve informal meaning and refer to our knowledge of natural language. Though the Chomskyan notion of I-language and E-language accounted for universal as well as for pragmatic aspects of human language, applied linguists found them more abstract and serve philosophical and cognitive debates than being relevant to any pedagogical reality.

This high level of abstractness in Chomsky's concept of competence did not yield any pedagogical relevance to the advocates of communicative approaches in applied linguistics. Alternatively, Hymes' (1972) observation that grammatical competence combines with an ability of use is responsible for our performance in a diversity of communicative situations prepared the ground for the communicative view in applied linguistics that has dominated language-teaching methodology up until now. Applied linguistics used Hymes' distinction between grammatical competence (form) and sociocultural appropriateness (function) to serve epistemic pedagogical doctrine that contributed to the advent and development of the CLT trend (Leung, 2001). Applied linguists made many attempts to re-contextualize the ethnographic notion of communicative competence to formalize a theory of language teaching. Widdowson (1983) drew a distinction between competence and capacity. For him, capacity accounts for the ability to actualize language knowledge in real time communication and is independent from competence. In Widdowson (1983) own words, ability is "an active force for meaning creativity" (p. 27). However, the most influential contribution in

developing the notion of CC in applied linguistics came from Canale and Swain (1980) and Canale (1983). This contribution produced two elements that deeply rooted the notion of communicative competence in applied linguistics and in language teaching approaches. First, it formalized a framework for the description and testing of communicative competence; second, it configured CC into categories other than the grammatical competence.

Building on Chomsky and Hymes' debate on competence and ability for use, Canale and Swain (1980) maintained that ability for use is not part of their definition of communicative competence. They presented two main reasons to explain their attitude: "(i) to our knowledge, this notion [ability for use] has not been pursued rigorously in any research on communicative competence (ii) we doubt that there is any theory of human action that can adequately explicate 'ability for use'" (p. 7).

However, Canale (1983) reformulation of the theory of communicative competence categorized the skills that are pertinent to 'ability of use'. Other applied linguists such as Ellis (1994) further expanded the notion of CC to refer to "the knowledge that users of a language have internalized to enable them to understand and produce messages in the language" (p. 696). Edmonson (1981) viewed communicative competence as the mastery of the linguistic code and speech acts to get one's meaning across. For Wiemann and Backlund (1980) Communicative competence is manifested through proficiency skills. Corder (1973) developed what he called 'transitional competence', an idea he attributed to Chomsky's conception of competence and performance. Corder (1976) explained "my own term transitional competence borrows the notion of 'competence' from Chomsky and emphasizes that the learner possesses a

certain body of knowledge which we hope is constantly developing” italics in the original (p. 67). Since the 1980s, applied linguists continued to contextualize the notion of CC into more pedagogical models to account for the content and objective of the CLT approach. These models strived to provide more specifications of the sub-components of CC in order to formulate a pedagogical framework for the notion of CC.

### **Models of Communicative Competence in Applied Linguistics**

The introduction of the notion of CC into applied linguistics sparked an interest to develop a model that specifies what makes up the language learner’s communicative competence. Current literature communicative competence refer to more than one model of CC; however, Canale and Swain’s (1980) model, re-formalized by Canale (1983) triggered a spate of studies and research that contextualized CC into language teaching. In order to expand on the theoretical framework of this study, it is essential to discuss the graduation of the CC models since the emergence of the first model 32 years ago. This section briefly reviewed the CC models of Canale and Swain (1980), Canale (1983) and the subsequent models of Celce-Murcia, Dornyei, & Thurrell, (1995), revised model of Celce-Murcia (2007), Schmidt & Richards (1980), Bachman (1990) ,and Bachman and Palmer (1996) and contextualize them in the general framework of the study.

**Canale and Swain model (1980), formulated Canale (1983).** Canale and Swain (1980) synthesized a conception of the notion of CC after arguing that it was feasible to analyze the underlying system of competences and skills involved in communication. Using Hymes paradigm, they labored on breaking down the Chomskyan notion of performance into three components, each accounting for a different type of knowledge: knowledge of the linguistic code, knowledge of the social code and

knowledge of the verbal and non-verbal strategies to maintain the communication flow.

The technical terminologies used to refer to these three types of knowledge are grammatical competence, sociolinguistic and strategic competence respectively (Canale & Swain, 1980). Canale (1983) revised model recognized discourse competence,

Cohesion and coherence, as a subcategory of sociolinguistic competence

Canale and Swain(1980) and Canale(1983) specified what L 2 classrooms need to consider closely to teach language as a viable object , and thus, the language classroom is viewed as a social venue in which learners are performing various interactional situations that use language as a means of communication. Subsequent models continued to expand the notion of CC inspired by Canale and Swain's characterization of CC.

**Bachman (1990), Bachman and Palmer (1996).** Bachman (1990) proposed the term “communicative language ability” to account for the notion of CC. Bachman (1990) and Bachman and Palmer (1996) subdivided communicative language ability into three components: First, language competence, further subdivided into ‘organizational competence’, that involves grammatical and textual competence and pragmatic competence that comprises illocutionary and sociolinguistic competence. Bachman and Palmer's (1996) model viewed CC as an ever-changing system in which strategic competence is developing through world knowledge and linguistic competence. Language learners who acquire this knowledge will be able to execute their linguistic intentions successfully. In Bachman's model, language competence is the general umbrella under which pragmatic and grammatical competences work. The model subdivides communicative competence into three components: language competence, strategic competence and psychophysiological mechanisms.

*Language competence.* This construct comprises different categories:

a). Organizational competence, subdivided into organizational knowledge that involves grammatical and textual knowledge as well as the traditional discourse competence of cohesion and coherence. The model specified the following as the components of organizational competence:

i. Vocabulary, morphology, syntax and phonology;

ii. Textual competence: cohesion, rhetorical organization;

b). Pragmatic competence involves:

i. Illocutionary competence: the ability to use and understand speech acts (Searle, 1961)

ii. Sociolinguistic competence: sensitivity to dialect or variety, sensitivity to register, sensitivity to naturalness, cultural references and figures of speech (p. 8).

Bachman and Palmer (1996) added the “ideational functions, manipulative functions, heuristic functions and imaginative functions.” Halliday’s categorization of the language function formed much of the basis to the communicative functions specified in Bachman and Palmers’ CC model. The pragmatic knowledge in this model of CC is the most comprehensive and it was an innovation to the ELT pedagogy. It accounts for the ability to acquire and use the functional illocutionary knowledge.

Second language learners who develop this competence are able of performing language functions consistent with the context of use. Bachman and Palmer’s model draw much on functional linguistics to distinguish between form and function in second language acquisition. They borrowed Searle’s’ (1969) term of illocutionary speech acts to

refer to the difference between the speaker's intended meaning and the perceived meaning of the utterance. Second language learners employ the illocutionary competence to develop the ability of expressing and interpreting the function of an utterance. To illustrate, the utterance 'it is hot in here' may communicate sarcasm (when it is too cold), warning (when hotness indicates danger of any kind), assertion (it is just hot), a request (to turn the AC on). Bachman and Palmer drew on Searle's (1969) theory of speech acts to explain the different levels of communication by making a distinction between what a speaker just says (utterance), and the act of referring to something (the illocutionary force) or the semantic content of the speech act.

***Strategic competence: assessment, planning, and execution.*** In Bachman and Palmers' (1996) model, strategic competence is introduced "as a set of metacognitive components, or strategies, which can be thought of as higher order executive processes that provide a cognitive management of function for language use as well as in other cognitive activities" (p. 70). The metacognitive skills employed in strategic competence are goal setting, planning, assessment, and execution. The assessment skill enables language users to delineate the content needed for a successful communicative act by employing the available resources and evaluating the whole context of the situation. The planning component is responsible for ordering and arranging the required items of the linguistic competence to carry out a communicative act, whereas the execution component utilizes the psychophysiological mechanisms to perform the communicative plans.

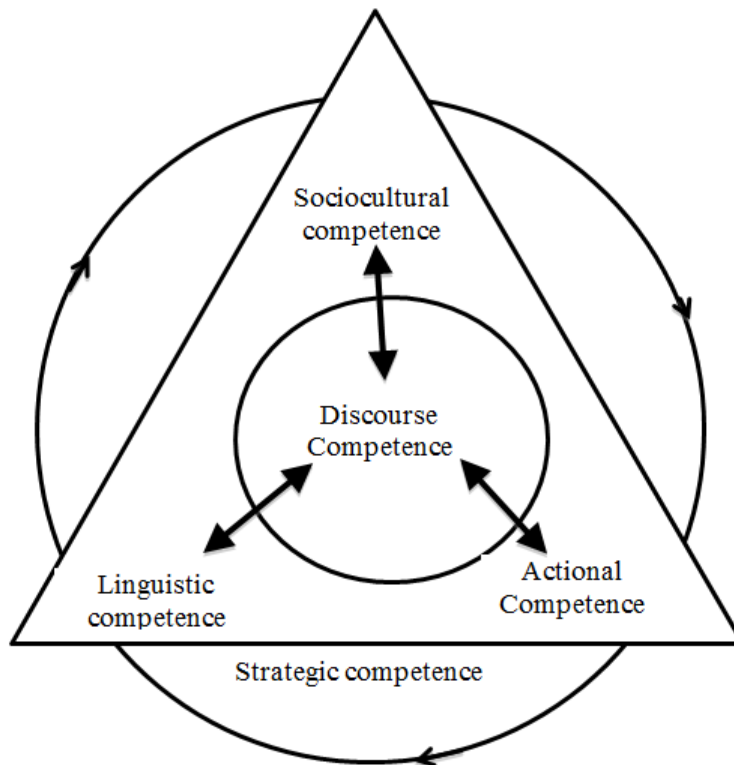
***Psychophysiological mechanisms*** Bachman's categorization of sub-competences aimed at constructing a model of CC that would address issues in L 2 testing. By

presenting a detailed description of the CC components, he attempted to develop a model that is more testable. Psychophysiological mechanisms are the neurological and physiological processes pertinent to performance at the execution of the productive skills (speaking & writing), (Kasper, 1983). Bachman and Palmer used this mechanism to refer to the learners' different abilities: the visual, auditory, receptive and productive. In listening and reading, the auditory and visual mechanisms are the main channels for the input while, in the productive mode, neuromuscular mechanisms are employed such as the speech organs and the articulatory system. In the context of this discussion, Bachman and Palmer's (1996) model will be used to evaluate the way the participants' speaking communicative competence is assessed by their professors.

**Celce-Murcia, Dornyei, and Thurrell (1995) Model.** These three applied linguists presented their CC model in 1995, Figure 1, that includes:

1. Discourse competence: cohesion, deixis, coherence, generic structure, and conversational structure
2. Linguistic competence: syntax, morphology, lexical knowledge, and phonological and orthographic systems
3. Actional competence: knowledge of language functions (e.g. expressing and finding out feelings, suasion, asking for and giving information, complaining, greeting and leaving, etc.) and knowledge of speech act sets
4. Sociocultural competence: appropriateness in social context, cultural awareness, style, and non-verbal communication

5. Strategic competence: linguistic strategies such as avoidance or reduction strategies, achievement or compensatory strategies, stalling strategies, self-monitoring strategies, and interactional strategies (pp. 11-28).



*Figure 1* Schematic Representation of CC in (Celce-Murcia, Dornyei,

The purpose of this model was to compensate for the lack of “generat[ing] a detailed content specification for CLT that relate directly to an articulated model of communicative competence” (p. 5). Unlike Bachman’s model that was an attempt to contextualize CC within language assessment, Celce-Murcia, Dornyei, and Thurrell (1995) model presented a pedagogical framework for the specifications of the notion of



CC. The model is a continuation of Canale & Swain's (1980) and Canale's (1983) models and included a number of CC features that are relevant to the development and assessment of the CLT content.

The main distinction between the three CC models discussed so far is that Canale and Swain's (1980) model presented the first sub-categorization of the notion of CC as grammatical, strategic and sociolinguistic competences and Canale's (1983) added discourse competence. Celce-Murcia et al (1995) and Bachman and Palmer (1996) recognized 'actional competence' as a fifth component of CC. Celce-Murcia's (2007) revised model of CC was an attempt to provide a detailed description that would inform the classroom pedagogical needs. In her models, sociocultural competence provides for the schematic knowledge (knowledge of the world). Under this competence, the pedagogical program can list notions such as beliefs, values, conventions, taboos and communication styles of the target language that are not part of the systematic knowledge (linguistic competence).

**A proposed revision of the 1995 models, Celce-Murcia 2007 Model.** In this revised model, Celce-Murcia updated the 1997 model and she provided a detailed account of what language learners' need to master their language skill. She subcategorized the CC components into:

- ❖ *Sociocultural Competence*. Social contextual factors: the participants' age, gender, status, social distance and their relations to each other's power and affect.
  - Stylistic appropriateness: politeness strategies, a sense of genres and registers
  - Cultural factors: background knowledge of the target language group, major dialects/regional differences, and cross-cultural awareness (p. 46)

The subcomponents of the sociocultural competence are encompassed in knowledge of the target language community's life such as traditions, history, literature and behaviors. Celce- Murcia states that foreign teachers often ignore the sociocultural competence and they alternatively focus on and promote the linguistic competence.

***Discourse competence.*** In this construct of CC, the discourse competence is maintained as pivotal to the other components. Celce-Murcia (2007) stated “discourse competence refers to the selection, sequencing, and to the arrangement of words, structures and utterances to achieve a unified spoken message” (p. 6). Four subareas previously listed in Celce-Murcia, Dornyei and Thurrell (1995, pp. 13-15) are relisted under discourse competence in Celce-Murcia (2007) model:

- ❖ *Cohesion*: conventions regarding use (anaphora/cataphora), substitution/ ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical chains (i.e. Halliday and Hasan, 1976)
- ❖ *Deixis*: situational grounding achieved through use of personal pronouns, spatial terms (here/there; this/that), temporal terms (now/then; before/after), and textual reference.
- ❖ *Coherence*: expressing purpose/intent through appropriate content schemata, managing old and new information, maintaining temporal continuity and other organizational schemata through conventionally recognized means
- ❖ *Generic structure*: formal schemata that allows the user to identify an oral discourse segment as a conversation, narrative, interview, service encounter, report, lecture, sermon, etc. ( p. 7).

***Linguistic competence.*** In Figure 2, the linguistic competence is opposed to the formulaic competence occupying counterbalanced triangles. Celce- Murcia argues that

the distinction between linguistic competence and formulaic competence is important. While linguistic competence entails an open-ended system and recursive rules listed below, formulaic competence involves acquiring ready-made linguistic chunks. The linguistic competence comprises the following subcategories:

- ❖ *Phonological*: includes both segmental (vowels, consonants, syllable types) and supra-segmental (prominence/stress, intonation, and rhythm).
  - ❖ *Lexical*: knowledge of both content words (nouns, verbs, adjectives) and unction words (pronouns, determiners, prepositions, verbal auxiliaries, etc.).
  - ❖ *Morphological*: parts of speech, grammatical inflections, productive derivational processes.
  - ❖ *Syntactic*: constituent/phrase structure, word order (both canonical and marked), basic sentence types, modification, coordination, subordination, embedding.
- (Celce-Murcia, 2007, p. 7).

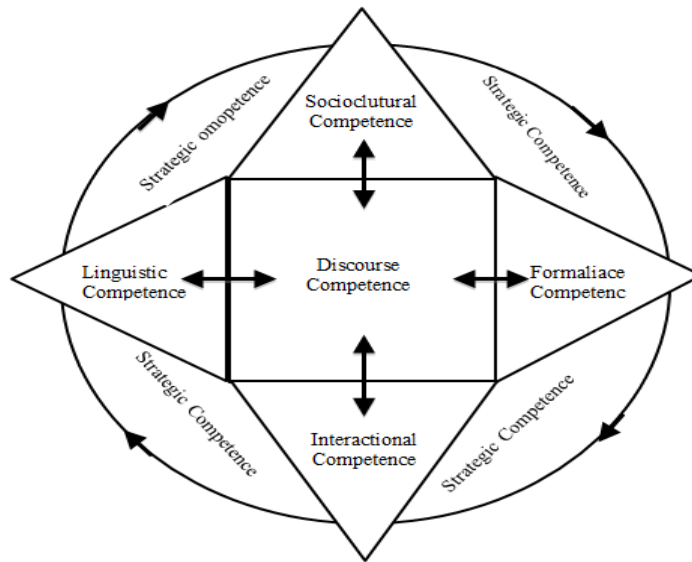


Figure 2 Representation of Communicative Competence (Celce-Murcia, 2007, p. 45)

**Formulaic competence.** Celce-Murcia (2007) drew heavily on the views of Pawley and Snyder (1983), and Nattinger and DeCarrico (1992) on the importance of formulaic and prefabricated chunks of language that is part of everyday communication. Celce-Murcia (2007) proposed that formulaic competence entails the following features:

- ❖ Routines: fixed phrases like *of course, all of a sudden* and formulaic
- ❖ Chunks like *How Do You Do? I'm Fine, Thanks; How Are You?*
- ❖ Collocations: Verb-Object: *Spend Money, Play The Piano*
- ❖ Adverb Adjective: *Statistically Significant, Mutually Intelligible*
- ❖ Adjective-Noun: *Tall Building, Legible Handwriting*
- ❖ Idioms: E.G., *To Kick The Bucket = To Die; To Get The Ax = To Be Fired/Terminated*

- ❖ Lexical Frames: E.G., *I'm Looking For \_\_\_\_\_ See You(Later/Tomorrow/next week, etc)* (p. 48).

***Interactional competence.*** Celce-Murcia (2007) revised model of CC included the subcomponent of interactional competence to refer to the ability of effectively using the lexical, semantic and syntactic features in talk-in-interaction. The issue of interactional competence figured centrally to the debate on communicative competence to replace Chomsky's term of performance. Celce-Murcia states that interactional competence is "the hands-on component of interactional competence." She presents three main components of this category of CC:

- ❖ *Actional competence*: knowledge of how to perform common speech acts and speech act sets in the target language involving interactions such as information exchanges, interpersonal exchanges, expression of opinions and feelings or reporting problems (complaining, blaming, regretting, apologizing, etc.), future scenarios (hopes, goals, promises, predictions, etc.):
- ❖ how to open and close conversations *Conversational competence*: inherent to the turn-taking system in conversation described as by Sachs Schegloff and Jefferson (1974) and extended it to other dialogic genres:
  - how to establish and change topics
  - how to get, hold, and relinquish the floor
  - how to interrupt
  - how to collaborate and backchannel ...etc.
  - *non-verbal/paralinguistic competence* includes:

- *kinesics* (body language), non-verbal turn-taking signals, backchannel behaviors, gestures, affects markers, eye contact.
- *proxemics* (use of space by interlocutors)
- *haptic behavior* (touching). Utterances with interactional import (e.g. ahhh! Uh-oh. Huh?) the role of silence and pauses

Celce-Murcia centralized interactional competence to communication since the performance of speech acts can differ from language to language. In pedagogical terms, second and foreign language learners need to acquire a set of “social interactions” in order to develop their communicative competences. In this vein, there is a firm stance on the importance of the learners’ ability to maintain actional competence along with general rules of conversational competence as primary objective of CL, however, such actional competence must mesh with the more general rules of conversational competence related to turn-taking system in the target language. Languages also differ on how they open and close conversations and on other conversational conventions: Can speakers interrupt each other? If so, how is this done? Can speakers overlap (i.e., talk simultaneously)?

***Strategic competence.*** Early cognitive research reported that human information processing systems have serious limitations that prevent the processing of information without resorting to some kind of strategies that account for such limitations (Broadbent, 1958). In the best-case scenario, human beings can only perform within the borders of their limited information processing system (Simon, 1957). Oxford (2001) as cited in Celce-Murcia (2007, p. 50) specified the L2 learners’ behaviors as processes used to improve the L2 intake. In this charge, she divided learners’ behaviors into learning

strategies and communicative strategies. Celce-Murcia adopted three of Oxford's learning strategies:

- ❖ *Cognitive*: these are strategies making use of logic and analysis to help oneself learn a new language through outlining, summarizing, note-taking, organizing and reviewing material, etc.
- ❖ *Metacognitive*: these strategies involve planning one's learning by making time for homework or for preparation, and engaging in self-evaluation of one's success on a given task or on one's overall progress.
- ❖ *Memory-related*: these are strategies that help learners recall or retrieve words using acronyms, images, sounds (rhymes), or other clues.

In addition to Oxford's list of learners' behaviors, Celce-Murcia (2007) proposed the following categories of strategic competence:

- ❖ *Achievement*: strategies of approximation, circumlocution, code-switching, miming, etc.
- ❖ *Stalling or time gaining*: using phrases like *where was i? Could you repeat that?*
- ❖ *Self-monitoring*: using phrases that allow for self-repair like *i mean*.
- ❖ *Interacting*: these are strategies that include appeals for help/clarification, that involve meaning negotiation, or that involve comprehension and confirmation checks, etc.
- ❖ *Social*: these strategies involve seeking out native speakers to practice with, actively looking for opportunities to use the target language. (p. 50)

The configuration of the notion of CC in applied linguistics put forward a pedagogical challenge to the teacher, the syllabus designer, the applied linguist as well as to the

learner. Language learning became the learning of a network of systems instead focusing on the grammatical competence as the main objective of learning a language. In the context of teaching the oral skills, the challenge became how to train the learners in international conversational skills. Performing speech-acts, taking a turn in a real time conversations and using of formulaic sets are some of the new challenging skills. More complex specifications of the conversational skills are pertinent to other social features of language such as that “for each social move or function, there is a stock of potential utterances; speakers must know enough about their interlocutors to choose appropriately from among these stock utterances” (Celce-Murcia 2007, p. 52) . Any approach to teach the different features of CC in the oral skills should uphold a pedagogical balance between these different features as a point of departure and as an end product of the content, the methodology and the testing process. For the purpose of this discussion, the pedagogical specifications of the notion of CC in ELT will be discussed in further details in this chapter.

**Characterization of CC in ELT.** Much of the practices in the 1970s and 1980s promoted ELT as a trans-nationalized enterprise that provided both a means of international communication and corpus for linguistic studies. The notion of CC provided the underpinning anchor for different CLT approaches. Through introducing and researching CC, applied linguists sought to provide answers to epistemological and sociolinguistic questions pertinent to ELT while breaking with the ALM paradigm that dominated both language teaching and language studies since the 1940s. CLT proponents reformulated second language pedagogy and curriculum to embrace sociocultural, discursal and pragmatic notions that emerged as sub-categories of CC. Despite the



diversity of the CC models discussed earlier, the framework of Canale and Swain worked as a reference for applied linguists and as a central principle in both ELT teacher training programs and ELT teaching materials (Brown, 2000). Dubin (1989) stated that there is a paradigms shift on the work of applied linguists in contextualizing the ethnographical notion of CC in ELT pedagogy. He argued, “It is apparent that over time there has been a shift away from an agenda for finding out what is happening in a community regarding language use to a set of statements about what an idealized curriculum for L 2 learning/acquisition should entail” (p. 174). In the process of re- contextualizing the notion of CC in applied linguistics, language-teaching professionals filtered the notion from its ethnographical charges to serve their own pedagogical concerns. They were more interested in specifying the features that should be included in the ELT teaching material to make it more communicative. The degree of the notion of CC impact on ELT content and methodology differed from one CC model to another. For instance, Canale and Swain’s (1980) model presented more specifications for grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence with regard to what should be selected and included in the ELT teaching material, whereas discourse competence was left to further research “until more clear-cut theoretical statements about rules of discourse emerge” (Canale and Swain, 1980, p. 30). Since its advent in ELT discussion, applied linguists and syllabus designers has contextualized CC in a broader discussion of the communicative syllabus. Unlike the grammatical syllabus that focused on and served the grammatical competence, the communicative syllabus reflected the different components of CC. Yaden (1983) proposed that the designer should consider some aspects of syllabus components:

1. As detailed a consideration as possible of the purposes for which the learners wish to acquire the target language;
2. Some idea of the setting in which they will want to use the target language.
3. The socially defined role the learner will assume in the target language, as well as their interlocutors.
4. The communicative events in which the learners will participate ( pp. 86-7)

Subsequent research on Conversational Discourse Analysis (CDA) identified signs of ideologies expressed in the language of a community such as political judgments or social stereotypes (Fairclough, 1995). Studies on Discourse Analysis (DA) that focused on the discourse as an aspect of language use (Fasold, 1990, p. 65) paved the way to the inclusion of discourse stretches beyond the traditional sentence limit in the ELT teaching materials. Canale (1983) updated Canale and Swain's (1980) CC model to include "discourse competence" in response to suggestions from DA and CDA studies that real time language use involves structures beyond the sentence level and some communicative functions are meaningful when their context and sequence are accounted for. Speakers' intentions, willingness, inferring and supra-segmental features are vital determinants of interpersonal meanings. Llobera (1996) specified the pedagogical entailment of the notion of discourse competence for the ELT classroom. He distinguished between "discourse conveyed in the FLT classroom [input] and discourse generated in the classroom [output]". He further explained that discourse competence is ever developing in and after the teaching and learning process. Discourse markers are indicative of some important concepts in interaction. Specific discourse features that express politeness, register, formality, turn talking and genre exemplify interlocutors'

relationships, their social status, social roles and social distance ( pp. 379-391).

According to Widdowson (1978), the aim of any ELT program became getting “the learner to cope with discourse in one way or another” (p. 146). He further suggested that examples of discourse markers would function as the core around which other communicative functions would rotate and the whole syllabus should proceed from one discourse feature to another.

The notion of discourse competence has had an enormous influence on the Council of Europe framework of language teaching and learning. Text-to-text activities and inferential language practices were viewed as vital techniques to develop learners’ discourse competence. Effective teaching of discourse competence entails specification of the learners’ communicative needs through needs analysis (Van Ek, 1975). Madrid and McLaren (1995) presented a list of the exercises that would help language learners to move from text to text:

- ❖ Completing texts with missing words,
  - Open dialogues,
  - completing a text by choosing the appropriate information from another source,
  - building a text by choosing the most appropriate option in a multiple- choice format
  - laying and simulating,
  - finding mistakes and differences,
  - filling in forms,
  - memorizing and reciting a poem, a song, etc.,
  - analyzing and interpreting discourse elements (metalinguistic activity),

- punctuating texts,
- acting out, for instance, a joke,
- narrating events and expressing sequence with visual support,
- describing with visual support,
- transforming colloquial discourse into narrative discourse, and
- arranging sentences to form texts that describe processes.( p. 197-208)

Cook (1989) delineated a bundle of activities that promote learners discourse competence including turn taking, application of knowledge of narrative structure or identification of cohesive devices including following lexical chains and references. Pérez Martín (1996) delineated some types of exercises that would promote the discourse competence:

- Lexical cohesion devices in context (e.g. use of synonyms)
- Grammatical cohesion devices in context (e.g. ellipsis, logical connectors, parallel structures)
- Identify the clauses that have the thesis statement.
- Oral discourse patterns (e.g. the normal progression of meanings in a casual conversation)
- Link a paragraph with the following one.
- Written discourse patterns (e.g. the normal progression of meanings in a formal letter)
- To be able to work out an introduction/development/conclusion of a piece of oral or written language. (p. 322).

There is a certain commonality in the way discourse competence is recognized in CLT and how it is developed in the different CC models. Hymes (1972) was the first to coin

the term sociocultural competence, and Canale and Swain maintained the same term in their (1980) model, whereas Canale updated model of (1983) added the term “discourse competence” to “sociocultural competence” and Celce-Murcia’s model of (1996) recognized actional/ discourse. These conceptions became more obvious in the post-structural ELT approaches in an interest to teach language use in specific social and cultural contexts. In this charge, Grillo, Pratt and Street (1987) have expressed the need to research and discover the universal forms of speech in different languages in order to determine their similarities and differences.

Views from different models of CC also influenced the pedagogical specification of strategic competence. In Canale and Swain (1980) model, strategic competence refers to a verbal and non-verbal communication events in real time use. Interlocutors employ different strategies to carry out these communication events such as filling in breakdowns in the speech flow due to deficiencies in their communicative competence.

Bachman and Palmer (1996) argued that factors such as personal characteristics, language knowledge and knowledge of the topic influence strategic competence in real time communication. In language learning, strategic competence is the ability of the learner to be aware of communication breakdowns and repair them using strategies that circumnavigate the lack in the language acquirers’ knowledge, whether the missing knowledge is linguistic, discursual, pragmatic or socio-cultural. Canale (1983, p. 11) stated that strategic competence is interpreted in language learning to the learner’s ability “to enhance the effectiveness of communication by e.g., deliberately slow and soften speech for rhetorical effect”. In this charge, Celce-Murcia (2007) suggests that strategic competence is the common denominator for all components of CC: sociolinguistic,

linguistic, formulaic and interactional. The discourse competence, on the other hand, is the general provider that keeps all the other CC components work efficiently. The idea of Canale and Swain (1980) that strategic competence refers to the types of strategic options available for interlocutors to repair communication breakdowns was maintained by the subsequent CC models and formed their pedagogical implications. The first category of these options accounts for the strategies that could be used to compensate for deficiencies in grammatical competence such as paraphrasing grammatical forms that are not part of the speaker's linguistic repertoire or cannot be remembered at the time of communication. The second category pertains to sociolinguistic competence such as how to address people with unidentified social status. Canale and Swain argued that in the SLA classroom practice should include meaningful communication to resemble real time language interaction. Celce-Murcia (1995) provided the most detailed pedagogical specification of strategic competence. She argued that second language acquirers who can make use of certain behaviors are more likely to be better learners than those who lack these behaviors. She divided these behaviors into learning strategies and communication strategies. Celce-Murcia further subdivided the learning strategies into three categories. First, learning strategies include cognitive strategies such as outlining, summarizing, note taking, organizing and reviewing material. Second, metacognitive strategies involve planning one's tasks, preparation, performing self-evaluation and guessing missing knowledge by using context or grammatical clues. Third, memory-related strategies that pertain to the use of hints such as acronyms, rhythms, rhymes, synonyms, images or any other memory stimulating device. The characterization of these communication strategies

included subdividing the broad notion of strategic competence into the following micro-strategies:

- ❖ *Achievement*: strategies of approximation, circumlocution, code switching, miming, etc.
- ❖ *Stalling* or time gaining: using phrases like *where was i? Could you repeat that?*
- ❖ *Self-monitoring*: using phrases that allow for self-repair like *i mean....*
- ❖ *interacting*: these are strategies that include appeals for help/clarification, that involve meaning negotiation, or that involve comprehension and confirmation checks, etc.
- ❖ *Social*: these strategies involve seeking out native speakers to practice with, actively looking for opportunities to use the target language. (p. 50)

Though the natural/ social approaches proponents called for a focus on competences other than the traditional grammatical competence, the structural approach proponents continued to argue for the importance of the grammatical competence even within the CLT approaches. Different CC models used the two terms, grammatical competence and linguistic competence, interchangeably to refer to the linguistic component of the language users' ability, though some CC models used linguistic competence in a more comprehensive sense. In Canale and Swain's (1980) model, grammatical competence involves traditional components related to understanding the language code. For Chomsky (1957), grammatical competence refers to "a grammar of a language purports to a description of the ideal speaker hearer's intrinsic competence" (p. 4). The counterexamples represented by Hymes and later by functional applied linguists maintained that the Chomskyan idealized linguistic competence does not account for the

interaction between form, function and communication and, thus, grammatical competence in actual performance is just one sub-skill that intersects with sociocultural, sociolinguistic, and discoursal knowledge. Savignon (1983) prefers to use the more comprehensive term “linguistic competence” to the more restrictive term “grammatical competence” (p. 36). Pedagogically, linguistic competence is the ability of the learner to recognize and use a wide array of linguistic features including lexical, phonological and morphological. Though it was relegated to a secondary importance in the deep-end CLT approaches, teaching the grammatical competence remains the most controversial issue in ELT

As was mentioned previously in this discussion, the advent of the notion of CC was simultaneous with a growing call to abandon the rule-plus drilling methodology (Lock 1996). This call resulted in a hot debate on the role of grammatical competence in second language learning and teaching and led to a split in the attitudes towards grammar teaching to pro-grammar and anti-grammar teaching. The split in the teaching practices between pro- and anti-grammar teaching reflected a split in theoretical linguistics and SLA research on the place of grammatical competence in second language acquisition. Research in this field is not yet conclusive to convince the two camps, the anti and the pro-grammar teaching, to compromise their differences about the effectiveness and non-effectiveness of a focus- on- form approach in ELT. Despite a consensus among applied linguists, educationalists and language teachers on the essentiality of grammatical competence to ELT in general and the speaking skill in particular, the place of grammar in the ELT syllabus has never been agreed upon. In 2001, Swan argued that “grammar swings in and out of favor, impelled at one end of its cycle by observations that grammar



lessons aren't very effective and at the other end by the realization that not teaching grammar is not very effective either" (p. 203). However, a wealth of research in the 1970s, e.g., Elley, Barham and Lanband William (1976) and Petroskey (1977) reported that even after an extended period of grammar teaching, the results showed no difference neither in the students' language competence nor in their performance. In the light of these emerging research findings, applied linguists questioned the traditional approaches that focused on one aspect of the learners' CC, and approaches that are more natural were gaining preference in the realm of ELT. Thus, social and natural approaches to second language acquisition succeeded, for the first time in the history of ELT, to contextualize the grammatical form in a natural language stretches to enable the learners to use grammar meaningfully and appropriately (Larsen-Freeman, 1991).

The CLT deep-end approached reacted strongly against focusing on grammatical competence in ELT teaching and adopted a balance between the different features of CC though the shallow-end version made a provision for grammar teaching. Results from research on discourse, sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences influenced this shift within CLT (Fraser, 1978; Koike, 1992; Bardovi-Harling, 2000; Félix-Brasdefer, 2008). Thus, applied linguists shifted pedagogical emphasis from methods of teaching to the process of learning and became more aware that learning occurs better in a more collaborative environment.

**CC in theories of second language acquisition (SLA).** The Universal Grammar theory (UG) and Autonomous Induction theory (AI) derived from the Chomskyan Generative Grammar theory (1959, 1987), viewed language acquisition as the cognitive acquisition of the linguistic competence. Input plays a relative role and

environment plays a minor role in the acquisition and /or learning processes. Linguistic competence is not dependent on experience. The language faculty is constrained by an innate human capacity that naturally equipped by “principles and parameters’ (in UG) or ‘features and categories’ (in AI). The different components of grammatical competence (syntax, phonology, morphology, and semantics) are acquired incidentally and unconsciously, thus, instruction has little or no role to play. Some SLA researchers believed that UG and AI provided characterization of second language acquirers’ communicative competence. The term interlanguage, coined by Selinker (1972) was espoused in SLA research to account for “the linguistic competence of L 2 learners and L 2 speakers, (White, 2003, p. 39). SLA research within the UG and IA frameworks sought to prove that interlanguage competence is subject to the same or at least similar constraints that govern native speakers’ competence. Researchers who followed this trend investigated the existence of the logical problem of L 2 acquisition parallel to the logical problem of language acquisition or the problem of poverty of the stimulus in L 1 acquisition. However, many applied linguists, e.g., , Corder (1969,1971), Selinker (1971) and Richards(1971), utilized the concept of interlanguage competence to develop a theory of analyzing the linguistic component of the learners’ errors more than delineating and specifying rules of appropriateness . The debate on whether or not interlanguage competence has the same or similar constraints that govern first language competence is still alive in SLA research. A point to which I will return later in this discussion under “current debate on CC”.

Outside of the UG and IA frameworks, the notion of communicative competence has a tremendous influence on theories of second language acquisition in general and on

theories of foreign language teaching and learning in particular. However, the process of introducing the notion of CC into SLA has passed through different stages before it took its current shape. In the 1970s, there was lack of consensus among applied linguistics on the components of CC. The first initiative to delineate these components in SLA research came from Savignon (1972). She considered linguistic competence as pivotal to CC along with other non-linguistic considerations. However, SLA research embraced the concept of CC as part of a broader trend that reacted to the drawbacks of the ALM. As a result, CLT came into being as an alternative to the traditional, structural, often referred to as non-communicative approaches to ESL and EFL. Critics of that period viewed ALM as a method of teaching the language system, and it did nothing to promote meaning. Thus, Hymes' ideas on sociolinguistics and rules of appropriateness corresponded to notions that redefined the objectives of second and foreign language teaching. Language teaching became not only teaching the system of the language but also teaching the rules of appropriateness. SLA researchers since the 1970s endeavored to narrow down the concept of CC to specify a set of abilities already located or that should be located in the foreign language learner and they started to grapple with the communication repertoire of the learners: what they can and what they cannot do in their new language. The results of SLA research in this sense promoted views that hold that learning languages requires more than learning the grammatical skill, usually the focus of traditional approaches to language teaching. Savignon (1972) represented early trends in the SLA research that attempted to break the concept of CC down into subcategories. She believed that in foreign language teaching, evaluators could test learners' CC by using a set of well-defined criteria. She rated her subjects' performance according to accuracy,

fluency, and effort, amount of communication, suitability and naturalness. The experiment activity included description, reporting, interviews, and discussions. Another study by Leeman and Waverly (1977) used similar criteria to evaluate the components of CC. The subjects had to speak about a particular topic or describe a picture. The researchers tallied the learners' performance as successful or unsuccessful. The overall criteria for evaluation included fluency, comprehensibility and appropriateness. Other parallel studies on the components of CC targeted first language speakers' performance. e.g., Purves and Gavin (1977) assessed English native speakers' CC in the classroom with a focus on the speaking skill. Their criteria for assessment consisted of clarity, accuracy, thoughtfulness and adaptation as subcategories of CC. Despite these early attempts to address the notion of CC in the SLA research, it was not until the 1980s that theories of SLA could set a research agenda to address the notion of CC.

Theories of second language acquisition that are compatible with the notion of CC are numerous; however, only the most dominant ones are cited here. Krashen's (1981) distinction between learning and acquisition drew the attention to the unconscious acquisition process when language is used for real time communication, whereas conscious grammatical knowledge is the product of instruction. Krashen (1981, 1985, 1987, 2003) argued that effective language learning is the result of using language communicatively and not through the practice of the language skills. Subsequent research built on Long's theory of social interaction and viewed interaction as a context in which input is modified through meaning negotiation (Gass, 1997). In the past 20 years, SLA research showed increasing interest in the role of input and interaction in acquisition. SLA research suggested that contextualized input facilitated learning and made it

meaningful (Gass, 1997, 2003; Gass, Mackey, & Pica; Long, 1996; 1998). Furthermore, SLA empirical studies showed that interactive input that resembles real time communication is facilitative to acquisition and leads to meaningful output (Ellis, Tanaka, & Yamazaki, 1994; Loschky, 1994; Polio & Gass, 1998; Swain & Lapkin, 1998). Practically oriented SLA researchers made considerable effort to prescribe methods of how to integrate real time interaction into the ELT teaching materials (Gonzalez-Lloret, 2003; Jacobs & Farrell, 2001; Van Lier, 1996). In this vein, the input-processing model of SLA proposed that internalized L 2 forms result from learners' comprehension of the message's meaning and from interactional modifications during meaning negotiation (Krashen, 1980, 1985; Long, 1983, 1996, 2005, 2006). Pica (1994) agreed that modifying and restructuring interaction occur when learners and their interlocutors anticipate, perceive, or experience difficulties in message comprehensibility, and this process is essential for effective L 2 learning. Input modification devices deemed beneficial including repetitions, confirmations, reformulations, comprehension checks, recasts, confirmation checks, and clarification requests (Long, 1996). These specifications correspond to the four components of the notion of CC: the linguistic, strategic, discourse and pragmatic components. More focused SLA research on interaction and negotiation of meaning suggested that 'strategic competence' is used more in native speakers (NS) and non-native speakers (NNS) interactions than in NS-NS interactions (Pica, 1994). Other research on what is known as "Interactional Hypothesis", e.g., Long (1985, 1996, 2005, 2006) relates comprehensible input to interaction in real time settings.

SLA research that embraced the notion of CC also focused on the role of meaningful interaction in language teaching and learning. Sleiger (1977) found out that

those second language learners with interactional opportunities during the input process outperformed learners with no interactional opportunities in actual language use. Students with no interactional opportunities failed to proceed independently with the communication process, whereas those with interactional opportunities were able to test new hypotheses about their second language. Such SLA research findings encouraged applied linguists to suggest that ESL and EFL programs should target learners' communicative competence to prepare competent language users.

Radical interactional theories of SLA built on Sociocultural Theory of Language Acquisition (SCT) that viewed language as a tool of thought and acquisition within process social interaction process. Language acquisition occurs best through conversations and interactive communications. The sociocultural theory developed from the fundamental concepts of the Russian psychologist L.S Vygotsky. Theoretically, the SCT argues that cultural artifacts as well as cultural concepts and activities act as mediators in the human mental function (Ratner, 2002). This broad view of the influence of culture on learning allows for a framework in which the learning capacity utilizes the available cultural artifacts and develops new ones when needed to promote different learning abilities. Lantof and Thorne (2006) explained that in practical terms, learning is an interactional process that takes place in sociolinguistic and sociocultural accumulative settings “such as family life, peer group interaction and institutional contexts (schooling, organized sport activities and workplaces” (p. 201)

SCT views language as one of the most important mediators between the individual and the environment. According to Lantof and Throne (2006), two constructs of the SCT that are pertinent to SLA are relevant to this discussion. The first construct is

mediation. It is a central construct of the SCT and it accounts for “the higher level cultural tools (i.e., language, literacy) which act to mediate the relationship between the individual and the social material world” (p. 202). The second construct of SCT is internalization, defined as “the process through which cultural artifacts, such as language, takes on a psychological function” (p. 207) Mediation has two forms: mediation through regulation and mediation by symbolic Artifacts.

Results from child-language acquisition research supported the principle of mediation through regulation within the broader mediation construct. By acquiring their first language, children are also reshaping their “biological perception into cultural perception concepts” (p. 203). This process is sponsored by the adults’ linguistic environment that provides the model to which the child’s thinking and actions are subordinated. This subordination promotes and develops the children’s physical and mental abilities to higher levels (Luria & Yudovich, 1972). Children consistently check, modify and develop their behavioral processes through acquiring adult language. Children also regulate their own social and biological interaction through the mediation of language that goes through three stages: object regulation, self-regulation and other regulation.

First, object regulation involves the children’s use of objects in their environment to develop problem-solving skills such as the use of blocks to solve math problems; second, other regulation in which the mediation comes from more proficient sources such as older children, adults, instructors, parents, siblings, coaches and so on. Two terms related to the concept of other regulations were imported to SLA research and SL teaching: Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and scaffolding. According to Vygotsky

1987), ZPD refers to “the distance between the actual developmental levels as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance, or in collaboration with more capable peers”. According to Lantolf and Thorne (2008), ZPD has a tremendous impact on SLA research in general and in applied linguistics in particular. The ZPD construct brought about the notion of assisted performance that maintained that what a learner can do with assistance today form the basis of what this learner is capable of doing as an independent language user in the future. Unlike the traditional measures and testing tools that evaluate learners’ status quo competence, the ZPD provided tools by which evaluators can predict learners’ potential communication ability.

The idea of the ZPD, Figure (3) was based on another Vygotsky (1978) principle that any cultural development has two faces:

Any function in the child’s cultural development appears twice, or on two planes. First it appears on the social plane, and then in the psychological plane. First it appears between people as an interpsychological category, and then within the child as an intrapsychological category. This is equally true with regard to voluntary attention, logical memory, the formation of concepts, and the development of volition. [I]t goes without saying that internalization transforms the process itself and changes its structure and functions. Social relations or relations among people genetically underlie all higher functions and their relationships. (p. 57)



Corden's (2000) diagram, Figure 3, shows the role of the teacher and the learner within the zone of proximate development, whereas in the center of the interaction, the independent learners can work free of any intervention.

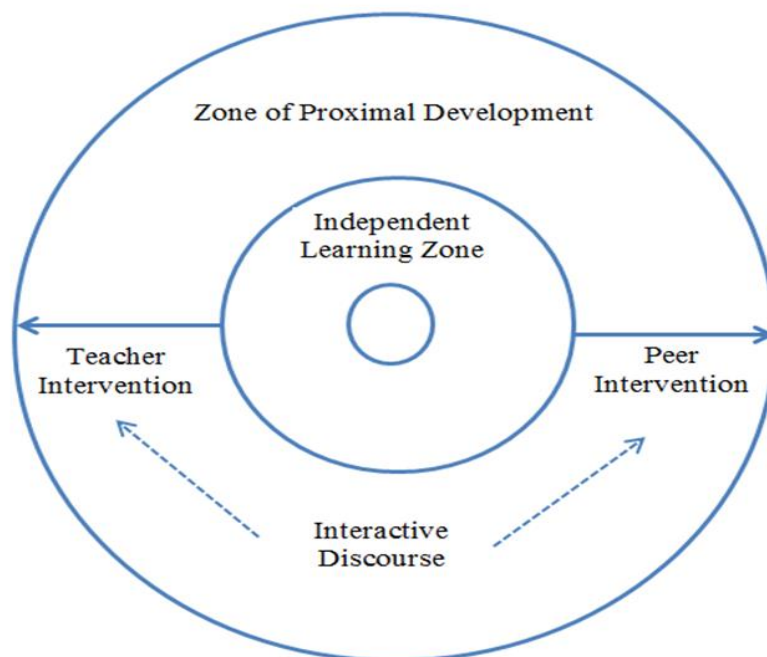


Figure 3. Independent and Potential Learning Zones (Corden, 2000, p. 9)

Vygotsky (1987) viewed learning a language as more of learning social norms and cultural patterns than internalizing linguistic patterns. He argued, "Human learning presupposes a specific social nature and a process by which children grow into the intellectual life of those around them (p. 88). The impact of the ZPD on SLA research is that learning is viewed as a social collaborative process. For learners' CC to be promoted in a foreign or a second language, teaching and learning should be a collaborative process

through learners' participation in socioculturally and institutionally organized practices (p. 211).

The other term that was related to the SCT principle of other objects is scaffolding. Within functional approaches in SLA, the concept-oriented approach recognized different levels of analysis: lexical, morphological, syntactic, discourse and pragmatic that are used by learners as sources of building up their messages. This trend of research examined all available means that make up learners ability of expression (Sato, 1984). Research on this area also focused on how learners express specific concepts and what devices are used to perform communication (Von Sutterheim & Klein, 1987). Concept-oriented approach suggested that great deal of language acquisition is attributed to the permanent reorganization of the balance among means of learners' expression( lexical, morphological, syntactic, discorsal, pragmatic) and the earliest resources such as interactional internalized examples provided by more advanced interlocutors (teachers, peers, native speakers. etc.). The interplay between means of expression and conversational instances promotes pragmatic, sociocultural and sociolinguistic competences (Meisel, 1987). In real time communications, proficient language learners and native speakers function as guidance through "scaffolding" and meaning negotiation to the less proficient speakers.

Adequate scaffolding leads to self-regulation that refers to the ability to perform an activity with less or no external mediation (Wrench, 1998). The term is used in language acquisition to indicate that a speaker is self-regulated when he or she can use the language independently. Self-regulation is the byproduct of internalizing social and functional repertoires. However, self-regulation is never an established goal even in first

language acquisition. Language acquirers check their product time and again for lapses, pitfalls; slip of the tongue and for breaches of the code due to fatigue, anxiety and memory failures and these checks can only be effective when language is functioning in its social and cultural context (Frawley, 1977).

***Mediation by symbolic Artifacts.*** Vygotsky (1987) SCT accounts not only for the material mediation of physical tools that we use to control our environment, but also for symbols as tools that “serve as an auxiliary means to control and organize our biologically endowed psychological processes” (Lantolf & Throne, 2007, p. 205). Symbolic mediation explains the unique human ability to react voluntarily and intentionally to stimuli considering variable actions. Mediation by symbolic artifact principle addresses features of the strategic competence. Vygotsky (1987) reasoned that planning, assessing aspects of the situation, considering possible courses of actions enable human beings to take control and change their environment. One of the tools in which we use these actions to control this environment is language, and within language performance, private speech is one of the most effective tools to control and regulate human mental functions. The SCT views language as the most effective cultural symbolic artifact that helps humans to communicate among themselves and with the world around them. Vygotsky believed that private speech, the inward utilization of speech to appropriate social communicative patterns and meanings, acts as a regulator of our mental functions. SLA research, e.g., (Dlaze & Berk, 1999; Wertsch, 1985) focused on the role of private speech in L 2 learners. This research revealed that private speech in L 2 learning provided different linguistic options such as syntactic brevity “come yet” for “did he come yet”, or “has he come yet”. The shared knowledge between the speaker and

the hearer cuts down on much of the unnecessary grammatical structures that may pose some difficulty and hinder L 2 learner to perform naturally in the target language. Teaching private speech as a communicative strategy would promote L 2 earners' strategic competence. Frawley (1977) states that social interaction is full of reduced private speech forms that utilize minimum lexical and grammatical forms "there" (the task is done), "let's see" (need more time to think). In the context of this study, the notion of private speech will be treated as feature of strategic competence.

Theories of second language acquisition discussed so far endorsed that acquiring one competence is not sufficient to master a language, and the social world is the main source of all human developmental skills. Teaching language through communication and addressing the different features of the learners' CC are essential for learning to happen. SLA theories and research endorsed that input is crucial to SLA acquisition and that this input must ensure active engagement; this engagement entails approaching language learning activities as sub-goals that would eventually lead to preparing competent language users. Active engagement also entails focusing on the different features of CC that are considered sub-goals to the higher goals of enabling learners to perform in the target language to achieve communicative functions such as using their English language speaking skill to be successful participants in global activities.

Although instruction has a vital role in acquiring the different features of CC, much of the social aspects of language are learned incidentally when language teaching is contextualized in the target language's social and cultural frameworks. Lantolf & Thorne, (2008) argued that SLA research informed us that "learner's output (speech) often follows predictable paths with predicable stage in the acquisition of a given structure and

that there are limits to instruction on SLA”, (p. 218). Learning is also variable, the learners’ output is characterized by learners’ systems and subsystems, converse to the traditional views that learners’ interlanguage system is made up primarily by developing the grammatical competence. So far, SLA research has promoted that second language acquisition would be more successful when re-contextualized in theories of social interaction. It has also suggested that there are commonalities between first and second language acquisition as regulators of cognitive processes, cultural and social aspects of L1 can be used to teach L2 with reference to peculiarities of the L2 culture, while forms of L1 have only a limited effect on L2 learning. SLA language acquisition research and approaches to second language acquisition that adopted the notion of CC reformulated and redefined the content and methodology of teaching the oral skills.

### **CC and Teaching the Oral Skills**

Speaking is the most ubiquitous skill in our daily interaction. In its social context, speaking establishes mutual understanding, maintains social identity, and it is a tool to express different speech acts (Thornbury & Slade, 2006). For Gumperz (1999), speaking is a cooperative activity that involves “contributions, assumptions, expectations, and interpretations of the participants’ utterances” (p. 101). Nunan (1999) viewed speaking as a negotiated and self-regulated activity. Thornbury and Slade (2006) referred to speaking as a combination of complex segments of frequent turns containing phrases and clauses. For Dornyei & Thurrell (1994), speaking is an interactive cooperative activity governed by rules and routines (p. 42).

Because of its multifunctional and multifaceted role in daily interactions, speaking is probably the most complex skill. Conversational routines such as openings

and closings turn taking, and gap-filling strategies are among other features that contribute to the complexity of the speaking skill. Applegate (1975) argued that another source of complexity stems from the nature of speaking being guided by a variation of communicative strategies and diverse speech mechanisms. The use of silence, stress, intonation, formulaic language, new/old information, norms and patterns of interaction are culturally bound and context sensitive. Conversational interaction is also subject to the influence of paralinguistic features such pitch change, the use of body language, conversation gaps, voice level and tempo. The common factor between the aforementioned definitions is that speaking is a multisensory multifaceted complex social skill with interpersonal and intrapersonal peculiarities.

Because of its multifaceted nature, speaking was informed by numerous studies in other fields. Linguistics, psychology, anthropology, and sociology have studied speaking and its input channel listening, and presented different definitions for what speaking is. To explore the nature of communication, Hymes (1961) proposed integrating linguistics and ethnography to explore the ethnography of communication. Previously, linguists occupied themselves with the description and analysis of the language code decontextualized from its social and cultural environment. In his proposed framework, Hymes shifted linguistic studies toward studying linguistic variations within the same speech community with regard to different contexts. Hymes and Gumperz's (1962) ethnographical studies focused on the communication patterns and strategies of certain ethnic groups, their shared knowledge, social status and their social relationships. Carbaugh (1989) described ethnography of communication as “an approach, a perspectives and a method to and is the study of culturally distinctive means and meaning

of communication” (p. 115). Hymes and Gumperz (1962) introduced the concept of ethnography of communication to account for the pragmatic, sociocultural and sociolinguistic variations that the speakers employ to maintain meaningful communication. These variations are due to geography, social status, gender, age, and difference in the educational level (Matel, 2009). The purpose of Hymes’ approach was to study the interaction between language and culture and to decipher the complexity of the communication events. His approach sought a sociolinguistic description of the communicative patterns in order to establish a unified theory of language use that incorporates the non-linguistic aspects of human communication by contextualizing it in its cultural framework. Hymes (1972) described his sociolinguistic approaches as “a necessary part of the progress toward a model of sociolinguistic description, formulation of universal sets of features and relations and explanatory theories” (p. 43). The ethnographical theory does not eliminate the role of linguistics in analyzing the communicative event; rather, language and linguistics are shaped by ethnography of communication.

The concept of ethnography of communication has its great influence on redefining and teaching the oral skills (listening and speaking). Pedagogues, applied linguists and ELT experts came to the tenet that more is involved in promoting the learners’ communicative competence than teaching them how to construct grammatically correct sentences. The view originated in theoretical linguistics that human language is performed in “a homogeneous speech community” (Chomsky, 1972, p. 112), which is compatible with the traditional approaches of ELT, is not valid any more since ethnographical studies suggested that heterogeneity rather than homogeneity is the

dominant feature of the speech community. Heterogeneity in the speech community accounts for variations in the cultural behaviors that produce systematic sociolinguistic patterns of communication. Sociocultural studies viewed linguistic variations as context-bound, unlike the formal linguistic approaches that viewed variations in any speech community as linguistically bound and context-free. Ethnographically, meaning and context are interactively interdependent when carrying out communicative acts. The pedagogical implication of these views to ELT was that classroom practices should encourage learners to interact in the different ways in which speakers interact beyond the rules of grammar in order to be competent speakers of the target language. Under insights from ethnographical and sociolinguistic studies, CLT relegated the grammatical competence to a secondary importance within the general theory of CC, and thus, new features of learners' competence appeared (sociolinguistic, pragmatic, discoursal strategic). CLT proponents replaced explicit grammar teaching with explicit teaching of what Hymes (1972) called "rules of speaking", represented by a series of wh/ words: "when to speak, when not ... what to talk about with whom, when, where, in what manner" (p. 277), in order to maintain conversational rules of appropriateness.

These views was reflected in the language classroom practice through emphasis was shifted from accuracy to fluency and to achieve natural language use, "whether or not it results in native-speaker-like comprehension or production [of the target language]" (Brumfit, 1984, p. 56). Classroom tasks also focused on more natural and authentic conversational sessions that are valid pedagogical means to develop learners "communicative ability" (Brumfit, 1981, p. 46). Radical applied linguists called for more controlled conversational classroom practice that promotes social and interactional



aspects of actual language use. Thus, adopting the notion of CC in CLT led to introducing new points of focus to the teaching of speaking to promote the different features of the learners' communicative competence. Tylor and Woflson (1987 reported that after the recognition of CC principles in teaching, the focus was shifted towards "Instruction in linguistic etiquette" (p. 36). Scott, (1981) argued more emphasis was put on teaching transactional speaking styles such as "role plays and games were important because they present learners with the opportunity to practice speaking under conditions that are as close as possible to those of normal communication( p. 77). These shifts led to changes in the content of the classroom conversation material and practices according to Thornbury and Slade (2006) tended to be "transactional rather than interactional and tasks tend to be structured rather than free" (p. 256). CLT pedagogical practices viewed speaking as a dual function skill: It communicates interpersonal and transactional functions (Nunan, 1999). Interpersonal interaction refers to the daily conversational activity in order to perform social functions, whereas the interlocutors use the transactional function to perform communicative acts such as requesting different services. Thornbury and Slade (2006) noted that this distinction is theoretical, the two purposes, interpersonal and transactional, are intertwined in real time communication, and the pedagogical distinction is meant for language learning awareness.

Functional views to the speaking skill also reoriented the goals of teaching and learning this skill. Real time communication involves intentional language use to achieve certain communicative goals through a speaking-listening process. Gofman (1967) divided these goals into high-level goals such as facial reactions and low-level goals such as performing speech acts. Conversational acts are not random and the speakers'

messages and at the other end of the channel a recipient will decode the message and resend another one. To do so, both the speakers and the listeners need basic communicative competence abilities. Linguistic competence is responsible for encoding and decoding phonological, morphological, and syntactic elements, whereas the non-linguistic aspects of the message such as pragmatic, sociolinguistic, discoursal and strategic are sub-competencies that interlocutors should be aware of to avoid breakdowns or sometimes even complete shutdowns of conversations. The pedagogical implication of this view is that speaking involves more than the linguistic competence. Learners' awareness of the social and cultural aspects of the target language is crucial to their CC development. Other issues such as how these aspects differ from their first language are also pivotal to building up the learners' speaking proficiency (Applegate, 1975). Bygate (1987) argued that speaking is multifaceted involving not only knowing "how to assemble sentences in the abstract" (p. 3), but also "how to produce them and adapt to the circumstances". In practical terms, speakers need to know how to make instant decisions and proper adjustment to work out unexpected problems that may hinder the conversation flow. The notion of communicative competence reoriented the focus of teaching the speaking skill from accuracy to fluency. Speaking classes became guided by elements of conversational analysis and sociolinguistic aspects more than by features of linguistic competence alone. Reorientation in theoretical linguistics, ethnographical studies and other related disciplines produced three main approaches of teaching speaking: the direct approach, the indirect approach and the indirect plus approach.

## **Approaches to Teaching the Oral Skills**

**The direct approach.** This approach draws on traditional methods that target the micro skills of speaking through promoting the grammatical competence. The development of the conversational skills is the product of a focus on form, thus, language input in this approach included explicit practice of linguistic information in order to develop learners' accuracy rather than fluency. According to Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei and Thurrell, the direct approach in teaching speaking was an "attempt to provide focused instruction on the main rules of conversational or discourse-level grammar e.g., pragmatic regularities and politeness strategies, communication strategies, and various elements of conversational structure such as openings, closings, and the turn-taking system)" (p. 141). Cook (1989) argued that learners in the direct approach might unconsciously internalize some mechanisms, such as supra-segmental features, as a byproduct rather than as a direct product of the teaching process since features other than the grammatical competence are not the focus of this approach.

**The indirect approach.** The indirect approach, on the other hand, viewed oral competence as the direct product of interaction. This approach develops learners speaking CC by "planning a conversational program around the specific micro skills, strategies, and processes that are involved in fluent conversation" (Richards, 1990, p. 77). The indirect approach is affiliated with CLT practices since the 1970s in which real time communication strategies were brought into the classroom in a form of communicative situations. Schmidt (1990) pointed out that the L 2 learner's communicative skills acquisition occurs incidentally after being engaged in a series of communicative activities such as role-plays, problem-solving tasks, or information-gap activities. Learners are

expected to develop, unconsciously, different features of CC such as strategic competence, pragmatic competence and sociocultural competence by “work[ing] these [features] out for themselves through extensive communicative task engagement” (Celce-Murcia, 1997, p. 141) The direct approach is based on the assumption that meaningful classroom interaction leads to develop learners’ speaking communicative competence. Counterviews, such as that of Nunan (1999) maintained that mismanagement of the classroom activities might lead to “reproduction of utterances rather than meaningful expressions” (p. 420), thus it might lead to hybrid rather than competent language users’ production.

**The indirect plus approach.** The third approach is the indirect plus approach (Thornbury & Slade, 2008). This approach dominates current practices of teaching the speaking skill by integrating direct and indirect learning approaches through “alternating cycles of performance and instruction”. Trends within CLT such as task-based approach allowed for episodic focus on form to raise the learners awareness to essential components of the linguistic competence (Doughty and Williams, 1998). This trend was the resultant from the influence of SLA theories, discussed previously in this chapter. These theories suggested that learners CC could better be developed through balancing its different features: linguistic, pragmatic, strategic, discoursal and sociocultural. Cazden (1996) proposed the term ‘whole language plus’ to refer to the integration of the notions of acquisition and learning. Some features of the speaking skill such as accuracy and meaningfulness of the message need what Cazden calls “instructional detours” to promote the different aspects of the learners’ communicative competence by focusing on individual parts of the message. “The idea of instructional detours preserves what I

believe to be essential: the prior establishment of a main road of meaningful language use, to which the detour is a momentary diversion when needed” (Cazden, p. 14). In the context of this study Thornbury and Slade (2006), term ‘indirect plus approach’ will be used to refer to this approach. According to Thornbury and Slade, indirect approach plus which allows for more flexibility than the deep-end CLT approaches that banned the explicit focus on the grammatical competence. They argue that alternating acquisition through conversation practice with periodic instructional detours would work better to promote learners’ communicative competence.

In the indirect plus approach speaking is taught as a spoken discourse through practices that promote learners’ autonomy and learner-centered interactions alternating content oriented and form oriented detours to address the different features of the learners’ communicative competence. This approach strives to balance the different features of the learners’ communicative competence to achieve conversational competence. The linguistic competence is represented by focus on its sub-components as illustrated in the different models of CC discussed earlier (pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary), whereas the other non-linguistic competences (sociocultural , discorsal, pragmatic, strategic) are focused on through teaching speaking as a transactional interaction by which interlocutors perform their different communicative speech acts. Other non-linguistic features of communicative competence as delineated by Hymes (1972) under the term “appropriateness” are taught in this approach through emphasizing sociocultural norms of communication. Conversational features such as the function of pauses, interlocutors’ rolls, conversational situations, social status, and formulaic phrases

are practiced in the indirect plus approach to achieve the balance between the linguistic and non-linguistic aspects of conversational interaction in the target language classrooms.

The combination of the linguistic and non-linguistic competences in teaching speaking implemented through practices that maintain learners' autonomy and communicative interactional tasks would promote teaching the oral skills as a spoken discourse. Systematic consciousness raising activities in the different features of the speaking skill, whether linguistic or non-linguistics through specifications of meaningful input would compensate in the foreign language classroom for the lack of real time interaction (Celce-Murcia, Dornyei, & Thurrell, 1995; Thornbury & Slade 2006; Willis 1996). In this charge, teacher-learner collaboration is the focal point in specifying the conversational content of the intended input. Occasional rearrangements and reorientations of the input might be a real need to motivate learning and convince the learners of the immediate relevance of their classroom practices to real time communication (Gibbons as cited in Thornbury & Slade, 2006, p. 313).

## **Conclusion**

Since its advent in the 1960s, the notion of CC is of central importance to second language acquisition. Educationalists and pedagogues looked for a quality of second language learners' CC to use language as a means of communication. Language learning is deemed important worldwide under transformations by globalization. In this context, learners' second language competence is not restricted to the linguistic competence, but redefined as the ability to carry out social interactions at all possible levels. For learners to be competent language users, they should be able to overcome cultural, social and communication obstacles in their L 2 performance. To do so, they should develop a

bundle of skills as the product of recognizing different components of the learners' CC: grammatical, discoursal, sociocultural, sociolinguistic, pragmatic and strategic. Thus the notion of language skills in L 2 teaching and learning was redefined with regard to teaching the oral skills to account for social and cultural aspects of L 2 learning. Oral skill pedagogy looked at these skills from a social and interactional perspective in the light of effectiveness and appropriateness criteria. Communication skills can only flourish by developing a wide range of related social, cognitive and sociocultural skills. The specification of these skills in the pedagogical arena recognized a number of verbal and nonverbal interaction skills. The concept of CC has contributed a great deal to the pedagogical program of L 2 acquisition in general and oral skill acquisition in particular. Modern language teaching approaches such as CLT regarding language teaching as teaching a number of processes and factors after suggestions from SLA research and CC models in applied linguistics that endorsed the notion of CC in L 2 acquisition. Although the notion of CC was addressed by many SLA theories and produced a number of models in applied linguistics, in essence, these models and theory complement each other and endorse that there are elements other than the traditional grammatical competence to be mastered if the objective of teaching the oral skills is to teach language for communication. The convergence of these theories, models and approaches within the CC frameworks produced the communicative language teaching approach to second language acquisition that endorsed the social and interactional dimensions of second language acquisition.

### **Chapter 3: Methods and Research Design**

The purpose of this study was to examine how the features of communicative competence (CC) are included and taught to the English majors in a foreign language teaching settings. The focus was on the integration of the CC features (linguistic, sociolinguistic, pragmatic and strategic) in the material and teaching practices intended to teach the oral skills (listening & speaking) to English majors at the department of English, university of Benghazi/Libya. In order to tap into the process of how these features are tackled in the teaching material and teaching methodology, this study used instructor questionnaires, head of the department questionnaire, student self -assessment grid/descriptors and student questionnaires. The study also used material evaluation, including criteria for evaluating the teaching material and the oral skills testing strategies and techniques. This chapter describes the overall design of the study and details the research tools used to collect the data pertinent to the problem under study. In addition, this chapter describes the different types of evaluation in education and specifies the criteria for the design and selection of the oral skills teaching material. The chapter also aims at describing the study's settings and the participants' characteristics.

#### **The Study Setting**

**The university.** This study took place at the Department of English, University of Benghazi, Libya. The 2013 university website states that the aim of the university is “to develop human civilization, and to broaden the horizon of human knowledge. The University of Benghazi also aims for greater contribution towards economic and social development”. The university student population is “approximately 80,000 undergraduate students as well as 3,000 graduate students. They study in nine faculties (75 academic



sections/departments). The number of professors who teach at the university is 3,000 with approximately 370 teaching assistants”. The Faculty (College) of Arts was founded in 1950 and the Department of English Language and Literature was one of its early functioning departments

The Department of English Language and Literature was one of the early sections of the college of Arts. It was composed of one division, the English Language and Literature, and then the Division of Translation was added. Students specialize in one of the divisions in the third year and they study scientific and practical courses. The practical part is taught in the language labs, whereas the theoretical part focuses on grammar, reading, writing, literature, and linguistics and research methods as well as on practical courses. The department website states that the department endeavors to provide the community with specialists in the field of the English language and translation, to meet the demands of the labor market and to contribute to building bridges of knowledge and culture between people of different cultures. The Department also aims at preparing graduates to meet the country’s needs to specialists who are able of accessing the English language and literature. The English department seeks to promote participation in international conferences in the field of languages, translation, and specialized scientific seminars.

This information is important to this study as it paints the picture of what type of teaching material should be implemented and what type of foreign language education should be adopted in this institution to achieve the aforementioned goals. Although English majors study other English courses, developing their oral skills is crucial to communicate successfully in all their English classes and to fulfill the deferent

communicative purposes where English is needed outside of the classroom not only for academic purposes but also for different job requirements. This notion was expressed in a number of studies, e.g., Rosling and Ward (2002), and Vasavakul (2006). The importance of developing the English major oral skills was also expressed by the departments' focus on the oral skills where the course stays with the student for three years through the different levels: Listening and speaking A, B ,and C. However, with this emphasis on the oral skills comes the need to develop the other skills of reading and writing. The English Department has also to focus on skills other than the oral to elevate the low competence of those students who come to the department with just basic knowledge of English. Though most of the English department student population comes from English specialty high schools, the department's policy also affords students from other non-English specialties to join the program.

**The English Department.** Examining the English department showed it has graduate and undergraduate programs in English. There are 51 professors within the department, of which 14 are on Ph.D. scholarships to the USA, Australia and Great Britain. The department's faculty is responsible for teaching graduate and undergraduate students, in addition to teaching service courses to non-English majors in other departments. Seven instructors teach the oral skills in the department, 2 of whom are PhD holders, whereas the other 5 are MA holders. Developing the oral communication skills has a very high priority as stated in the course description. The objective of the oral skill courses is "developing the students' ability to understand real-life spoken English in both academic and social contexts, to understand different speaking styles and to develop speaking skills that help students take part in academic and everyday language". The

course objective statements are loaded with general terms such as ‘real time spoken English’, ‘speaking styles’, and ‘speaking skills’ that need more pedagogical specifications. This point will be discussed further in the data analysis chapter.

## **Methodology**

The methodology in this study comprises two parts: the theoretical framework and the practical process of data collection

**Theoretical framework.** The theoretical background on the emergence and development of the notion of CC in ELT was covered in details in the literature review; however, it is of relevance here to relate the notion of CC specifically to the oral skills to specify the pedagogical implications of the notion of CC to teaching and learning the oral skills. As was mentioned in the literature review, the formulation of the notion of CC in language teaching is the result of the works of Canale and Swain (1980), Swain (1983), Bachman (1987), Celce-Murcia (1985, 1987, 2007), Bachman and Palmer (1996), and Savignon (1983). This study focused on the notion of CC as specified in these models with regard to the teaching, learning and testing of the oral skills in order to investigate the integration, teaching and testing of the features of the notion of CC. These different models collectively recognize four main components of CC that acquirers should master to survive second language communication.

First, sociolinguistic competence includes knowing appropriate sociocultural rule of language use and of discourse. This entails teaching and learning situational social scenarios where the language is put into effect in its social context. Utterances need to be contextualized in natural environment; the learners need to be trained to understand the rules of participation, and functions in real time interaction and in the information

exchange process during communication. Only socially contextualized language can be judged as appropriate or inappropriate (Brown, 2000). For Bachman (1990), sociolinguistic competence involves discourse features such as formality, registers, politeness, metaphor, in addition to cultural aspects of language interaction. In a more detailed account of the sociolinguistic competence, Boersma (2001) argues that learning this competence is a continual process even in one's first language. First and second language speakers similarly need to update this competence frequently to be able to engage in meaningful interactions. As Boersma puts it, acquiring the sociolinguistic competence means knowing how "to give every person his or her dues". This goes in line with what sociolinguistic competence meant to Hymes(1972, 0 "when to speak, when not, what to talk about with whom, when, where and in what manner" (p. 277).

Second, pragmatic competence, pedagogically defined by Crystal (1997) as:

The study of language from the point of view of users, especially for the choices they make, the constraints they encounter in using language in social interactions and the effects their use of language has on other participants in the act of communications". (p 301)

Olshtein (1994) describes pragmatic competence as an "actional competence" and he contextualized it in the general framework of speech act theory (Austin, 1962). Kasper (2001) argues that communicative actions include not only speech acts such as apologizing, complaining, complimenting, and requesting, but also performing a variety of interactional discourse and engaging in speech events of different length and density (p. 2) With regard to spoken discourse, Leech (1990) and Thomas (as cited in Kasper, 2001) subcategorized pragmatics into pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics.

Pragmalinguistics refers to the pragmatic strategies employed in interpersonal communication to convey a variation in meaning. Pragmalinguistic pragmatics involves a wide variety of communicative acts such as routines, habits, directness and indirectness in addition to the available linguistic options for the interlocutors to soften or intensify their interaction. Kasper (2001) argues that the variation in the two forms of apology “*Sorry* and *I’m absolutely devastated—could you possibly find it in your heart to forgive me?*” is just a variation in the Pragmalinguistic resources that the speaker employed in the second form. Leech (1990) states that sociopragmatics is the specification of the sociological requisites of the communicative action, (p. 10). Different speech communities assess speaker-hearer social status differently, thus, sociopragmatics is about appropriateness with regard to the relation between the social and linguistic behaviors. An awareness of this relation should be part of the second language acquirers’ communicative competence.

The third component of communicative competence recognized by ESL and EFL pedagogy is the strategic competence. In spoken discourse, it is the ability of the second or foreign language speaker to maneuver with language to compensate for lack of knowledge (Celce- Murcia 2007; Cohen, 1996; Savignon, 1983). Strategic competence comes forward when speakers suffer conversational breakdowns due to imperfect linguistic, discourse or sociolinguistic competences. Speakers with strategic competence are able of surviving conversations even beyond their communicative competence by means of explaining, paraphrasing, defining or describing the topic to keep the conversation going. Learners should be taught how to compensate for the shortcomings

of their knowledge in real time communication and those who acquire these skills can be characterized as having acquired strategic competence.

The fourth component of the CC is the grammatical or linguistic competence that connects the aforementioned competences. Thornbury, 1999 argued that grammatical competence “from a learner’s perspective, is the ability both to recognize and produce well-formed sentences in an essential part of learning a second language” (p. 3). In this study, grammatical competence was looked at within the general framework of social interaction theories, as a device employed to serve communicative functions (Long, 1996; Vygotsky, 1978). The integration and teaching of the grammatical competence will also be evaluated in light of critical discourse analysis theory (CDA) (Hesmondhalgh, 2006; Wodak, 1998, 2006). In this vein, grammatical competence is viewed as the factor that characterizes the structure of sentences to intertwine with other competences to get the final interactional product that is acceptable within a certain linguistic practice and speech community to address social issues such as race, gender, identity. Grammatical competence is conceived in this study as a shuttle between the different competences to enable the learners to achieve the level of accuracy needed to expedite and enhance the fluency required to carry out successful interactions in their L 2.

### **Practical Framework**

This study used a qualitative / quantitative approach to obtain data on the integration, teaching and testing of the features of the notion of communicative competence regarding the oral skills. This study used integrated qualitative / quantitative approach to collect and analyze the data. Mixed methodological designs in research enable the researcher to maximize the process of data analysis by increasing the level and

scope of analytical tools (Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Mixed methods are a third option to get results based on both numbers and words (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 17)

Greene, Caracelli and Graham (1989) list five rationales for integrating a qualitative/quantitative approaches in research:

- ❖ Triangulation: Seeking convergence and corroboration of results from different methods and designs studying the same phenomenon;
- ❖ Complementarity: seeking elaboration, enhancement, illustration, and clarification of the results from one method with results from the other method;
- ❖ Initiation: discovering paradoxes and contradictions that lead to a re-framing of the research question;
- ❖ Development: using the findings from one method to help inform the other method;
- ❖ Expansion: seeking to expand the breadth and the range of research by using different methods for different inquiry components (p. 259)

Mixed methods in social science research are defined as a technique that “mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study” (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 17). The mixed approach is more relevant to this study since the main purpose was to evaluate, describe and report the pedagogical manipulation of the CC features in a foreign language teaching environment.

As described in the definition of the qualitative research approach, this study investigated the incorporation teaching, learning and testing of the notion of CC in the teaching material and teaching practices at the English department, Benghazi University.

The focus was on how the different features of the notion of CC (sociocultural, pragmatic, strategic, linguistic) are manipulated in the oral skills teaching material ; how do the teachers perceive the notion of CC and how do the English major students perceive their oral skills development with regard to their communicative needs and what actually is taught to them. The study also looked at how the notion of CC was tested at the end of the semester. The data collection process in this study employed three data collection research tools: Material evaluation (course description, textbook, testing material), questionnaires (head of the department, instructors, students) and student self - assessment grid/descriptors.

### **Instruments of Data Collection**

**Material evaluation.** ELT materials are integral aids to learning. In teaching the oral skills, these materials could be traditional textbooks, electronic (visual, auditory) or both. Whether traditional or electronic, ELT teaching materials function as the main source of input to the language learner, especially in EFL settings. Tomlinson (1998) assigns four different roles to any teaching material: instructional, experiential, elicitive or exploratory. Materials are instructional when they are informative about the language. The focus is usually on the linguistic aspects of language to promote linguistic competence. When teaching materials offer more opportunities for language use, they are experiential. Teaching materials that endeavor to promote the different features of CC are experiential since their purpose is targeting the different aspects of language use by contextualizing the target language in its social environment. The ELT teaching materials could also be elicitive in that they aim at obtaining data from the learner's covert knowledge to provoke learning strategies and stimulate communicative



activities. The teaching materials could also be exploratory when they provide the learner with opportunities to try out ideas, listen to how they are used by others and show how these ideas are arranged and rearranged in different patterns (Barnes, 1996). Despite the different purposes of the teaching materials, most of the teaching practices are instructional since only few teachers are good material developers (Dudley-Evan & St. John, 1998). Ideally, those teachers should be able to evaluate, sponsor and adopt their teaching materials when these materials lack functionality to cover the different features of CC. Teachers should have adequate background knowledge on theories of language learning and teaching and their applications to function efficiently in their profession (Tomlinson, 1998). Teachers should also reflect on their practices and theorize them (Schon, 1987). Material evaluation was used in this study as a tool to look into the inclusion of the notion of CC in the teaching material adopted to teach the oral skills to the English major students and explored the instructors as well the head of the department's perceptions of material selection, development and adaptation.

Evaluation in language teaching and learning settings is usually threefold, serving three purposes, viz, accountability (summative), curriculum development (formative) and teachers' self-development (illuminative). First, Rea-Dickens and Germaine (2001) observed that accountability, also called summative evaluation by (Genese, 2001), is concerned with giving evaluative judgments and does not bring about any change or betterment in the curriculum. It usually takes place at the end of an extended period.

The second purpose of evaluation in ESL and EFL is to improve the curriculum. It is also known as formative evaluation. It aims at providing information to the curriculum development, the syllabus and material designer and language teaching

programs and, thus, it can play an important role in improving them. Formative evaluation, in this sense, is an ongoing process and serves to individualize an educational phenomenon such as, textbooks, students, teachers, or administrators, in order to identify the strengths and weaknesses of all aspects of teaching and learning. Both teachers and learners are two important sources of information in the evaluation process. According to Rea-Diekens and Germaine (2001), this information can be obtained through “responses to questionnaires, interviews, records or diary keeping” (p. 254). Formative evaluation can also draw on classroom-based factors that impinge on the effectiveness of the teaching and / or learning process. Genesee (2001) stated that these factors include: “students’ learning needs and goals, their preferred learning styles, their attitudes towards schooling and second or foreign language learning in particular and their interests and motivations” (p. 145). The third type of evaluation is illuminative evaluation. Genesee, (2001) elaborated that this type of evaluations aims at increasing the teacher’s knowledge about teaching and/or learning process(s). It intersects with formative evaluation in purpose; however, the primary focus of illuminative evaluation is providing the teacher with a type of information that is widely used in teachers’ self-development.

In this study, the evaluation process was formative, dealt with material in process. It aimed at individualizing the inclusion of the notion of CC in the oral skills by looking into the teaching material, instructors’ practices and the students’ perceptions and attitudes towards the notion of CC. It also looked at the evaluation process as sources to bring about betterment to teaching the notion of CC in the oral skills. The evaluation in this study was also summative. It aimed at giving evaluative judgments on the outcomes

of teaching and learning the notion of CC. Summative evaluation included test analysis and analyzing student self -assessment grid/ descriptors.

***Criteria for material evaluation.*** This study used two main sources of material evaluation criteria to evaluate the content of the oral skills course. First, McDonough and Shaw (2003) criteria for textbooks and material evaluation:

- ❖ Course background
- ❖ *Date of publication*
- ❖ *The textbook*
- ❖ *The introduction claims*
- ❖ *The table of contents*
- ❖ *Form and function*
- ❖ *The selection of the teaching material*
- ❖ *Grading and recycling*
- ❖ *The contextualization of the teaching material*

*The level of presentation (word level, sentential level, textual level (p. 165)*

Second, the instructors reported that they use two textbooks to teach the oral skills:

*English for Academic purposes: Speaking* in additions to *English for Academic Studies: Listening*. The publisher’s website states, “The series has been designed for students on pre-sessional and foundation courses within CEFR LEVELS B2 TO C2/IELTS 5.0–7.5+”. This statement indicates two facts about the textbooks. First, these textbooks were designed with CEFR competency levels in mind. Second, the learners’ proficiency level should be determined either by using the IELTS or any equivalent standardized test. Additionally, the two textbooks encourage the instructors to use CEFR student self-

evaluation descriptors to evaluate their oral competence. Consequently, additional evaluative criteria were extracted from (CEFR) oral skills competence descriptors. These extracted criteria were used in this study to compensate for the lack of pedagogical criteria in the literature for evaluating, incorporating and teaching the components of CC particularly in the oral skill classroom. The evaluation process was guided by the research question: “How are the features of communicative competence intergraded in the material used to teach the English oral skill (listening and speaking) to the fourth year English major Libyan learners?” In the following section, the use of the CEFR in this study is discussed in more details.

In its own words, the CEFR “provides a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc... [it also] 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 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 that allow learners' progress to be measured at each stage of learning and on a life-long basis" (CEFR, 2001, p. 1). CEFR subcategorizes second language acquirers' communicative competence into three components: “linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic”, (CEFR, p. 13). For the CEFR, Hymes' (1972) strategic competence is the product of the mastery of these three competences. The CEFR framework corresponds to the different models of CC in applied linguistics that was covered in the literature review. The European framework also described what any learner of any language can do at six specific levels: Basic users (A1 & A2), independent users (B1& B2), and proficient users (C1 & C2).

The course description for teaching listening and speaking skill C in the Department of English at the University of Benghazi stated, “by the end of the course, students are expected to have reached the level of proficient language users”. The European framework and the department’s course description intersected in the term ‘proficiency level’; however, the English department used the term “proficient” vaguely since no tools were used to determine the students’ proficiency. This study looked at the measures that were taken by the department to achieve the learners’ proficiency of their oral skills, and whether or not the features of CC are part of the teaching practices and the teaching and learning materials. Examining the instructors and the head of the department’s responses showed that most of the statements in the course description are just rhetorical jargon and lacked clear pedagogical reference. This study used the CEFR descriptors as a pedagogical reference against which the teaching and learning of the CC features were checked.

It has been stated that one of the purposes of this study was to elicit pedagogical criteria for evaluating the inclusion and teaching of the features of CC in the teaching material intended to teach the oral skills to the Libyan English majors at Benghazi University. In this vein, the CEFR pedagogical specifications of the features of the learners’ communicative competence in a second/ foreign language are used as guidelines to extract evaluative criteria to investigate the teaching material, teaching methodology, and teacher-learner interactions, in addition to the theoretical communicative competence frameworks in the literature review chapter

The characteristics of the CEFR defined very specific communicative goals of English language proficiency (ELP) through setting up a taxonomy based on language

use and on “ can do” concrete learning outcomes. Little (2011) argued that CEFR has a unique addition to language teaching:

[It has] the capacity to bring curriculum, pedagogy and assessment into much closer dependence than has usually been the case. This capacity arises from the CEFR’s action oriented approach to the description of L 2 proficiency. Each ‘can do’ descriptor may be used to specify a learning target, select and/or develop learning activities and materials, and shape the design of assessment tasks. What is more, learners themselves can be drawn into this cyclical dynamic by checklists of ‘I can’ descriptors that are used for goal setting and self-assessment in the ELP (p. 281)

This study used the CEFR’s ‘can do’ descriptors to develop evaluative criteria that worked as a frame of reference for evaluating the teaching material, teaching practices and testing strategies. The descriptors are also used to evaluate the students’ English oral proficiency using student self-assessment grid/ descriptors (see Appendices 1 & 5).

For the CEFR, promoting orality in second language learning is a characteristic of any CLT approach to foreign and second language teaching and learning. Communicative tasks are an integral part of everyday language use in private and public life and the world of work. Skills in oral expressions, competence in presentation and course skills thus have an important place in the preparation of [learners] for employment and study” (CEFR, p. 3). In the CEFR framework, oral production and comprehension entails a number of cognitive demands that may be understood as developmental in accordance with the learner’s level. These demands include “automaticity (grammar; collocations);

demands on language knowledge (routines; words) and demands on functional knowledge (speech acts; register; sociolinguistic awareness)” (Tschirner, 2011, p. 7). In showing their concern on what kind of competence underlies the learners’ abilities to perform effectively in the target language, the CEFR framers determined a full range of aspects that would make up a learner’s oral competence. Those framers suggested a number of methodological options for language teaching, learning, and assessment. The CEFR authors set out a comprehensive scheme for the standardization of the learner’s proficiency levels appropriate to address the concerns of all of those who are involved in the process of language learning and teaching. Trim (2011), the director of the Council of Europe’s Modern Language projects from 1971 to 1997 and a key figure in promoting the CEFR, elaborated on the types of descriptors of each level and on the aims of setting out the general CEFR scheme. He stated that the general objective was:

To offer a scheme for the calibration of proficiency, with levels and descriptors, broad or narrow as appropriate to their purpose. The overall aim was on the one hand to establish an objective basis for the comparability of qualifications (usually but not necessarily examined) we aimed to promote the portfolio concept in support of student autonomy), but even more to raise awareness among all concerned, learners, teachers, testers and education authorities, so as to make the whole process more purposive and transparent, and to raise the quality of learning, teaching and assessment and their value to society. (CEFR, pp. 7-8)

***Student self- assessment descriptors.*** The descriptors are represented by the ‘can do’ phrases that characterized the action- oriented approach of the CEFR. Chapter 2 of

the CEFR presented a generalized statement about the learners' competences, contexts, conditions and constraints that control the process of language use:

Language use, embracing language learning, comprises the actions performed by persons who as individuals and as social agents develop a range of *competences*, both *general* and in particular *communicative language competences*. They draw on the competences at their disposal in various contexts under various *conditions* and under various *constraints* to engage in *language activities* involving language processes to produce and/or receive *texts* in relation to *themes* in specific *domains*, activating those *strategies* which seem most appropriate for carrying out the *tasks* to be accomplished. The monitoring of these actions by the participants leads to the reinforcement or modification of their competences. (Council of Europe 2001 p. 9), [original emphasis]

North (2007) affirms that the CEFR is “a concertina-like reference” (p. 656) suitable for all users to localize in order to address their specific contexts. The “can do assessment” has been adopted worldwide as a reference for proficiency tests such as TOEFL, TOEIC, and ILETS by using achievement descriptors. The CEFR has also influenced the idea for developing Common Asian Framework of References for Languages in Learning, Teaching, and Assessment (CAFR), (Koike, 2011). In this vein, Koike also argued that many Asian countries such as Hong Kong, China, Taiwan, Japan, and Korea have already linked their national English language teaching, learning and testing to the CEFR. The CEFR general framework descriptors have also been used in the USA, New Zealand, Australia, and Argentina as references and guidelines for developing, evaluating and assessing language-teaching programs. The global flexibility



of the CEFR is accounted for by the principles of “plurilingualism, linguistic diversity and social cohesion” (Council of Europe 2005, p. 4). The generality of such principles gives the CEFR the power to achieve dominance as a harmonizing tool of language teaching, learning and assessment (Filcher, 2004). The CEFR global potentiality “can be accounted for by the ease with which it can be used in standards-based assessment, and form the basis for policy areas such as immigration” (Krumm, 2007).

The worldwide popularity of the CEFR scheme as reference for language programs is also supported by its ability to present specific descriptors that would measure and evaluate the learners’ communicative competence. The CEFR took as its point of departure the concept of communicative competence to categorize the learners’ communicative intentions. In Chapter 5, Council of Europe 2001, the CEFR framers stated that:

For the realization of communicative intentions, users/learners bring to bear their general capacities together with a more specifically language-related communicative competence. Communicative competence in this narrower sense has the following components:

- ❖ Linguistic competences;
- ❖ Sociolinguistic competences;
- ❖ Pragmatic competences (p. 108)

In this study, the CEFR descriptors are used for three main purposes. First, the descriptors of the notions of CC are used as a verbal scale reference in order to evaluate the inclusion and teaching of the CC features in the oral skills teaching materials. The listening and speaking course description corresponds largely to the “can do” descriptor

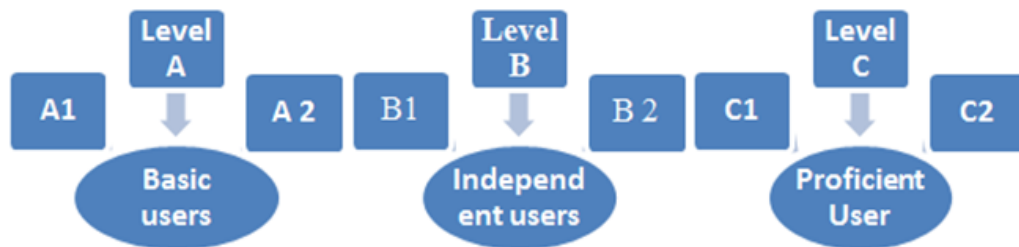
statements in the CEFR. The teachers' questionnaire results showed that this correspondence was accidental since all of the instructors of the oral skills stated, "they have never heard or used the CEFR as a reference in their teaching practices". Table 2 shows the similarities between the course description and the CEFR descriptors:

*Table 2*

Comparing the Course Description and the CEFR Proficiency Levels Descriptors

CEFR Common Reference Levels: Proficient Language User	English department fourth year student: speaking & listening C
<p>C 1 Level Can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognize implicit meaning</li> <li>❖ Can express him/her fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions</li> <li>❖ Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes</li> <li>❖ Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organizational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices</li> </ul> <p>C 2 Level Can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read.</li> <li>❖ Can summarize information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation</li> <li>❖ Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely,</li> <li>❖ differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations</li> </ul>	<p>By the end of the course the learner is able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Interpret points of view</li> <li>❖ Distinguish facts from opinion</li> <li>❖ Synthesize information from different listening input</li> <li>❖ Relate listening texts to personal experience</li> <li>❖ Classify information</li> <li>❖ Compare and contrast different listening input</li> <li>❖ Infer word meaning from the listening context</li> <li>❖ Balance fluency and accuracy</li> <li>❖ Communicate in academic settings, seminars, debates and scholarly discussions</li> <li>❖ Can deal with language type and interactive material</li> <li>❖ Can deal with the idiomatic use of the language and with specialized vocabulary</li> </ul>

The English department course description stated, “by the end of the course students are expected to have reached the level of proficient language users”. The CEFR also used the same term “proficient users” to describe the advanced language users as it is shown in Figure 4 adapted from the CEFR document. There are three basic levels, A, B, and C, each of which is subdivided into two levels.



*Figure 4.* Proficiency Levels in the CEFR.

This figure illustrates learner’s categories within each CEFR level. These levels are related to descriptors that define learner’ competences in the four skills using a set of “can do statements”. Only the CC descriptors that are pertinent to the oral skills are used as reference criteria for material and teaching methodology evaluation in this study (see Appendix 1).

Second, the CEFR self-assessment grid/ descriptors are used in this study as a student self-assessment criterion to collect data for summative evaluation (see Appendix 1). Third, promoting the CEFR as springboard to create and develop a local framework of reference for teaching and testing the features of the CC in the Libyan context. In

addition to material and tests evaluations, this study employed questionnaires for different stakeholders in teaching and learning the oral skills in the English department.

**Head of the department questionnaire.** The head of the department is an important stakeholder within the English department. She has the authority to assign the instructors of the oral skills, discuss the syllabus and the teaching material, in addition to holding periodical meetings with the instructors to determine the testing process (see Appendix 2). The head of the department survey was conducted via “online asynchronous email exchange” (Meho, 2006). The researcher exchanged several emails with the head of the department between August 2012 and May 2013 to determine what responsibilities the instructors of the oral skills have on top of their teaching assignments, in addition to exploring the department’s policies, perspectives and attitudes towards teaching the oral skills. Furthermore, the data provided by the head of the department were compared to those provided by the instructors to check the consistency and/or discrepancy between the department’s policies and the instructors’ management of teaching and testing the features of CC with regard to the oral skills (see Appendix 2). The questions of the head of the department survey looked also into the teaching philosophies of the department and into how the head of the department perceived the importance of the notion of CC. In general, the head of the department survey served to provide a panoramic view of the English department’s policies in teaching the oral skills in general and in teaching the notion of CC in particular.

**Instructor questionnaire.** As shown in Table 3, the instructors described in this study are those who are assigned to teach the oral skills (Listening and Speaking C) to the English majors at the English Department, Benghazi University, Libya. The

instructors teach other courses such as grammar, reading, writing and introduction to linguistics. According to the data obtained from the head of the department and the instructor surveys, none of the instructors is specialized in teaching the oral skills and no specific requirements for recruiting the instructors were reported. The researcher administered the survey to those instructors who teach the advanced level of Listening and Speaking C.

Table 3

*Demographics of the English Department Instructors*

Category	Instructor 1	Instructor 2	Instructor 3	Instructor 4	Instructor 5	Instructor 6
Gender	Female	Male	Male	Female	Male	Female
Age	Over 50	41-49	Over 50	26-30	Over 50	26-3
Nationality	Libyan	Libyan/ British	Libyan	Libyan	Libyan	Libyan

The researcher purposefully chose the advanced course C because the department course description states that this course “is aimed at a higher level of language acquisition. By the end of the course, students are expected to have reached the level of practicing critical thinking skills in their foreign language and the course aims at introducing the students to a more complex language type and interactive material. Attention is to be paid to both accuracy and fluency... by the end of the course; students are expected to have reached the level of proficient language users” (Listening & speaking course description, 2012).

The instructor survey aimed at investigating awareness of the instructors of the notion of communicative competence and its importance in developing the oral skills. It also investigated their perception of the notion of CC; how they incorporated this notion in the teaching material; and how their perceptions and teaching philosophies effected teaching the oral skills to the English majors in a foreign language teaching settings. The consent form provided the instructors with basic background knowledge about the survey. The introduction for the consent form stated the researcher:

is conducting research on the inclusion of the components of communicative competence in the teaching material and textbooks used to teach the oral skills (Listening and Speaking) to the fourth year English major Libyan students at the College (Faculty) of Arts, University of Benghazi, Libya. The researcher is also investigating teachers' beliefs about the concept of communicative competence and the students' reaction to the teaching material and textbooks. Through questionnaires, the researcher will gain insights into how the absence or presence of non-linguistic aspects of foreign language learning, such as social, cultural and pragmatic, influence teaching and learning English as a foreign language.

Though the consent form introduction stated that the researcher focused on incorporating and teaching the notion of CC in the oral skills, the questions in the survey indirectly reflected specific assumptions, theorization, ideas, approaches, conceptions, pedagogical practices of teaching and learning the notion of CC. Only those teachers who have background knowledge on this theoretical framework would be able to provide insightful answers to the survey questions (see Appendix 3).

*Construction of the instructor questionnaire.* The instructors' questionnaire tapped into their perceptions of the relevance and importance of integrating the features of the notion of CC in the ESL listening and speaking class. The survey was constructed to gather information about how the instructors select and implement their teaching materials. It also explored the instructors' knowledge on addressing the features of CC in language teaching and on the current trends on CLT. The survey also investigated the instructors' teaching philosophies and their pedagogical tenets with regard to integrating the features of CC in the ESL and EFL listening and speaking classes. The questions of the teacher questionnaire sought answers to the following questions of this study:

1. How do Libyan University instructors perceive the notion of CC: What are their pedagogical tenets, teaching practices and philosophies with regard to the notion of CC?
2. Are the features of CC integrated in the material and teaching practices used to teach the English oral skills for the fourth year English major Libyan learners?

Question 1 of the instructor questionnaire collected demographic information, whereas question 2 has three main subcategories: education, course taught and teaching practices. It asked about the instructors' education, contributions and training regarding teaching in general and teaching the oral skills in particular.

Teacher's beliefs and assumptions influence their methodology and classroom practices. Teachers take classroom instruction decisions and make instructional options in light of their theoretical assumptions and beliefs about the teaching and learning processes. These beliefs and assumptions influence their teaching goals, material choices, methodology, their roles, and their students' roles as well as the role of the whole

educational institution they work in (Richards & Roger, 2001). Cummins, Cheek and Lindsey (2004) confirmed that the type of education a language teacher has is a major influence on classroom practice. Building on these insights from research on teachers' beliefs, the questions aimed at collecting information about the teachers' knowledge and background on teaching the oral skills in general and on their views and beliefs regarding the notion of CC. Furthermore, the questions explored how these teachers select and implement the teaching material and whether or not the notion of CC is part of their teaching practices of the oral skills.

**Student questionnaires.** In addition to the head of the department and the instructors, students are the other important stakeholders in the teaching and learning process. The students in this study are the fourth year English majors who study listening and speaking course C. This course is one of the core courses in the English department and it is a requirement for graduation. The students' questionnaire comprised two parts. The first questionnaire was administered during the course to serve informative evaluative purposes. It explored the students' perceptions of what makes up their communicative competence and their attitudes, expectations and impressions about the teaching material, teaching methodology and their instructors' practices in teaching the oral skills (see Appendix 4). The second students' questionnaire was at the end of the semester, administered to those students who have finished listening and speaking C. The purpose of this questionnaire was to investigate the students' attitudes towards the teaching practices and the teaching material to explore their perceptions of their performance after they have completed four years of studying the oral skills in general (see Appendix 5). Additionally, this study used the CEFR student self-assessment



descriptors (can do statements) to tap into the students' perceptions of their oral communicative competence after having finished the course requirements (see Appendix 6). In this study, the end of program questionnaire and the CEFR student self -assessment grid/ descriptors served summative evaluation purposes to explore the outcomes of an extended period program. The student questionnaires and self-assessment grid/ descriptors were used to answer the following questions of the study:

1. How do Libyan ESL students perceive the importance of learning the features of CC in their listening and speaking classes?
  - a. What are the students' perceptions of their listening and speaking skills during and after they have finished the courses?
  - b. How do the students evaluate their oral competence on learns' self-descriptors can do statements?
  - c. What are the students' reactions to the oral skills teaching material and teaching methodology?

*Construction of the student questionnaires.* The student questionnaires included demographic questions about the participants' age, gender, nationality, semester, languages spoken and if the student is receiving any oral skill tutoring outside of the department (Appendix, 4). The first set of questions asked the students about their conceptions of the oral skills in general and what makes up a proficient speaker. Responses to this question were formatted in Liker -type-scale (Likert, 1932). The students had to choose from five response alternatives: strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree and strongly agree. The -scale was first pilot-tested on 5 participants for reliability assessment and the confusing Likert-type item 'neutral' was

altered by “neither agree nor disagree”. The confusion with the Likert-type item ‘neutral’ resulted from the irrelevance of the label ‘neutral’ to the other scale items that all have the word ‘agree’. The rationale for using the Likert scale in this question was that the 5-item scale would allow for obtaining different degrees and levels of the respondents’ attitudes, opinions and perceptions of the problem under study (Goldstein & Hersen, 1984).

Question 2 was formatted in a rating scale, using a numerical system from 1 to 5. A 5-point option scale is more appropriate for measuring attitudes and perceptions. The content of this question aimed at eliciting responses on how high or low do the students perceive the importance of learning the four skills (i.e., reading writing, speaking, listening), and how do they rank the importance of learning certain features of the notion of CC with regard to the oral skills. The scale used items ranging from ‘high importance’ to ‘very low importance’. Question 4 required two- option responses, using Yes-No format. In this question, the students had to answer a series of questions about their teachers’ practices when teaching the oral skills. The questions were tailored around a wide range of assumptions, theories, approaches and teaching techniques that would distinguish communicative from non-communicative teaching practices.

The first question of the end of the semester questionnaire contained demographic information whereas question 3 of the second student questionnaire asked if the students are aware of which of the world Englishes do they speak. Question 4 is also in the same context, however, it asked about the dialect or dialects the instructors focus on while teaching the oral skills. Research has reported that L 2 learner’ differences in listening comprehension are due to differences in the spoken dialect. L 2 learners may be familiar

with a particular dialect (Major, Fitzmaurice, Banta, & Balsubramian, 2005; Wilcox, 1978). L 2 learners test results showed that differences in comprehension are referred to differences in the dialect or the target language variation they were exposed to in their language classroom (Tauroza & Luk, 1997). The purpose of these two questions was to explore these variations in the learners' L 2 language input and variations in the teaching practices in order to determine the English dialect and / or dialects that the instructors and teaching material are focusing on. Question 5 of the end of the semester questionnaire asked the participant to agree or disagree with a number of statements about the outcomes of learning and developing the oral skills over the last 4 years (Appendix 5). Research on learner's motivation reported that language learners have two types of motivations: (1) integrative motivation, when a learner learns the language to integrate with its speakers (Gardner, 1985; Masgoret & Gardner, 2003), (2) instrumental motivation, when learners learn the language to achieve their goals and meet other personal needs such as getting a job (Morris, 2001; Oxford & Shearin, 1996). The purpose of this question was to determine the type of motivation that drove the learners' desires to learn to speak English whether it was integrative, instrumental or both. Question 6 asked the student participants to rate, in a percentile scale, a series of expected teaching practices that the instructors use to teach the oral skills. The question covered a number of communicative and traditional practices pertinent to oral skills teaching. Evidence from literature shows that student ratings of instruction is the practice of many universities and colleges around the world to evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching process (Abrami, 1989 ; Abrami et al., 2001; Hobson & Talbot, 2001; Seldin,1985; Wagenaar, 1995). Question 7 of the end of

semester questionnaire asked the learners about their conceptions of competent second language speaker ability.

**Test analysis.** In this study, the test analysis process explored how the oral skills are tested in general. Chapelle and Brindley (2010) define testing as “the act of collecting information and making judgments about a language learner’s knowledge of a language and ability to use it” (p. 247). According to McNamara (2000), the assessment process can be traditional that involves “paper-and-pencil language tests and performance tests or non-traditional that uses checklists, journals, logs, videotapes and audiotapes, self-evaluation, and teacher observations, etc. The test analysis process in this study aimed at exploring the procedures and the content of the tests and whether or not they reflect any of the communicative competence components and which component has the most emphasis in the assessment process.

### **Data Collection Timeline**

The process of data collection started in July 2012 after obtaining the Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval (ID# 2226). In 2012, the Faculty / College of Arts decided to extend the spring semester to July 2012 to compensate for the loss of time during the Libyan uprising in the spring of 2011 so that the students will graduate as planned. In the summer of 2012, the researcher had to travel to Libya to start the process of data collection. First, the students’ during-the-term questionnaire was administered in the last week of July 2012 (see Appendix 4). The student first survey was distributed to those students who were taking listening and speaking C and agreed to participate in the study by signing the consent form (see Appendix 3). The total number of the student participants was 52. The second student questionnaire was distributed online through

Survey Monkey in February 2013 to those who graduated after completing all the program requirements and the total number of graduate participants was 45. The CEFR self- evaluation descriptors survey was administered in May 2013 through survey monkey.

The data collected by the end of the semester questionnaire was based on the results of a number of studies that reported a discrepancy between the English majors' oral skill competences and the job market English language requirements (Rosling & Ward, 2001; Phosward, 1989; Silpa-Anan, 1991; Vasavakul, 2006).

In the same vein, Dominguez and Rdowski (2002) referred to the gap between academic English and real time communicative purposes as "*the abyss existing between the goals of the academic and the professional world*". At the end of the course questionnaire aimed at exploring the students' perception of their communicative competence and relevance of their oral skill proficiency to their actual communicative needs as speakers of English.

The instructors' questionnaire was distributed in July 2012 towards the end of the semester. The survey questions focused on how the instructors regard the notion of CC and what measures they take to insure the inclusion of this notion in their teaching materials and practices when teaching the oral skills (Appendix 3). The head of the department questionnaire was conducted via asynchronous email exchanges between July 2012 and June 2013.

The process of data analysis categorized and classified the respondents' answers according to the study's questions and expectations. This will be discussed in more details in chapter 4.

## Chapter 4: Coding, Analysis and Data Display

This chapter outlines the processes of data analysis and data display with regard to the qualitative/quantitative approach adopted in this study. The analytical mode of the data collected in this study followed the three typical steps in data analysis: reduction of the original database and coding, reconstruction of linkages and finally comparison of findings. The chapter also gives detailed description of the use of computer-aided qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) provided by the qualitative research analytical tool Atalast-i.

### Data Analysis Strategies

The analytical mode of the data collected in this study was qualitative / quantitative. Qualitatively, the study followed the three typical steps in data analysis: reduction of the original database and coding, reconstruction of linkages and data display and finally comparison of findings (Miles & Huberman, 2013). The data analysis process adopted both the traditional manual procedures as well as the use of Computer-Aided Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS) provided by the qualitative research analytical tools Atalast-i software <http://www.atlasti.com/index.html>.

**Qualitative data analysis.** ATLAS.ti software (1993-2014) is “a workbench for the qualitative analysis of large bodies of textual, graphical, audio, and video data. It offers a variety of tools for accomplishing the tasks associated with any systematic approach to unstructured data, i. e., data that cannot be meaningfully analyzed by formal, statistical approaches” (The software Manuel, p. 3). The most updated version that was used in this research is 7.1.6. ATLAS.ti falls under the CAQDAS umbrella, and its basic characteristic is taking qualitative analytical approach to qualitative data segments.

ATLAS.ti systemizes data sets into conceptual sets, through codification and grouping text items into network relations that display the different relations between data sets (Kimmel 2012). The analyzed data can also be exported as excel and SPSS files. For these characteristics, ATLAS.ti has been used by publications in top journals, such as *American Sociological Review*, *American Journal of Sociology*, *Pediatrics*, *American Journal of Public Health*, *Criminology*, and *Journal of Marriage and Family*. As a validated and reliable tool of CAQDAS, was also used in this study to empower the process of data analysis and address the details the may go unseen by the traditional manual analysis.

The data collected in this study were qualitatively analyzed both manually and by the help of CAQDAS. The manual procedure matched the collected data with the theoretical framework provided by CEFR and different frameworks of communicative competence theories, (Bachman & Palmer, 1996; Canale & Swain, 1980; Celce-Murcia, 1985, 1987, 2007; Savignon, 1983; Swain, 1983). These frameworks were covered in details in the literature review chapter of this study. In addition to its specification of the different features of CC, the CEFR evaluation descriptors were used in this study as a measurement of the students' oral skills competence. CEFR is now adopted as the pedagogical realization of the theories of CC and CLT even beyond the European borders for its ability to standardize and centralize language education around a fixed system of “can do statements” (Fulcher 2010)

**Quantitative data analysis.** The quantitative approach in this study was used to collect and analyze the data under study. The tools for data collection were instructor surveys, student survey, student self-descriptors can-do statements, material evaluation as

well as test analysis. The surveys used Likert-style scales to measure the instructors' and the students' perceptions of the notion of communicative competence. The quantitative data analysis tools used in this study were SPSS and Excel in order to measure and compare the statistical results of the analysis. ANOVA was used to accept or reject the null hypothesis and validate the statistical outcome.

### **Pedagogical Framework for Data Analysis**

The pedagogical realization of the notion of CC in the CEFR accounts for the complex nature of the human language. Based on numerous CC frameworks that subcategorized the notion of CC into different components, the CEFR framework recognizes the de-compartmentalization of the learners' competence and learning skills.

Davies (2008) thinks that "the indiscriminate exportation of the CEFR for use in standards-based education and assessment in non-European contexts, such as Hong Kong and Taiwan, shows that Trim [the director of the Council of Europe's Modern Language Projects] was correct when he observed that "there will always be people who are trying to use it as an instrument of power" (p. 282).

According to the CEFR, the CC has three main subcategories: linguistic, sociocultural and pragmatic. In this sense, CEFR provides the pedagogical representation of the notion of CC in the different theoretical frameworks covered in the literature review of this study. The CEFR draws on the different theoretical CC frameworks and translates them into "a more specifically language-related communicative competence". The pedagogical specification of CC in CEFR has three broad components: linguistic competences, sociolinguistic competences and pragmatic competences; however; in the detailed analysis of the subcomponents, CEFR recognized the sub-features of the major



CC frameworks in both theoretical and applied linguistics. In addition to the different theoretical CC frameworks, CEFR pedagogical specifications of the different components of CC are used as a reference for data analysis in this study. The CEFR pedagogical realization of CC is summarized in the following section.

**Linguistic competence.** With regard to learners' CC, CEFR refers to the CLT approach that relates form and meaning. Linguistic competence is broadened to involve not only the traditional prescriptive recipes of grammatical accuracy but it also involves "knowledge of, and the ability to use, the formal resources from which well-formed, meaningful messages may be assembled and formulated"( CEFR, p. 3). The suggested pedagogical realization of learners' linguistic knowledge and performance uses multiple classificatory tools and parameters from different CC models to present a pedagogical linguistic content. The pedagogical specification of linguistic competence recognizes five subcategories:

- ❖ lexical competence
- ❖ grammatical competence;
- ❖ semantic competence;
- ❖ phonological competence;
- ❖ Orthographic competence;
- ❖ Orthoepic competence.

The CFER descriptors view advanced learners' linguistic competence as specific linguistic abilities that should be the target of any pedagogical program. Advanced learners can:

Exploit a comprehensive and reliable mastery of a very wide range of language to formulate thoughts precisely, give emphasis, differentiate and eliminate ambiguity. No signs of having to restrict what he/she wants to say.

- ❖ Select an appropriate formulation from a broad range of language to express him/herself clearly, without having to restrict what he/she wants to say.
- ❖ Maintain consistent grammatical control of complex language, even while attention is otherwise engaged (e.g. in forward planning, in monitoring others' reactions).
- ❖ Consistently maintain a high degree of grammatical accuracy; errors are rare and difficult to spot.

***Sociolinguistic competence.*** at the advanced levels a learner should::

- Have a good command of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms with awareness of connotative levels of meaning.
- Appreciate fully the sociolinguistic and sociocultural implications of language used by native speakers and can react accordingly.
- Mediate effectively between speakers of the target language and that of his/her community of origin taking account of sociocultural and sociolinguistic differences.

***Pragmatic competence.*** at the advanced level, a learner should:

- ❖ Show great flexibility reformulating ideas in differing linguistic forms to give emphasis, to differentiate according to the situation, interlocutor etc. and to eliminate ambiguity
- ❖ Take the floor (Turntaking):

- ❖ Can select a suitable phrase from a readily available range of discourse functions to preface his remarks appropriately in order to get the floor, or to gain time and keep the floor whilst thinking
- ❖ Can create coherent and cohesive text making full and appropriate use of a variety of organizational patterns and a wide range of cohesive devices
- ❖ Can convey finer shades of meaning precisely by using, with reasonable accuracy, a wide range of qualifying devices (e.g. adverbs expressing degree, clauses expressing limitations).
- ❖ Can give emphasis, differentiate and eliminate ambiguity.
- ❖ Can express him/herself at length with a natural, effortless, unhesitating flow. Pauses only to reflect on precisely the right words to express his/her thoughts or to find an appropriate example or explanation.

The pedagogical content of the communicative competence is represented in the CEFR by concrete “can do statements” that reflect the learner’s repertoire. The data collected from the head of the department, instructors and students are checked against the CEFR descriptors of the pedagogical framework of the learners’ communicative competence. CEFR C1 and C2 advanced levels descriptors were used as a reference since the data collected for this study refer to the Libyan fourth year English Major as “advanced” language learners. The pedagogical policies and practices at this level should enable the learner to use different linguistic resources that would contribute towards building learner’s communicative competence. At this level, a learner should have an acceptable command of certain linguistic competence formulated in descriptors as

demonstrated in Appendix 6. With regard to the syllabus content of the linguistic competence, the CEFR specified a range of grammatical as well linguistic items.

### **Data Coding**

**Coding the head of the department survey.** The purpose of the head of the department survey was to find out more about the department's policies and strategies in teaching the oral skills to the English majors, especially fourth year students. The information of the survey was categorized and displayed in the data collection matrix. The head of the department's answers were coded as in as will be shown later in this chapter. The focus of the survey was to explore the perception of the head of the department of the notion of CC and her administration of the instructors and the course. The survey questions investigated on whether or not the department adopts any specific standards of CC or CLT in teaching the oral skills. The content of the head of the department survey was analyzed and coded according to the CEFR and CC frameworks' pedagogical guidelines of teaching the CC in the oral skills.

In the head of the department survey, the analysis process looked for evidence of referring to any standards, local or international, that would pedagogically specify how the notion of CC is integrated in teaching the oral skills. The data analysis process also looked into whether or not the head of the department put any emphasis on communicative strategies adopted by the department to develop the learners' communicative competence as the springboard of communicative language teaching. The data collected from the head of the department are important since she is responsible for supervising and developing the syllabi for the different department courses.

**Coding the instructor survey.** The purpose and structure of the instructor survey were discussed in details in the methodology chapter. In this chapter, the data collection matrix demonstrated how the research questions were linked to conceptual frameworks as well as to the other components of the tools of data collection. In general, the survey geared towards understanding the instructors' perception and manipulation of the notion of communicative competence as the springboard of CLT when teaching the oral skills to the English majors. The data analysis procedure looked at what the instructors said regarding the inclusion and teaching of the features of CC. The survey content analysis aimed at seeing whether the instructors' goals and assumptions correspond with the course syllabi, the students' surveys and the head of the department survey. The coding process broke the instructor survey into five categories: 1) demographic information, 2) education, 3) teaching philosophy and background on communicative competence, 4) teaching practice, and 5) courses content and features of CC. The analysis focused on the third and fourth components since the first two variables did not serve any of the research questions. The instructors' responses were also checked against listening and speaking C course description. Based on the communicative competence frameworks extracted from the different theories of CC and the CFER framework, the analytical procedures looked into how the instructors perceived teaching the oral skills and what degree of importance do they assigned to the different components of the notion of communicative competence. Additionally, the analysis looked at what methodology do these instructors follow to develop their students' oral skills and promote their communicative competence. The instructors' responses were

codified according to the different components of CC, linguistic, sociocultural, pragmatic and strategic as well as according to assumptions in traditional and CLT approaches.

**Coding student survey.** The student survey content was modeled around CLT assumptions, CC frameworks and CEFR descriptors of teaching and learning the notion of CC. As was pointed out in the research methodology chapter, there were two student surveys and a student self-assessment descriptor. Each one of these tools of data collection served to answer a different component of the research questions:

First, beginning of term survey data analysis looked into how do the students perceived the teaching and learning of their oral skills. The data analysis process also explored, from students' perspective, whether or not the features of communicative competence and communicative language teaching are incorporated in the teachers' approaches and practices when teaching the oral skills. Additionally, the analytical tools examined how the students might rank the importance of the different features of the notion of communicative competence such as the linguistic, pragmatic sociocultural or strategic. In this vein, the learners' responses were compared to both the head of the department and the instructors' responses to explore the incorporation of the notion of CC in the teaching material and teaching practices of the oral skills.

Second, end of term survey analysis looked into the students' perception of their oral skills after finishing the four course levels. It also explored their awareness of their speaking skills with regard to dialectology and of the outcomes of their oral skills acquisition. The analysis process also looked at signs of learners' motivation or demotivation depending on whether or not the outcome of their learning met their expectations. The analytical tools also explored, from a student perspective, the existence

or non-existence of a series of expected teaching practices that the instructors use to teach the oral skills communicatively. Furthermore, the analysis procedure tapped into the learners' conception of competent second language speaker's ability. The codes covered a number of communicative and traditional practices pertinent to oral skills teaching

**Coding student self-assessment grid/ descriptors.** The CEFR descriptors are sets of criteria and procedures for scaling and characterizing the different levels of language proficiency. The proficiency descriptors indicate a hierarchical development of the language acquisition process. The descriptors address different scales of language proficiency and each scale matches specific communicative ability related to a subcomponent of the learners communicative competence. There are three types of scales of proficiency in the CEFR descriptors: (a) user-oriented, (b) assessor-oriented and (c) constructor-oriented scales (Alderson, 1991). In this study, the user-oriented descriptors were used in the students' self-assessment grid/ descriptors form (Appendix 5). According to the CEFR statement, the user-oriented scales capture typical learners' communicative competence at each specific level. The descriptive statements delineate "what the learner can do and to be positive worded descriptors at all levels. The CEFR descriptors are effective tools for both assessing the learners' achievement and level of proficiency. The analysis process of the student's self-assessment descriptors looked into what do the students think they can do with their oral skills after finishing the four levels of their listening and speaking courses. The student participants chose from 15 different "can do statements" to describe the level of their communicative competence with regard to their oral skills.

The descriptors served the following categories of communicative competence:

❖ Linguistic competence descriptors:

- I have no difficulty in understanding any kind of spoken language: TV, Radio or a person.
- I can present English speech that helps the listeners understand the main points and remember important items.
- I can present clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects, show details and end with an appropriate conclusion.

❖ Pragmatic competence descriptors:

- I need some time to get familiar with the accent to understand any conversation in English.
- I can understand television programs and films without too much difficulty.
- I can express myself fluently and use direct and indirect meaning easily.
- I can use language flexibly and effectively for social and professional purposes.
- Strategic competence descriptors
- I can understand long speech even when it is not clearly structured.
- Sociolinguistic Competence descriptors
- I can understand any speeches even when I don't know the speakers.
- I can take part in any conversation or discussion with native and non-native speakers.
- I can understand idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms without a problem.
- I can present a clear and smooth description or argument in English that is a style appropriate to the context.



**Coding and analyzing documents.** Document analysis in this study involved analyzing the syllabus, textbooks and the exams. The responses to the head of the department survey, the instructor survey and the student surveys showed that the department imposes the syllabus and the textbook for teaching the oral skills.

The instructors have a very limited role in preparing and choosing both the syllabus and the teaching material. The purpose of the document analysis in this study was to explore, in the light of well-defined pedagogical criteria, the integration and manipulation of the features of CC in teaching the oral skills.

**Coding the syllabus.** The process of syllabus analysis looked into whether its content addresses the notion of CC directly or indirectly. It also explored the standards and objective(s) of teaching the oral skills to the Libyan English majors. By examining the syllabus, the analytical tools looked into whether the syllabus refers, implicitly or explicitly, to any theories of learning and/ or teaching that would delineate the general approached of teaching, learning and testing the oral skills.

**Coding the textbooks for evaluation.** The survey results showed that all the teachers of the oral skills use two textbooks, one for listening and one for speaking, imposed by the department. This study used textbook evaluation criteria to gain more in depth information on the content and concentration of the textbooks. The evaluation process looked into the content of the teaching material according to well-defined pedagogical criteria. There were two types of criteria: First, McDonough and Shaw (2003) criteria for textbooks and material evaluation. Second, criteria extracted from The Common European Framework of Reference CEFR descriptors of the oral skills. These extracted criteria are specifically developed for this study to compensate for the

shortcomings in McDonough and Shaw's general criteria. Both types of criteria are listed under protocol codes.

**Coding and analyzing the test.** The general purpose of any assessment and testing process in an educational institution should help monitor student's educational progress and evaluate the quality of school systems (Fulcher & Davidson, 2009). The test analysis process explored how the oral skills are tested in general.

Chapelle and Brindley (2010) define testing as "the act of collecting information and making judgments about a language learner's knowledge of a language and ability to use it" (p. 247)

According to McManara (2000), the assessment process can be traditional that involves "paper-and-pencil language tests and performance tests or non-traditional the at uses checklists, journals, logs, videotapes and audiotapes, self-evaluation, and teacher observations, etc." (p. 133). The test analysis process aimed at exploring the procedures and the content of the tests and whether or not they reflect any of the communicative competence components and which component has the most emphasis in the assessment process.

For instructors to measure learners' competence effectively, they have to show that they understand learners' competence and its development in order to select the most appropriate testing tools and test content. As Alderson (2006) puts it, "if researchers, theoreticians and testers do not know how language proficiency develops, they can hardly claim to be able to help learners develop such an ability" (p. 135). A major issue in testing is the test construct and different approaches have suggested and defined different constructs. Different theoretical basis of the testing approaches were informed by

different views on language learning and teaching. Discrete point testing, led by cloze tests format, was largely influenced by structural linguistics and the behaviorists' views on language and language learning. Unitary competence hypotheses such as that of Oller (1979) brought about a focus on testing the grammatical competence as the main indicator of learners' linguistic development. Since the advent of communicative language teaching and the notion of communicative competence, test constructs tended to reflect multiple learners' abilities rather than focusing on a single ability (McNamara, 2000). The analysis process of this study looked at the test construct to discern which feature of the learners' communicative competence has the most emphasis in the test items: grammatical, socio-linguistic, discourse or strategic. The analysis also looked into the grading system the instructors use to pass or fail their students, what type of descriptors and what is their evaluation rubric based on?

*Coding criteria.* The purpose of coding in data analysis is to provide keys for exploring, discerning, scrutinizing, comparing and contrasting the data segments to display the internal relations between them (Miles & Huberman, 2013). In a broad sense, coding in this study was governed by the particular goals and objectives of the project (to explore the teaching of CC in the oral skills) Mixing a qualitative/quantitative data analysis approach in this study allowed for the integration of a system of sub-codes was also used to examine the data from multiple angles in order to address the evaluation questions. According to Miles, Huberman & Saldana (2013), the first step in qualitative data analysis is to reduce the substantial amount of data provided by the participants, especially in the open-ended questions. Tesch (1990) explained that the reduction process centers on the two principles of retrieving and marking of segments in the data pertinent

to the study's questions. Data reduction involves condensing the original database by assigning symbolic meaning to text segments and chunks. Saldana (2013) explains that a code can be a single word or a phrase that has the capacity of capturing the core meaning of the data under analysis. A single code may condense the meaning of a participant's response and can refer to a single word, a phrase or a whole passage. Coding is the process of linking data collection to the hypotheses and theories on which the study assumption is built. Charmaz (1983) argues, "In qualitative data analysis, a code is a research-generated construct that symbolizes and thus attributes interpreted meaning to each individual datum for later purpose" (p. 4). The prime purpose of coding is to capture patterns, classes and categories in the data and link them to existing theories in the field or use these codes and their text segments in theory building. Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2013) believe that "coding is analysis" (p. 72). It involves profound thinking and reflection on the data, consequently, assigning meanings and providing interpretations based on the condensed meaning captured in the set of codes. According to Miles, *et al* there are 10 methods of coding of which 5 methods are pertinent to this study:

- ❖ Process coding
- ❖ Value coding
- ❖ Evaluation coding
- ❖ Holistic coding
- ❖ Protocol Coding

***Holistic coding.*** This method of coding allows the researcher to form a panoramic view of the data by assigning a single code to a big chunk of data. This coding is

appropriate to capture general trends that can be classified under large categories. According to Miles, *et al* (2013), a holistic approach in coding is "often a preparatory approach to a unit of data before a more detailed coding or categorization process" (p. 77). This coding method was used to capture the relation and interaction between the different segments of data obtained from different sources (instructors, head of the department, students, teaching and testing materials).

***Process coding.*** Process coding involves the use of words to capture specific actions in the data. Miles, Huberman and Saldana believe that process coding is appropriate for segmenting processes that include evolutionary values or concepts over a period. They also assert that process-coding method can specifically connote "participant action/ interaction and consequences" (p. 75). Process coding was used in this study to capture the instructors and the students' reactions and interactions with the teaching material and their conception and perception of their language learning during and after completing the required four years for graduation. Their responses were segmented using the process coding method. Miles, *et al* explain that this coding method is effective to capture and condense data segments that reflect "the participants' perspectives, worldviews, and life conditions". The codes are in a form of headings that reflect the participants' attitudes towards the phenomenon under study.

***Value coding.*** In quantitative data coding, value codes are attributed to data segments that "reflect a participant's values, attitudes, and beliefs". (Miles et al, 2013, p. 75). Value codes are suitable for exploring the degree of importance we attribute to things, people or ideas. Value coding has the widest range of coverage since it has the capacity to explore the participants system of values. In this study, value coding was used

to explore the participants' attitudes perceptions of the importance of learning their oral skills in general and learning the features of the notion of CC in particular.

***Evaluation coding.*** This method of coding explores the evaluative judgments the participants used to describe a certain program or policy. Miles, Huberman and Saldana argued that evaluation coding "is appropriate for policy, critical action, organizational and evaluation studies".(p. 76). This coding technique was used in this study to code the data segment pertinent to teaching practices and textbook evaluations.

***Hypothesis coding.*** This approach to data coding is driven by the research hypothesis. The list of codes applied onto the collected data aim at evaluating and "assess[ing] a researcher-generated hypothesis" (Miles, et al 2013, p 78). Quantitative coding requires preconceived, logically deduced codes into which the data are placed. Qualitative coding, in contrast, needs creating categories from interpretations of the data. Rather than relying on preconceived categories and standardized procedures, qualitative coding has its own distinctive structure, logic and purpose. (Charmaz, 1983, p. 111). It should be clarified here that hypothesis coding qualitative data analysis is different from hypothesis testing in quantitative research methods. Hypothesis codes are referential codes that help to examine the research hypothesis or a series of study questions. Qualitative hypothesis coding in this study involves coding all the data segments with reference to the study hypothesis and questions. The retrieved codes can be used to explore possible internal relations between the data segments that serve the study's theoretical assumptions summarized in the study's questions.

***Protocol coding*** .This coding method uses well-established codes or a set of criteria to categorize and classify the data Miles, et al (2013). In this study, protocol-

coding uses reestablished criteria to evaluate the teaching material relevance to teaching the features of communicative competence with regard to the oral skills. Table 4 shows the coding process in this study.





Type of Coding	Code	Data Segment
Evaluation Coding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learners' intake of CC</li> <li>• Pragmatics</li> <li>• Filter level and hesitancy</li> <li>• Pragmatic competence</li> <li>• Skill separation vs. skill integration</li> <li>• Sociocultural competence awareness</li> <li>• The signs of student oriented teaching practices</li> <li>• The focus of the testing material</li> <li>• Responsibility of choosing the teaching material</li> <li>• Topics in the teaching material</li> <li>• Type of English spoken</li> <li>• Dialectology issues</li> <li>• Teaching practices</li> <li>• The ability to get meaning across clearly</li> <li>• Discourse, appropriateness and style</li> <li>• Understanding the speech of new encounters</li> <li>• Maintain acceptable level of topic understanding</li> <li>• Able to conduct conversations with Native and non-native speakers</li> <li>• Understand idiomatic language</li> <li>• Use direct and indirect meaning</li> <li>• Speak about complex topics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student questionnaires</li> <li>• Instructor questionnaires</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand oral production (person, TV, Radio)</li> <li>• Ability to understand speech from first encounter</li> <li>• Ability to use pragmatic competence (explanation, paraphrasing rephrasing ...etc.)</li> <li>• Automaticity in speech production</li> <li>• Self-expression and fluency</li> <li>• Accent familiarity &amp; communication hindrance</li> <li>• Course and teaching material</li> <li>• Instructors' teaching philosophy</li> <li>• Teaching practices</li> <li>• Learners' attitudes and perceptions</li> <li>• Teaching the features of CC</li> <li>• Testing the features of CC</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student self-descriptors coding</li> <li>• Textbooks</li> <li>• Student questionnaires</li> <li>Instructor questionnaires</li> <li>Continue</li> </ul>

## **Data Display**

Data display is the second stage in Miles and Humberman (2013) model of data analysis. The reduced data in step one is used to provides “a display organized and compressed assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing. A display is a representation of the main body data using diagrams, charts, networks or matrices. The data in this study were uploaded to excel spreadsheet file and imported into ATLAS.ti for coding and analysis. The data were organized into what ATLAS.ti calls “families”, data groups representing categories predetermined by the researcher. Once the data was processed, the software can generate networks between the codes and the data segments to establish the relationship between concepts, variations and the respondents in the data under analysis. The generated network views in this study condensed the textual extended data to explore patterns of similarities and internal relationships in the data.

In line with Miles and Saldana’s (2013) suggestion that “credible and trustworthy analysis requires, and is driven by displays that are focused enough to permit viewing the full data set in the same location and are arranged systematically to answer the research[s] question at hand” (p. 108), a sample of network views of the data is presented as in Figures 5, 6 and 7.

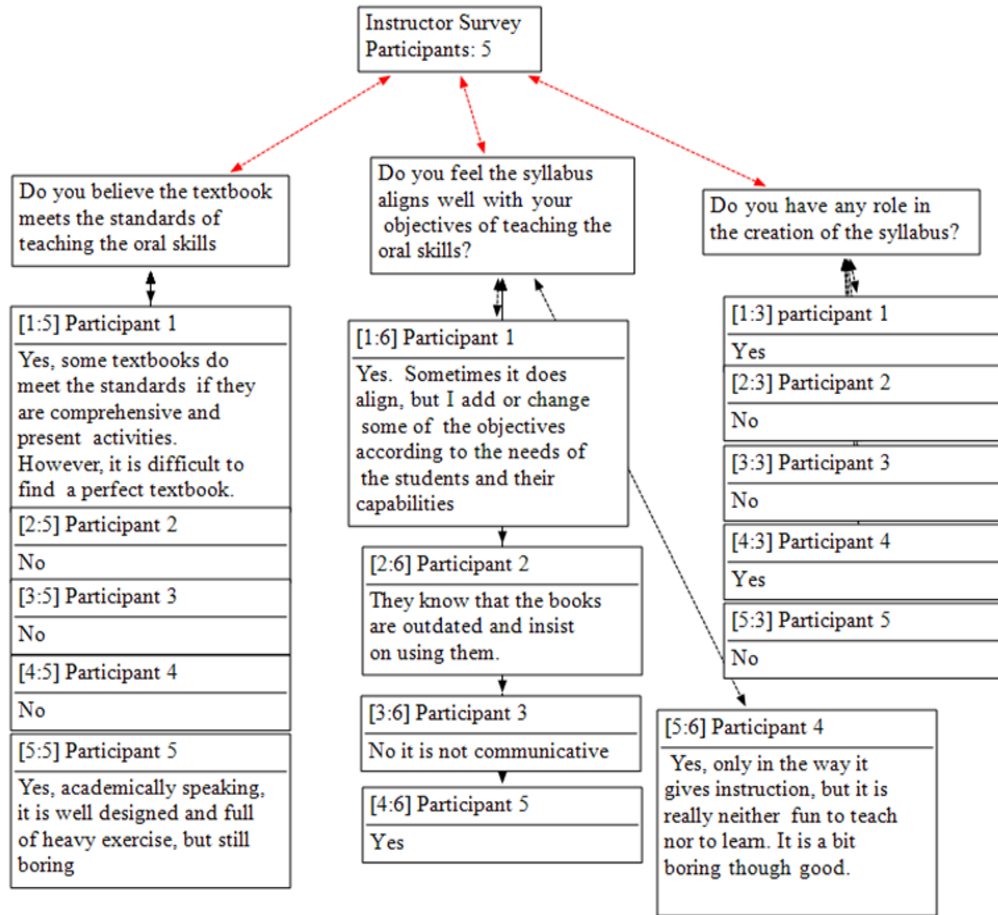


Figure 5. ATLAS.ti Network View: Teaching the Features of Communicative Competence

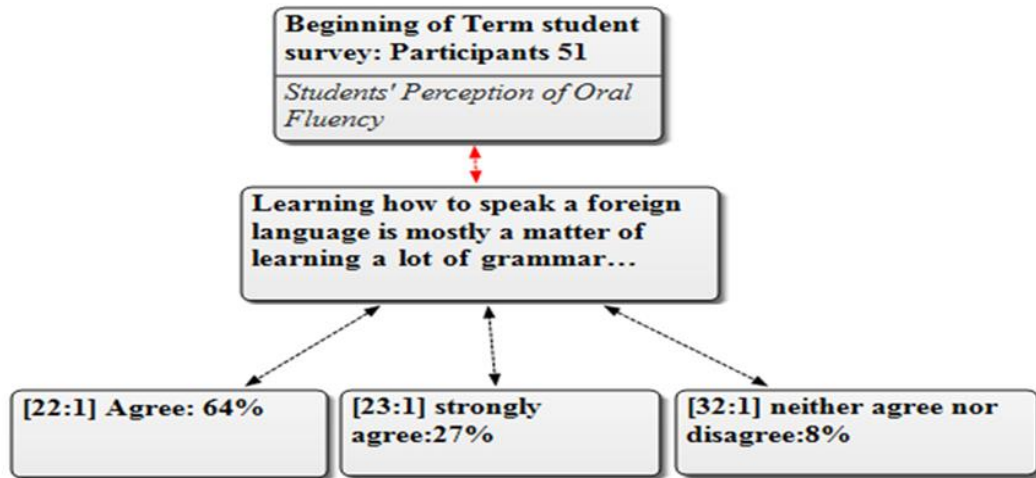


Figure 6. ATLAS.ti Network View : Students' Perception of Communicative Competence

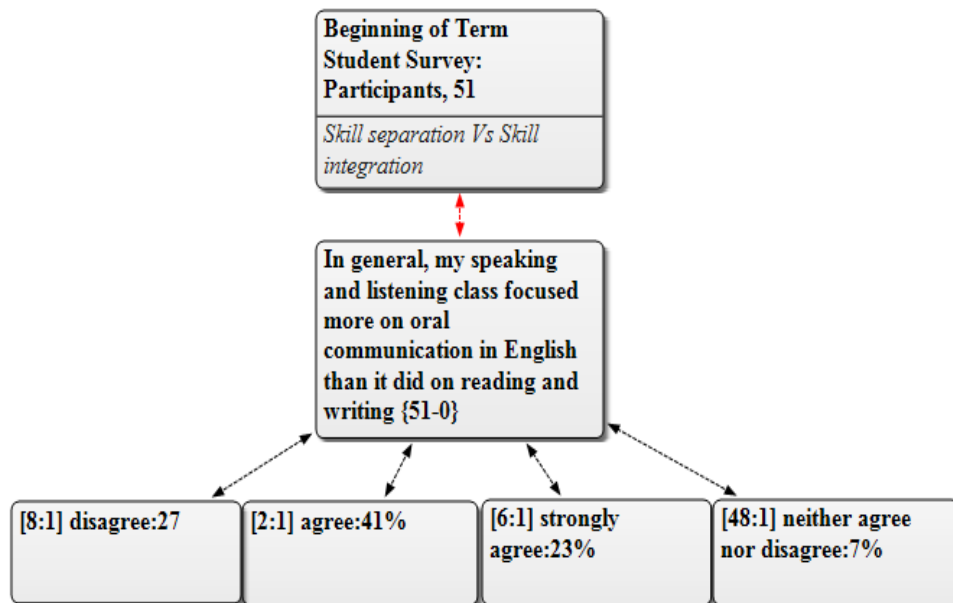


Figure 7. ATLAS.ti Network View: Student Survey: Learning The Features Of Communicative Competence

**Matrix displays.** According to Miles and Saldana (2013), matrix is a tabular format that collects and arranges data for easy viewing in one place, permits for detailed analysis and sets the stage for later cross-case analysis with other comparable cases or cites. (p. 111).Matrix display was used in this study to exhibit intra-case analysis. The matrix was used to compare and contrast what each category of respondents say about teaching and learning the features of CC. The patterns were tabulated in one location. The three respondent units, instructors, students and head of the department, provided a huge amount of data that cannot be exhibited in textual display

Since the data was collected from one site “the English department, the university of Benghazi Libya, the manual data analysis process involved organizing the data into one matrix to display the different data collection tools in one cite, Table 5. This matrix contained the different tools of data collection: instructor survey, student questionnaires, student evaluation descriptors, the head of the department survey and material evaluation criteria.

Table 5

*Data matrix Display*

Research Question	Theoretical Framework	Documents / Assignments	Instructor Survey	Beginning of term student survey	End of Term Student Survey	Head of the Department Survey
1. How are the features of communicative competence intergraded in the material used to teach the English listening and speaking skill for the fourth year English major Libyan learners?	- Criteria for material evaluation	Syllabus, Teaching material, Testing material, classroom practice	Questions : 20,21,22,23,24,25,26,27,28,29,30	-Teaching material: Questions 9,10,23,24 - Classroom practice  Questions 25,26,27	Survey questions addressing this study question were: 2 (a) through (P)	Head of the department survey questions:  4,6,10,11
2. Which of the four components of CC has the most emphasis in both the teaching material and the classroom practice	Theory of Communicative competence		CC components question: 39	During the course student survey. Questions: 4,5,6,7,11,12,,13,14,15,16,17,18,19,20,21,22		

Research Question	Theoretical Framework	Instructor Survey	Beginning of term student survey	End of Term Student Survey	Head of the Department Survey
3. How are current ESL instructors integrating the features of CC in their language teaching practices and how do they test these features in the learners' output?	Theory of Communicative competence and CEFR communicative competence descriptors	-Testing, questions : 34,38	Integration and teaching practice: questions 34,35,36, 37,38,39.		
4. What are the instructors' perceptions and pedagogical tenets with regard to the features of CC and what is actually going on in the speaking and listening classes?			perception of CC: questions 40,41,42, 43,46,47		
5. How do Libyan ESL students perceive the features of CC in their listening and speaking class and how they identify themselves as speakers of English?	Theory of Communicative competence and CEFR communicative competence descriptors		Questions addressing this research questions are: 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9, 27	Survey questions: 4, (a) through (d)	

Research Question	Theoretical Framework	Instructor Survey	Beginning of term student survey	End of Term Student Survey
3. How are current ESL instructors integrating the features of CC in their language teaching practices and how do they test these features in the learners' output?	Theory of Communicative competence and CEFR communicative competence descriptors	-Testing, questions: 34,38 Integration and teaching practice: questions 34,35,36,37,38,39. -perception of CC: questions: 40,41,42,43,46,47		
4. What are the instructors' perceptions and pedagogical tenets with regard to the features of CC and what is actually going on in the speaking and listening classes?				
5. How do Libyan ESL students perceive the features of CC in their listening and speaking class and how they identify themselves as speakers of English?	Theory of Communicative competence and CEFR communicative competence descriptors		Questions addressing this research questions are: 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9, 27	Survey questions: 4, (a) through (d)

The processes of data reduction, coding and display were the three preliminary steps towards the process of data analysis and findings. The next chapter presents a detailed description of what has been uncovered by the different research tools to answer the research questions.



## **Chapter 5: Data Analysis and Findings**

This chapter described the respondents' profiles, examined the research questions in light of the data analysis findings, and reported on the teaching and learning of the notion of communicative competence with regard to the oral skills. The informants were instructors and fourth year English majors at the department of English, university of Benghazi, Libya. The quantitative/qualitative analytical tools used in this research were ATLAS.ti , excel and SPSS.

### **Research Questions Restated**

The chapter also explored the findings and what is being uncovered from the data to suggest answers to the following research questions:

1. Do the head of the department, the course coordinator and the university instructors at the English department/ Benghazi University recognize any standards for teaching the notion of CC in the oral skills?
2. How do Libyan University instructors perceive the notion of CC: What are their pedagogical tenets, teaching practices and philosophies with regard to the notion of CC?
3. How do Libyan ESL students perceive the importance of learning the features of CC in their listening and speaking classes?
  - a) What are the students' perceptions of their listening and speaking skills during and after they have finished the courses?
  - b) How do the students evaluate their oral skills competence on student self-descriptors "can do statements"?

- c) What are the students' reactions to the oral skills teaching material and teaching methodology?
4. What are the instructors and the students' reactions to the oral skills teaching material and teaching methodology?
5. Are the features of CC integrated in the material and teaching practices used to teach the English oral skills for the fourth year English major Libyan learners?

### **The respondents' profile**

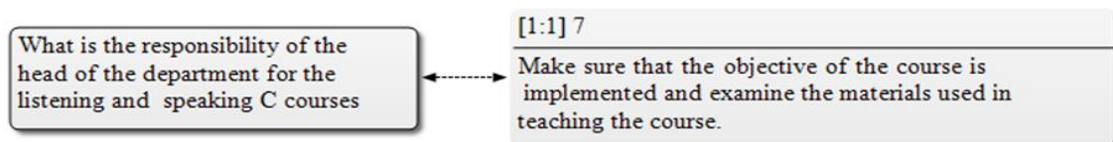
The respondents were instructors (n = 5), head of the department (n = 1) and students (n = 54). There were five instructors involved in this study who were all Libyans. Their qualifications were one PhD holder in applied linguistics and the other four are M. A. holders in the same field. All of the instructors have prior experience in teaching the oral skills and none of them is specialized in teaching the oral skills per se. In her response to the question, "how does the department assign the listening and speaking course to the instructors?" The head of the department stated, "according to specialization; most course instructors have MA in Applied Linguistics". As for the course planning, only the Ph.D. holder instructor was part of the departments' decision-making body and he played an effective role in setting up the syllabus for teaching the oral skills. Based on the communicative competence frameworks extracted from the different theories of CC and the CFER framework, the analytical procedures looked into how the instructors perceived teaching the oral skills and what degree of importance do they assigned to the different components of the notion of communicative competence. Additionally, the analysis looked at what methodology do these instructors follow to develop their students' oral skills and promote their communicative competence. The

instructors' responses were codified according to the coding approach suggested by Miles et al (2013) discussed in chapter four. The instructors' responses were classified under the four categories around which the research questions were formulated: perception, integration, teaching and testing of the notion of communicative competence.

### **Findings: Research Question 1**

Question 1 was: Do the head of the department, the course coordinator and the university instructors at the English department/ Benghazi University recognize any standards for teaching the notion of CC in the oral skills?

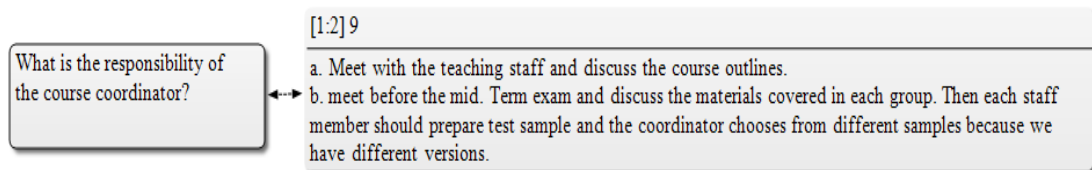
The first part of the findings of this study introduced the settings in which the main decisions for teaching and learning the oral skills are made. As was mentioned in the methodology chapter, a different survey was designed for the head of the English department. ATLAS.ti analysis results, Figure 8,) showed the responsibilities of the head of the department with regard to teaching the oral skills



*Figure 8.*ATLAS.ti Display: Head of Department Responsibility for Teaching the Oral Skills

Another stakeholder in planning, implementing and monitoring the syllabus is the coordinator of the course. According to the head of the department, the course coordinator is responsible for outlining the course, monitoring the development of the

teaching process and holding meetings with the instructors to prepare for the final exams. To explore these responsibilities, a different survey was designed to the course coordinator. Though she agreed to participate in the study, signed the consent form and received a copy of the survey, she did not turn in her responses. However, when the writer of this project discussed with her the process of teaching the oral skills in the department, she expressed her dissatisfaction with the teaching process and stated, It does not promote learners' communicative competence. Her responsibilities as stated by the head of the English department are illustrated in Figure 9.



*Figure 9* Atlas ti Display: Responsibility of the Course Coordinator for Teaching the Oral Skills

According to the head of the department, Figure 10, the instructors are assigned to teach the listening and speaking course C according to their experience. However, 2 of the 5 instructors stated that they have been teaching in the department only for two to three years and they did not have any prior experience in teaching the oral skills



Figure 10. Atlas.Ti Display: Criteria for Assigning Oral Skills Course Instructors

As shown in Figure 11, the head of the department also stated that no special training for the instructors is required to teach the oral skills and the only opportunity to get some in-service training is when some American visiting experts conduct occasional workshops in general ELT.

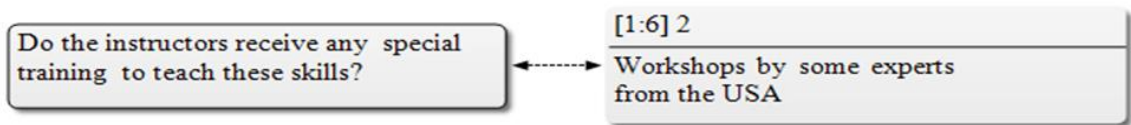


Figure 11. Instructors' Training in Teaching the Oral Skills

**Standards for teaching the oral skills.** Question 1 of the instructor survey asked whether the instructors introduced any standards for teaching the oral skills. Sixty percent of the instructors do not introduce any standards and the other 40% confused teaching methodology and teaching standards. Examples of their responses are: 1) “I usually organize the students in groups to participate in class activities; 2) These activities enhance students’ communicative and cultural skills. Students also prepare presentations on various topics and from various and different sources”. One instructor explained that that no standards are introduced at the university. “I am not allowed due to the department’s policy makers who require students to record on cassettes and have

me listen to their[the students] monologues”. This Instructor also mentioned that when teaching in private language centers outside of the university, the grammatical resources, lexical resources, discourse management, pronunciation and interactive communication are included to teach the oral skills.

Question 2 asked what should be the overall goal of teaching listening and speaking. In their responses to this open-ended question, 100% of the instructors recognized that the overall goal should be promoting learner communicative ability. However, further analysis showed variations in understanding and perceiving these abilities. Participant 1 referred to these abilities as using language naturally. Participant 2 defined learners’ communicative abilities as native-like of language competence that can be achieved by hiring native speakers to teach in the department. Participant 3 set the goal of teaching the oral skills as improving the students’ communicative competence, which is defined as the ability to interact well and present the information in the right way. For participant 4, the overall goal of teaching the oral skills to Libyan English majors should be enabling the students to use the language naturally. Participant 5 believes that the goal should be to teach students to produce connected speech using expressive devices; in addition to lexis, grammar and negotiation language. Most of the instructors believe that the overall goal of teaching the oral skills should be teaching communicatively, however, the conception of CLT is vague.

As for the head of the department, she quoted the syllabus to answer a question about the ultimate goal of teaching the oral skills as illustrated in Figure 12.

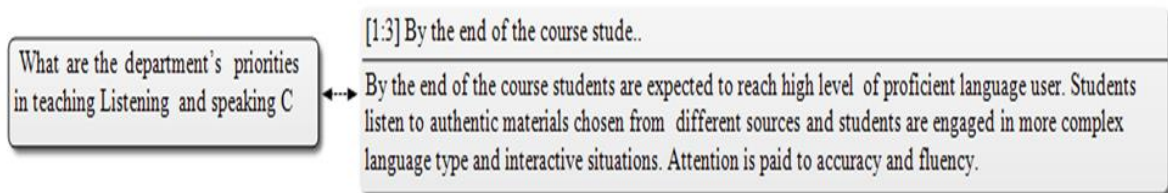


Figure 12. ATLAS.ti Display: The English Department's Priority in Teaching the Oral Skills

Though she mentioned authentic material and different sources of input to engage the learners in a more complex language type, in answering another question, the head of the department stated she did not think the instructors use any supplementary material other than the textbook. This response indicated a discrepancy between the instructors and the head of the department about the use of sources other than the textbook to teach the oral skills.

Question 3 asked the instructors “are you aware of any standards of foreign language teaching such as the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, Learning, teaching, assessment?” The results for this question showed all the instructors, 100%, said that they were not aware of any local or international standards for language teaching and learning.

**Syllabus alignment with the course objectives.** Question 4 asked the instructors “Do you feel the syllabus aligns well with your objectives of teaching the oral skills?” The results showed that instructor 1 said sometimes it does align, but other times he had to add or change some of the objectives according to the needs of the students and their capabilities. Instructor 2 stated, “They [department's policy makers] know that the

syllabus and books are outdated and insist on using them. Instructor 3 criticized the syllabus for being not communicative. Instructor 4 said “Yes” the syllabus aligns with the objectives of teaching the oral skills. Instructor 5 said, “Yes, only in the way it gives instruction, but it is neither fun to teach nor to learn. It is a bit boring though good.”

Question 5 asked the instructors “Do you have any role in the creation of the syllabus?” The results showed that only one out of the five instructors has a role in the creation of the syllabus. The results of this question agree with the results of question 6 where instructors reported that only the senior instructor participate in the creation of the oral skills syllabus.

Question 6 asked the instructors about who generates the syllabus. Instructors 1 and 2 stated that the English Department generates that syllabus, whereas instructor 3 and 4 said the department always prepares the syllabus and they have no role in its preparation. One of them explained “ at the university, senior faculty members are responsible for the creation of the syllabus and they produce low quality of education that does not serve Libyan learners”. Instructor 5 did not provide any answer to this question.

Question 7 asked the instructors “do you believe the book meets the standards of teaching the oral skills”. Instructor 1 stated academically the textbook meets the standards of teaching the oral skills. Instructor 2, elaborated, “academically speaking, it is well designed and full of heavy exercises, but still boring”; whereas instructor 3 reported that the textbook does not meet the standards of teaching the oral skills. Instructor 4, stated, “neither the current textbook nor any other textbook is comprehensive enough to



meet the standards of teaching the oral skills”. Instructor 5 did not provide any answer to this question.

**Teaching Material.** Question 8 asked the instructors what material and/ or textbooks do they use for this course? The majority of instructors, 80%, reported that they stick to the textbook imposed by the department. (*English for Academic purposes: Speaking* and *English for Academic Studies: Listening*) Both the listening and speaking textbooks are also evaluated later in this study for the incorporation of the features of CC. Only 20% of the instructors reported the use of different sources without delineating these sources. However, the head of the department and the students’ surveys results contradict the instructors’ responses. The following ATLAS.ti data analysis view, Figure 13, shows this contradiction. In her answer to a similar question, the head of the department said:

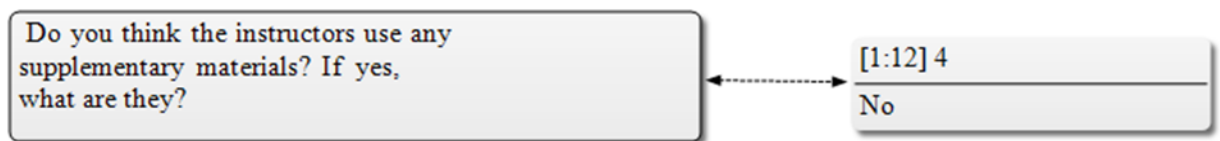


Figure 13. ATLAS.ti Display: Instructors’ Use of Supplementary Material

The contradiction in this area might be attributed to the lack of a follow up policy by the department to monitor and check on the development of the teaching material and the implementation of the course objectives, Figure 14.

Question 9 asked the instructors to state the criteria according to which they choose the textbook or the teaching material. ATLAS.ti analysis showed that one

instructor said that a good syllabus should be used as the criteria and any textbook has to fulfill the syllabus requirements. It [the syllabus] also has to include activities and all the information necessary for the course. According to this instructor, a good textbook for teaching the oral skills should have a) an appropriate methodology b) cultural opportunity c), teacher's guide, d) Language skills. Instructor 2 has no specific criteria for choosing the oral skills teaching material, whereas instructors 3 and 4 prefer to follow the department's course description. Instructor 5 argued, "I am not allowed to choose what I teach. The department gives me the material and usually there isn't a teacher's book". In a related question, the head of the department also confirmed that no follow up policy is available to evaluate the outcome to the teaching process, Figure 14.

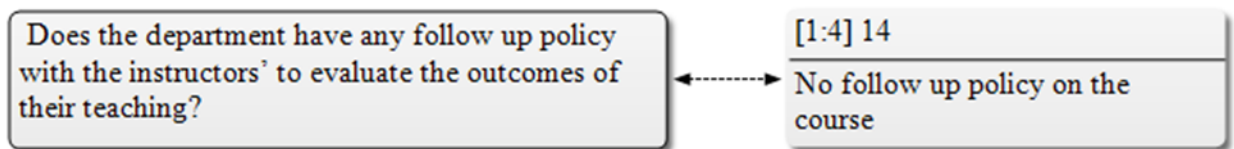


Figure 14. ATLAS.ti Display: English Department Follow up Policies of Oral Skills Teaching

Question 10 asked the instructors if they think the syllabi specify how the features of communicative competence (linguistic, pragmatic, strategic, and sociolinguistic) should be integrated into the class. The results showed that instructors 1 and 2 think that the syllabus specifies how the features of CC and CLT should be integrated in the class. The syllabus promotes communicative competence by teaching the language skills. Instructors 3 and 4 reported that no specification of the notion of CC or CLT is in the

syllabus. Examples of their responses are following: Because of the huge number of students in the class, one cannot judge the syllabus upon this specific point. Instructor 5 stated:

No[ specification of CC and CLT], Dell Hymes coined the term communicative competence in 1971; the teachers at Benghazi University are given an old book (from the 1960s that introduces the hippie culture that died out in that decade) with no cover or title name. So what communicative competence?

By comparison, the results of the head of the department survey, Figure 15, showed that the notion of CC is perceived in its broad terms as a dichotomy of language knowledge and language use without specifying the type of knowledge whether this knowledge is linguistic, sociolinguistic, pragmatic or strategic.

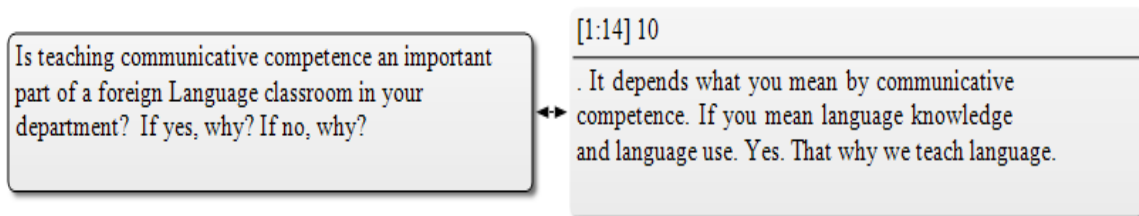


Figure 15: The Importance of Teaching CC in the Oral Skills Course

Question 11 asked the instructors if they were to introduce any standards for teaching the oral skills, what examples would they provide to show how to promote the students communicative competence? ATLAS.ti analysis showed that 80% of the participants asserted that they do not introduce any specific standards for teaching the oral skills. One instructor explained, “I am not allowed [to introduce any standards] due

to policy makers". The other 20% stated that they follow the departments' course description.

Question 12 asked the instructors about the roles authentic communication opportunities in the target language play in their listening and/or speaking class. The results showed that 80% of the instructors emphasized the importance of authentic material. Only 20% of the instructors stated, authentic material plays a minimal role due to lack of enough exposure. The conception of authentic material differed in the responses. For one instructor it is exposure to different types of accents, for another instructor it is the reflect [ion] of real time language use in real situations; and for a third instructor authenticity is using material from the media.

Question 13 asked the instructors what role does teaching sociocultural competence play in their oral skills class. The majority of instructors (80%) stated they assign no role to the sociocultural component when teaching the oral skills; however, 20% of the participants perceived sociocultural competence as reducer of mother tongue interference and selecting appropriate topics without delineating these topics.

Question 14 asked the instructors what differences in pragmatic, cultural and social performance they have noticed based on learner's L 1 that is not appropriate in L 2. The instructors reported that they observed first pragmatic, cultural and sociolinguistic interference of Libyan students learning English. Examples of their responses were when students think in Arabic while they speak English. Another instructor reported that first culture and first language interference hinder the Libyan students developing their second language communicative competence. The third participant stated, the differences are always individual rather than differences between levels. The fourth participant listed

literal translation, first tongue interference; sometimes the students use words from their first language when they speak because they do not know the equivalent in the target language was the most salient examples of first cultural, pragmatic and sociolinguistic interference

Question 15 asked the instructors about the difficulties they face if they integrate the non-linguistic aspects in second language classes (sociolinguistic, pragmatic, and strategic)? This question used the alternative term nonlinguistic to refer to the different non-grammatical features of communicative competence. The purpose was to explore the type of resistance the instructors face when they try to include and teach the nonlinguistic features of CC. Are there any difficulties in integrating these aspects? What is the source of these difficulties, if any? Instructors 1 and 2 said that they do not emphasize the nonlinguistic aspects of language when teaching the oral skills. Instructor 3 stated that because students believe that grammatical accuracy is THE cure for inaccuracies [emphasis] in the original, the focus is always on the linguistic aspects in teaching the oral skills. Instructor 4 attributed the difficulties of introducing the non-linguistic features to the lack of authentic materials be used. Instructor 5 listed two features of nonlinguistic aspects that are difficult to teach in the Libyan context: some gestures and inappropriate photos.

### **Findings: Research Question 2**

How do Libyan University instructors perceive the notion of CC: What are their pedagogical tenets, teaching practices and philosophies with regard to the notion of CC?

In order to answer this research question, question 16 measured the instructors' perception of the importance of teaching the features of CC to the Libyan English majors.

The instructors were given a five-point Likert scale to rate the importance of the four common pedagogically recognized features of the notion of communicative competence (linguistic, pragmatic, sociolinguistic, strategic) with 5 identifying the feature as of a very high importance and 1 identifying the feature as of a very low importance. The degree of perception was measured by the degree of satisfaction with each item on a 5-point Likert scale. The items that scored higher points indicate instructors' positive attitude towards the feature and the items with lower points indicate negative attitudes towards the feature that these items indicate.

**Instructors' perception of linguistic competence.** The results in Table 6 shows that the instructors have strong positive attitudes towards teaching linguistic/grammatical competence with teaching syntax achieved very high satisfaction 5.0 on 5.0 Likert scale. Teaching cohesion and coherence, teaching sentence structures and teaching verb conjugation in the oral skills achieved high instructors' satisfaction with 4.4, 4.2, and 4.0 respectively on a 5-point Likert scale. Teaching grammaticality achieved medium satisfaction with 3.8 on a 5-point Likert satisfaction scale.

Table 6

*Instructors' Perception of Linguistic Competence*

Linguistic Competence Features	Degree of Satisfaction
1.Teaching grammaticality	3.8
2.Teaching Sentence structure in the oral skills	4.2
3.Teaching Cohesion and coherence in conversations in the oral skills	4.4
4.Teaching Verb conjugation in the oral skills	4
5.teaching syntax in the oral skills	5

**Instructors' perception of strategic competence.** In general, the results in Table 7 showed that the instructors have negative attitude towards teaching the features of strategic competence. Likert scale satisfaction measurement showed that teaching pragmatic competence features achieved low importance, on a five-point Likert scale with teaching flexibility to differentiate according to the situation, interlocutor, etc. and to eliminate ambiguity 2.6.

Table 7

*Instructors' perception of Strategic competence*

Strategic Competence Features	Degree of Satisfaction
Teaching how to integrate sub-themes, develop particular points and round off with an appropriate conclusion.	2.2
teaching the ability to maneuver with language to compensate for lack of knowledge	2.4
Teaching telling or time gaining phrases such as where are we say it again	2.2
Teaching flexibility to differentiate according to the situation, interlocutor, etc. and to eliminate ambiguity	2.6

Teaching the ability to maneuver with language to compensate for lack of knowledge rated 2.4 and teaching stalling or time gaining phrases such as 'where are we?', 'say it again in the oral skills 2.2, and teaching how to integrate sub-themes, develop particular points and round off with an appropriate conclusion 2.2.

**Instructors' perceptions of pragmatic competence.** The results in Table 8 showed that the instructors have a positive attitude towards teaching pragmatic

competence in general with a high satisfaction 4.0. The instructors also have positive attitude towards teaching how to reformulate ideas according to the situation, interlocutor, eliminate ambiguity and teaching communication in the oral skills with a rate of 4.4 on a 5-point Likert scale.

Table 8

*Instructors' Perception of Pragmatic Competence*

Pragmatic Competence	Degree Of Satisfaction
1. Teaching communication in the oral skills	2.4
2. Teaching how to reformulate ideas according to the situation, interlocutor etc. and to eliminate ambiguity.	4.4
3. Teaching Cohesion and coherence in conversations in the oral skills	4.0
4. Teaching how to choose suitable phrases from a readily available range of discourse	2.2

Teaching cohesion and coherence in conversations in the oral skills achieved satisfaction score of 4.0; however, the instructors perceived the two features teaching communication strategies and teaching how to choose suitable phrases from a readily available range of discourse as of low importance with a satisfaction rate 2.4 and 2.2, respectively.

**Instructors' perceptions of sociolinguistic competence.** Generally, the results in Table 9 showed that the instructors have a negative attitude towards teaching the sub-features of sociocultural competence in the oral skills with a satisfaction point 2.4. , whereas teaching routines fixed phrases, expression, collocations, idioms in the oral skills rated 2.2, teaching dialects and language varieties in the oral skills 2.2.



Table 9

*Instructors' Perception of Sociolinguistic Competence*

Sociolinguistic Competence	Degree of Satisfaction
1. Teaching Routines fixed phrases, expression, collocations and idioms in the oral skills	2.2
2. Teaching Culture in the oral skills	2.4
3. Teaching Dialects and language varieties in the oral skills	2.2
4. Teaching rhetorical and conversational organization in the oral skills	4.0

The feature teaching rhetorical and conversational organization in the oral skills was assigned the highest importance with a score of 4.0 on a 5- point Likert scale.

**Instructors' Oral skills Teaching Practices** .The instructors were asked to strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree and neither agree nor disagree with a number of teaching techniques and practices in order to explore their actual classroom practices. The results of the instructors' responses is reported in Tables 10, 11, 12, and 13 showed that teaching the features of linguistic/grammatical competence have the highest satisfaction ratings on a 5- point Likert scale: (a) it's important to repeat and practice a lot and I encourage my students to do so 4.2, b grammar correctness and vocabulary were the most important things I focus on in the listening and speaking classes this semester 4.4, ( c) accuracy oral and written exercise 5.0, and ( d) raising the learners grammatical awareness by teaching elements, categories, classes, structures, processes and relations 4.0.

Table 10

*Teaching the Features of Communicative Competence*

Sociolinguistic competence	Satisfaction Rate
a) Teach dialog completion	3.2
b) Role-play	3.2
c) Dialogs	3.8
d) Analyze social sensations and issues	3.2
e) Refer learners to online collaborative tasks such as social networking and blogging	3.8
f) Sociolinguistic	
g) Teach the language according to socially and culturally appropriate situations	2.5
h) Teach the language according to socially and culturally appropriate situations	2.5
i) Teach socially and culturally appropriate language choices	2.3

Table 11

*Teaching the Features of communicative competence*

Pragmatic Competence	Satisfaction Rate
a) Teach scenarios and identify correct responses and behaviors.	3.4
b) Use videos or computer programs demonstrating pragmatics.	3
c) Initiate and sustain interaction by using a variety of questions ranging from knowledge questions (e.g. information questions) to evaluation questions (e.g., opinion questions).	2.8
d) Promote scaffolding (support) and instructional backings that enable learners to be successful in their verbal interactions.	3.6

Table 12

*Teaching the Features of Communicative Competence*

Linguistic competence	Satisfaction Rate
a) It is important to repeat and practice a lot of linguistic units and I encourage my students to do so.	4.2
b) Grammar correctness and vocabulary were the most important things I focus on in the listening and speaking classes this semester.	4.4
c) Accuracy: oral and written exercises	5.0
d) Raising the learners grammatical awareness by teaching Elements, categories, classes, structures, processes and relations	4.0

Table 13

*Teaching the Features of communicative competence*

Strategic competence	Satisfaction Rate
a) Let the students repair communication breakdowns on their own	2.2
b) Interaction does not necessarily mean that student's participation is always verbal	3
c) Teach learners strategies to negotiate meaning g: ask for clarification, paraphrase, and use circumlocution	3.8
d) Teaching time gaining phrases where are we , what you may call it	2.3

The other nonlinguistic features of CC showed low ratings on the 5-point satisfaction Likert scale. The seven sociolinguistic pedagogical features delineated by the CEFR, have medium and low satisfaction points ranging from 3.2 to 3.8. The results also showed that the instructors do not put enough emphasis on teaching the features of pragmatic competence. The highest feature rating is 3.6 and the lowest is 2.8. Teaching strategic competence has the lowest satisfaction points, ranging from very low 2.2 to medium 3.8. In general, the results of teaching the features of CC showed that the

instructors focus more on grammatical/ linguistic competence than on the nonlinguistic features of the learners communicative competence, viz , (sociolinguistic, pragmatic, strategic).

Question 25 asked the instructors “what do you perceive to be the benefits of integrating social, cultural and pragmatic notions into teaching listening and speaking?” The results in Table 14 showed that all of the participants agreed that integrating cultural and pragmatic notions into the oral skills teaching material would reduce hesitancy and awkwardness, influence impressions others have of the EFL and ESL speakers

Table 14

*Instructors’ Perceptions of Integrating the Non-Linguistic Features in Teaching the Oral Skills*

Benefits of integrating social, cultural and pragmatic notions into teaching the oral skills	Agree	Disagree
Reduce hesitancy and awkwardness	100%	0%
Influence impressions others have of the EFL and ESL speaker	100%	0%
Eliminate hesitations and awkwardness	70%	30%
Influence impressions others have of the EFL and ESL speaker	100%	0%
(Facilitate the acquisition of communicative functions (greetings, apologizing, regretting ...etc)	90%	10%
Increase self-confidence	100%	0%
Familiarize learners with native speaker’s norms of communication ( Don’t over use maybe or please)	90%	10%
Develop native speaker-like competence	60%	40%

Significantly, 70% of the instructors said integrating cultural and pragmatic notions into teaching the oral skills eliminates hesitations and awkwardness in second language communications. One hundred percent of the participants agreed that the

integration of cultural and pragmatic notions would influence impressions others have of the EFL and ESL speaker and increase self-confidence; whereas 90% agreed that CC integration in teaching the oral skills would facilitate the acquisition of communicative functions (greeting, apologizing, regretting) and familiarize learners with native speaker's norms of communication (don't over use maybe or please). Sixty percent of the instructors agreed that integrating cultural and pragmatic notions would help the students develop native speaker-like competence.

### **Findings: Research Question 3**

How do Libyan ESL students perceive the importance of learning the features of CC in their listening and speaking classes? In order to answer research question three, a 5-point Likert scale was used in order to determine the students' perception of the importance of learning the different features of the notion of communicative competence (linguistic, sociolinguistic, pragmatic, and strategic). The scale provided the participants with the following points: 5- agree, 4- strongly agree, 3- disagree, 2- agree, 1- neither agree nor disagree. Using this scale, the student respondents indicated the degree to which they perceive the importance of teaching and learning the notion of communicative competence. The question comprised 19 items that provided the CEFR pedagogical specifications of the notion of CC. In order to analyze each item as a single concept, the responses were individually measured on the 5-point scale, with 5 indicating the highest satisfaction point and 1 indicating the lowest satisfaction point. The result for this question was subcategorized under the four main components of the notion of CC to show the students' perception of each individual component, and then compare these perceptions using ANNOVA .

**Students' perceptions of linguistic competence** .Juxtaposing the means of each item to the 5- point scale in Table 15 shows that linguistic competence subcomponents means are closer to the highest point on the 5-point Likert scale. The item “it is important to repeat and practice a lot of grammar and my teachers encourage me to do so” achieved 4.00, “grammar correctness and vocabulary are the most important things in learning how to speak English” 3.69, “learning how to speak a foreign language is mostly a matter of learning a lot of grammar rules linguistic” 4.35, “you shouldn't say anything in the language until you can say it correctly” 4.55. This means that the students perceived learning the linguistic competence as highly important to their oral skills learning.

Table 15

*Students' perceptions of Linguistic competence*

Features of Teaching Linguistic Competence	Satisfaction
It is important to repeat and practice a lot grammar and my teachers encourage me to do so	4.00
Grammar correctness and vocabulary are the most important things in learning how to speak English	3.69
Learning how to speak a foreign language is mostly a matter of learning a lot of grammar rules	4.35
You shouldn't say anything in the language until you can say it correctly linguistic	4.55

**Students' perceptions of linguistic competence.** Table 16 shows the results for the students' perceptions of learning sociolinguistic competence. There were five sociocultural / sociolinguistic subcomponent items : a) it is important to speak a foreign

language with an excellent accent,  $M = 4.52$ , b) culture should be presented in the oral skills class in more of facts approach which involved demographics, populations, climates information about government or currency, economics, etc.  $M = 3.09$ , c) including cultural aspects of my foreign language in the class would help me learn more about myself and my culture  $M = 3.94$ , d) it is necessary to know the foreign language norms of use in order to become proficient in a foreign language sociolinguistic,  $M = 3.60$ , e) comparing and contrasting different English varieties (British, American...etc.) would help me understand native speakers better than focusing on one variety  $M = 4.05$ . The means for all the five subcomponents of the sociocultural/ sociolinguistic competence are significantly closer to the highest point, 5, of Likert satisfaction scale. This indicates that the students perceived the sociocultural components as highly important to develop oral competence in their second language learning.

Table 16

*Students' Perceptions of Sociolinguistic Competence*

Features of Sociolinguistic/ sociocultural competence	Satisfaction
1. It is important to speak a foreign language with an excellent	4.52
2. Culture should be presented in the oral skills class in more of facts approach which involved demographics, populations, climates information about government or currency, economics, etc	3.09
3. Including cultural aspects of my foreign language in the class would help me learn more about myself and my culture	3.94
4. it is necessary to know the foreign language norms of use in order to become proficient in a foreign language	3.61
5. Comparing and contrasting different English varieties (British, American...etc.) Would help me understand native speakers better than focusing on one variety	4.05

**Students' perceptions of pragmatic competence.** Table 17 shows the results of the students' perceptions of learning pragmatic competence. There were six pragmatic subcomponent items adopted from the CEFR pedagogical specifications of the notion of CC:



Table 17

*Students' perceptions of Pragmatic competence*

Features of Pragmatic competence	Satisfaction
1. Focusing on patterns of real life communication is more important than learning grammatical rules and vocabulary lists.	3.96
2. Learning about the non-linguistics aspects of English (when to say what to whom and in what manner) would help me understand and use the English language better	3.92
3. learning about the context of use would help me appreciate the English language better	4.35
4. learning how to use English in my listening and speaking classes would motivate me to continue learning the foreign language	4.31
5. Opportunities to communicate in the foreign language are an important part of becoming proficient in that language	4.19
6. I feel I am learning better when I am exposed to authentic, social, and real-life uses of English	3.64

a) focusing on patterns of real life communication is more important than learning grammatical rules and vocabulary list  $M = 3.96$ , b) learning about the non-linguistics aspects of English (when to say what to whom) would help me understand and use the English language better sociolinguistic  $M = 3.92$ , c) learning about the context of use would help me appreciate the English language better  $M = 4.35$ , d) learning how to use English in my listening and speaking classes would motivate me to continue learning the foreign language pragmatic  $M = 4.31$ , e) opportunities to communicate in the foreign language are an important part of becoming proficient in that language  $M = 4.19$ , f) I feel I am learning better when I am exposed to authentic, social, and real-life uses of English  $M = 3.64$ . The means for all the five subcomponents of the sociocultural competence are significantly closer to the highest point 5 of Likert satisfaction scale. This indicates that

the students perceived these components as highly important to develop oral competence in their second language.

**Students' perception of strategic competence.** Table 18 shows the results for the students' perception of learning strategic competence. There were four strategic competence subcomponents adopted from the CEFR pedagogical specifications of the notion of CC: a) teaching how to integrate sub-themes, develop particular points and round off with an appropriate conclusion 2.2, b) it is helpful to learn how to maneuver with language and use other options when I lack the ability to say what I want to say 2.4, c) I need to learn time gaining phrases such as where are we? say it again in the oral skills to keep the conversation going smoothly 2.2, d) learning flexibility to differentiate according to the situation, interlocutor, etc. and to eliminate ambiguity would solve some of my communication problems 2.6. The means for all the five subcomponents of the sociocultural competence are significantly lower than the highest point 5 of Likert satisfaction scale.

Table 18

*Students' Perceptions of Pragmatic Competence*

Features of Pragmatic competence	Satisfaction
1) Teaching how to integrate sub-themes, develop particular points and round off with an appropriate conclusion.	2.2
2) It is helpful to learn how to maneuver with language and use other options when I lack the ability to say what I want to say.	2.4
3) I need to learn time gaining phrases such as where are we. say it again in the oral skills to keep the conversation going smoothly	2.2
4) Learning flexibility to differentiate according to the situation, interlocutor, etc. and to eliminate ambiguity would solve some of my communication problems	2.6

This indicates that the students perceived the strategic competence features as of low importance to teaching and learning the oral competence in their second language.

ANOVA single factor analysis of mean difference was used to test the difference between the students' perceptions of the importance of the four features of the notion of CC. Upon reviewing the results in Table 19, the test indicated that the assumption made in Tables 15, 16, 17, 18 that the means are equal was validated. Consequently, the null hypothesis that there is no difference in the students' perceptions of the different features of the notion of CC is accepted;  $p > 0.05$  (Means are the same) *P-Value* 1.000.

Table 19

*ANOVA Analysis of the Students' Perception of CC*

Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance			
Linguistic Competence	20	204	10.2	95.6421			
Sociolinguistic Competence	25	255	10.2	105.083			
Pragmatic Competence	29	302	10.4137	127.394			
Strategic Competence	15	153	10.2	65.8857			
ANOVA							
Source Of Variation	SS	Df	MS	F	P > .05	P-	F Crit
Between Groups	0.89360	3	0.29786	0.00286	Value	2.71192	
Within Groups	8828.63	85	103.866		1.000	1	
Total	8829.52	88					

**Findings of Research Question 3.a**

What are the students' perceptions of their listening and speaking skills during and after they have finished the courses?

Question 1 of the end of term student survey explored what variety of English do the instructors focus on when teaching the oral skills, Table 20. Some studies showed, e.g., Söderlund and Modiano (2002), and Hutig (2006), that instructors of English prefer teaching British English over American English for being formal, correct, and strict.

Table 20

*Students' Perspectives on the Instructors' Focus on English Varieties*

British	American
63%	37%

The findings in Table 20 indicated that the instructors use British than American English in the oral skills classes. These findings agree with previous studies in the field.

**Linguistic fossilization** .Fossilization, as defined by Selinker and Lamendella (1978), is a permanent state of stagnation of the language learner in interlanguage competence. Interlanguage competence fossilization hinders the development of the target language norms at all levels including linguistic and nonlinguistic. Fossilization could be the result of factors such as training transfer (Graham, 1981), learning strategies (Sims, 1989), communication strategy (Ellis, 2002) or,. overgeneralization (Ellis, 2000). Question 2 of the end of term student, “I am aware of doing some mistakes that I cannot get rid of”, explored the students’ interlanguage competence fossilization. A significant number of the participants, 60% ,agreed and 10% strongly agreed that they are aware of some mistakes in language use that they cannot get rid of. The number of the undecided was 5% ; whereas 3% said they do not have any sign of fossilization

**Sociocultural fossilization**. Learning occurs when teaching (scaffolding) creates real opportunities for the learners to transform their world actively instead of just conforming to it (Donato, 1994). Ellis (2000) stated that sociocultural theory focuses on how learners accomplish tasks and how the interaction between learners can scaffold and assist in the L 2 acquisition process. If these principles are ignored and teachers insist on

inculcating fixed routines and traditional treatment of skills, the result will be what Vygotsky called “cultural fossilization”. Question 3 asked if the students are aware of any sociocultural fossilization. A significant number of the participants, 59%, agreed and 19% strongly agree that they are aware of problems related to how to speak English according to the sociocultural context. Those who were undecided counted for 13%; whereas those who said that they are not aware of any cultural related language use problems comprise 8%.

**Communicative ability in real-time communication.** Question 4 tapped into the type of difficulties the students have when engaging in real time communication. A significant number of the participants expressed their inability to cope up with the context of use in real time communication. Seventy percent agreed and 16% strongly agreed that they find it difficult to modify their speech according to the context of use when speaking English. Eight percent of the sample and 2% reported that they have no difficulties with modifying their oral production with the context of use.

**Students’ motivation.** Question 5 of the end of term survey asked the students whether using English in their listening and speaking classes has motivated them to continue learning the foreign language and use it outside of the classroom. Most of the participants stated that they use their oral skills to communicate in English outside of the university classroom. The participants also expressed their intentions to seek opportunities to develop these skills outside of the university classes. Significant number of the students, 62% agreed and 25% strongly agreed that they feel motivated to develop and use their oral skills even after graduating from the university, 3% were neutral and

10% said they do not feel motivated to develop their oral skills after they have finished the course.

**Pragmatic communicative ability.** Questions 6 of the end of term survey, “Learning about the context of use helped me appreciate the English language better”, asked the students to evaluate, on a Likert scale, their instructors’ focus on the pragmatic competence through teaching the context of use and appropriateness. The results showed that 75% of the participants disagreed and strongly disagreed that their instructors focus on the pragmatic competence, 15% strongly agreed, whereas 7% were neutral, and 3% think that their instructors do not teach pragmatic competence.

**Students’ monitor system.** In his theory of second language acquisition, Krashen, (1982) argued that the only function of learning is editing and monitoring learners’ production of their new language. Learners who use their monitoring system suffer from hesitancy and overcorrection when they use their language. Accuracy oriented approach to teaching the oral skills emphasize grammatical competence to achieve accuracy. Learners who utilize their monitor excessively resist exposure to challenging structures and resort to negative learning strategies such as avoidance, frequent pauses and hesitancy that would cause communication breakdown (Bryne, 1986; Crystal 1977; Ellis 2009; Nation, 1991).

Question 7 explored how the students use their linguistic competence to monitor their language use. The students’ responses to the prompt, “you shouldn’t say anything in the language until you can say it correctly”, showed that significant number of the participants, 61%, strongly agreed that they utilize their monitor to make pauses to edit

their oral production; whereas 9% were neutral. Those who disagreed counted for 28% of the participants.

**Importance of speaking with Excellent accent.** Question 8 of the end of term survey “It is important to speak a foreign language with an excellent accent” explored how the students perceived the importance of accent when learning their oral skills. A significant number of the participants 70% agreed and 27% strongly agreed that it is important to speak a foreign language with an excellent accent whereas 3% of the sample understudy was neutral. None of the participants disagreed with the prompt.

Question 10 of the end of term survey explored the type of English the participants think they speak, British or American. The results in Table 21 showed that the Libyan English majors almost use both of the two varieties equally. This finding supports Outland’s 2005 claim that learners of English usually mix the two varieties under the influence of media.

Table 21

*Use of English Variety in Teaching the Oral Skills*

British	American
48%	53%

Question 11 explored the students’ perception of their general communicative competence in English after they have finished the oral skills course. The findings in



Table 22 showed that the majority of the participants feel that their spoken English is limited and they are planning to improve their skills outside of the university classes.

Table 22

*Students' Perception of their Speaking Ability*

CC Feature	%
A bilingual (a person who speaks two languages )	14%
I can work in any job that needs a fluent English speaker	9%
I am planning to improve my spoken English outside of the university classes	67%
My spoken English is still limited and I can read and write more than I can speak	10%

Question 12 explored the students' beliefs on what makes up a speaker' of English competence. The findings in Table 23 showed that the majority of the participants believe that being fluent in English as one is in his or her first language is a characteristic of a good foreign language speaker.

Table 23

*Students' Beliefs about What Makes up Communicative Competence*

I consider my a speaker of English if I can:	%
Be fluent in English as I am fluent in my first language	23%
Speak as fast as the native speakers do with a good accent	57%
Understand native and non- native speakers	30%

The findings of the instructor survey and the head of the department showed that one of the controversial issues was who chooses the teaching material and textbooks for teaching the oral skills. Question 14 of the end of term student questionnaire investigated if the instructors adopt any learner-centered approach where the students are given opportunities to choose the classroom topics. The results in Table 24 indicate that the majority of the participants reported that the students have no role in choosing the topics in the oral skill class.

Table 24

*Students' Role in Choosing the Teaching Material*

Who chooses the topics in the listening and speaking classes?	%
The students help the teacher with choosing the topic	14%
The teacher	42%
The class just follows the topics in the book	44%

### **Findings of Question 3.b**

How do the students evaluate their oral competence on learners' self-descriptors can do statements?

As was mentioned in chapter four, CEFR descriptors are sets of criteria and procedures for scaling and characterizing the different levels of language proficiency. The proficiency descriptors indicate a hierarchical development of the language acquisition process. The descriptors address different scales of language proficiency and each scale matches specific communicative ability related to a subcomponent of the learners communicative competence. The CEFR descriptors are effective tools for both assessing the learners' achievement and level of proficiency.

The analysis of the student's self-assessment descriptors in this study looked into what do the students think they can do with their oral skills after finishing the four levels of their listening and speaking courses. The results showed that the can-do reports were obtained from 54 student participants: 51 fourth year English majors and 3 were graduates in the academic year 2012/2013. The can-do statements assessed students' ability to perform certain CC features. The can-do statements were categorized according into the communicative features they indicate with regard to the different features of the notion of communicative competence.

**Students' self-evaluation of their pragmatic competence.** a) I can easily follow complex interactions between third parties in-group discussion and debate, even on abstract and complex unfamiliar topics n = 13 (24%), b) I can understand complex technical information, such as operating instructions, specifications for familiar products and services (n = 19 (10%), c)I can easily follow and contribute to complex interactions

between different speakers in-group discussion even on abstract, complex unfamiliar topics ( $n = 8$  (15%), (d) I can understand any native speaker, even on abstract and complex topics of a specialist nature beyond my own field, given an opportunity to adjust to a non-standard accent or dialect  $n = 10$  (19%), I can keep up my side of the dialogue extremely well, structuring the talk and interact with complete fluency as interviewer or interviewee, at no disadvantage to a native speaker  $n = 9$  (17%), I can give clear, smoothly flowing, elaborate and often memorable descriptions  $n = 6$  (11%), e) I can show great flexibility reformulating ideas in differing linguistic forms to give emphasis, to differentiate according to the situation, interlocutor etc. and to eliminate ambiguity  $n = 7$  (13%). The mean for the pragmatic competence can-do responses is  $M = 10.285$ ).

***Students' self-evaluation of their linguistic competence.*** a) I can convey finer shades of meaning precisely by using, with reasonable accuracy, a wide range of descriptive devices (e.g. adverbs expressing degree, clauses expressing limitations  $n = 35$  (65%)), b) I can give emphasis, differentiate and eliminate ambiguity,  $n = 40$  (74%), c) I can express myself at length with a natural, effortless, unhesitating flow and pause only to reflect on precisely the right words to express my thoughts or to find an appropriate example or explanation,  $n = 45$  (83%), d) I can exploit a comprehensive and reliable mastery of a very wide range of language to formulate thoughts precisely, give emphasis, differentiate and eliminate ambiguity. No signs of having to restrict what I want to say,  $n = 44$  (81%), e) I can maintain consistent grammatical control of complex language, even while attention is otherwise engaged (e.g. in forward planning, in monitoring others' reactions  $n = 50$  (93%)), f) I can vary intonation and place sentence stress correctly in order to express finer shades of meaning. I have clear, natural, pronunciation and

intonation,  $n = 38(70\%)$ . The mean for the linguistic competence can-do statements responses is ( $M = 42$ ).

***Student self-evaluation of their strategic competence.*** a) I can extract specific information from poor quality, audibly not clear public announcements, e.g., in a station, sports stadium etc,  $n = 3 (5\%)$ , b) I can hold my own in formal discussion of complex issues, putting a clear and persuasive argument,  $n = 10 (19\%)$ , b) I can handle difficult and even hostile questioning ( $n = 8 (15\%)$ , c) I can select a suitable phrase from a readily available range of discourse functions to preface my remarks appropriately in order to get the floor, or to gain time and keep the floor whilst thinking  $n = 6 (11\%)$ , e) I can give elaborate descriptions and narratives, integrating sub themes, developing particular points and end with an appropriate conclusion  $n = (15\%)$ , f) I can select a suitable phrase from a readily available range of discourse functions to preface my remarks appropriately in order to get the floor, or to gain time and keep the floor whilst thinking  $n = 6 (11\%)$ , g) I can give elaborate descriptions and narratives, integrating sub themes, developing particular points and end with an appropriate conclusion( $n = 8 (15\%)$ ). The mean for the strategic competence can-do statements is,  $M = 7$ .

***Student self-evaluation of their sociolinguistic competence.*** a) I can follow specialized lectures and presentations employing a high degree of colloquialism, regional usage or unfamiliar terminology,  $n = 9 (7\%)$ , b) I can understand a wide range of recorded and broadcast audio material, including some non-standard English usage, and identify finer points of detail including implicit attitudes and relationships between speaker,  $n = 9 (7\%)$ , c) I can converse comfortably and appropriately, unrestricted by any linguistic limitations in conducting a full social and personal life,  $n = 7 (13\%)$ , d) I

can present a complex topic confidently and clearly to an audience unfamiliar with it,  $n = 6$  (11%), e) I have a good command of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms with awareness of connotative levels of meaning,  $n = 3$  (6%), f) I can appreciate fully the sociolinguistic and sociocultural implications of language used by native speakers and can react accordingly,  $n = 6$  (11%). The mean for the sociolinguistic competence is,  $M = 6.666$ ).

### Comparing Student Self-Evaluation Results

ANOVA was performed to investigate if there were any differences between the students' responses to the different CC can-do- statements, Table 25. Pragmatic competence descriptors,  $n = 72$ ,  $M = 10.28$ ,  $VAR = 19.904$ , linguistic competence descriptors,  $n = 252$ ,  $M = 42$ ,  $VAR = 29.2$ , strategic competence descriptors,  $n = 37$ ,  $M = 7.4$ ,  $VAR = 3.8$ ) and sociolinguistic competence descriptors,  $n = 40$ ,  $M = 6.66$ ,  $VAR = 5.066$ ).  $f$  value(108.814) is significantly higher than the  $F_{crit}$  and  $p < 0.05$ .

Table 25

#### *ANOVA Analysis of the Student' Competence Self-Descriptors Can-Do- Statements*

Groups	=Count	Sum	Average	Variance	
Pragmatic competence	7	72	10.28571	19.90476	
Linguistic competence	6	252	42	29.2	
Sociolinguistic competence	6	40	6.666667	5.066667	
Strategic competence	5	35	7	7	
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	F crit
Between Groups	5202.863	3	1734.288	108.814	3.098391
Within Groups	318.7619	20	15.9381		
Total	5521.625	23			P < 0.05

This means that the null hypothesis is rejected, alternatively, the difference between the means and variances is not by chance and since the linguistic competence has the highest mean and variance, the students have significantly more control over the linguistic competence can-do- descriptors than they have over the non-linguistic (pragmatic, sociolinguistic, strategic) can-do descriptors.

The students' competence descriptors can-do-statements results indicated that the student have more control over the linguistic competence descriptors than over the non-linguistic statements. These results agreed with the instructors and the students' data analysis results that the oral skills teaching practices and techniques promote the students linguistic competence.

#### **Findings: Research Question 4**

What are the instructors and the students' reactions to the oral skills teaching material and teaching methodology?

**Students' reaction to the teaching material.** As was mentioned in chapter 4, the survey results showed that all the instructors of the oral skills use two textbooks, one for listening and one for speaking, imposed by the department. One of the purposes of this study was to investigate the students' reactions to the teaching material and classroom practice. First, the student's reaction to the teaching material: In order to answer this research question, the survey instrument provided the student respondents with four-characteristics indicative of how the features of CC should be taught and practiced. The respondents were given a Likert scale to show their agreement, and disagreement with 5 strongly agree, 4 agree, 3 disagree, 2 strongly disagree and 1 neither

agree nor disagree. The means and standard deviations and the points of satisfactions are reported in Table 26.

Table 26

*Students' Reaction to the Teaching Material*

Question	(n)	Mean	SD	Satisfaction	CV
1. The teaching material exposed the student to how to use language in real time communication through socially oriented practices	51	12.75	9.63	2.64	2.65
2. opportunities to use strategies to work out communication problems such as paraphrasing, summarizing, the use of time gaining phrases or conversation fillers (where are we, Hmm..., I mean..., now, let me think... Do you know what I mean?... That is an interesting question.	51	12	8.27	3	2.76
3. The teaching material made me aware of how to express appropriate messages in different social and cultural contexts of communication	51	10.2	6.52	2.17	2.00

Question 6 of the student survey asked the participants whether the “Teaching material exposed the students to how to use language in real time communication through socially oriented practices”. The results showed that 8% of the participants strongly agreed, 14% agreed, 27% strongly disagreed, 51% disagreed, and 0% were neutral. The mean  $M = 12.7$ ) and standard deviation,  $SD = 9.63$ , analysis indicate that the responses to this question have a significant variability and since the respondents’ satisfaction rate



was 2.65 on a 5-point Likert scale, the variability leans towards disagreeing and strongly disagreeing that the teaching material teaches the pragmatic aspects of CC.

Question 7 of the student survey asked the participants whether the teaching material gave the students opportunities to use strategies to work out communication problems such as paraphrasing, summarizing, the use of time gaining phrases or conversation fillers (where are we, Hmm..., I mean..., now, let me think... Do you know what I mean? That's an interesting question. The mean standard deviation,  $M = 12$ , and  $SD = 8.27$ , analysis indicate that the response with regard to this question has large variability and since the respondents' satisfaction rate was 2.76 on a five-point Likert scale, the variability leans towards disagreeing and strongly disagreeing that the teaching material teaches aspects of strategic competence.

Question 8 asked the participants whether the "The teaching material made them aware of how to express appropriate messages in different social and cultural contexts of communication". The results showed that the mean of the responses is  $M = 10.2$  and the standard deviation is  $SD = 6.52$ . The statistical results indicated that the responses with regard to this question have large variability and since the respondents' satisfaction recorded 2.00 on a five-point Likert scale, the variability leans towards disagreeing and strongly disagreeing that the teaching material teaches aspects of CC.

Question 13 of the end of term student survey explored, from a student perspective, the type of material and teaching resources the instructors use to teach the oral skills to the Libyan majors of English. The findings of this question indicate that the instructors rely heavily on the textbook as the main source of the learners' input. Table 27 details the distribution of the different teaching resources.

Table 27

*Students' Perspective on the Teaching Material and Resources*

	The book	Films
	83%	0%
Which of the following does the teacher use to teach the listening and speaking skills?	Topics from outside of the book	You tubes
	10%	0%
	Internet	CDs and Cassettes
	0%	0%

**Instructors' reaction to the teaching material.** The teachers were asked to evaluate the current teaching material in order to explore their awareness of the any problems with the content. The findings showed diverse views on the teaching materials, especially the textbook. Instructor 1 stated that it focuses on teaching students presentation skills, participating in seminars, discussions and debates. Instructor 2 contended, I don't see any specific focus that serves teaching the oral skills communicatively. Instructor 3 viewed the content of the textbooks as guiding the students to how to cope up with a text when thy listen and guiding them to the important and useful language for speaking. Instructor 4 stated that the focus of the syllabus is interactive exposure whereas instructor 4 described the content as academic listening and speaking and the focus on speaking B & C courses is on oral presentation and seminars

The instructors were asked to reflect on the content of the teaching material they use, especially, the textbook. The responses showed a variation in the instructors' evaluations of the teaching materials. Instructor 1 reported the use of supplementary material in addition to the textbook "I don't only use the textbook; I prefer to rely on a variety of other sources. Participant 2 said that the content of the textbook is mainly a

promotion of verbal interaction; whereas instructor 3 viewed the content as teaching listening and speaking academically. Participant 4 regarded the content as focusing on academic listening and speaking skills. Instructor 5 expressed dissatisfaction with the textbook by saying the only emphasis I see [in the teaching material] is spreading ignorance. On the other hand, the head of the department stated that the main content of the teaching material is an interaction between the two skills, listening and speaking. However, the instructors use two separate textbooks for teaching the skills; each book has its own content and methodology. This aspect is dealt with in the textbook evaluation section that shed light on how the notion of CC is integrated in each book.

The instructors were also asked whether they believe the book meets the standards of teaching the oral skills? Instructor 1 stated academically the textbook meets the standards of teaching the oral skills. Instructor 2, elaborated, academically speaking, it is well designed and full of heavy exercises, but still boring; whereas instructor 3 reported that the textbook does not meet the standards of teaching the oral skills. Instructor 4, stated, neither the current textbook nor any other textbook is comprehensive enough to meet the standards of teaching the oral skills. Instructor 5 did not provide any answer to this question.

#### **Findings: Research Question 5**

5. Are the features of CC integrated in the material and teaching practices used to teach the English oral skills for the fourth year English major Libyan learners?

**Teaching communicative competence.** To report on their teaching practices regarding the features of CC, question 16 asked the instructors to provide at least two examples of how they might incorporate pragmatic, linguistic, sociocultural and strategic

aspects in the listening and speaking class activities. Instructor 1 reported the use of topics that are related to the students' cultural background. Instructor 2 makes the students listen to extracts and speak about superstitions and /or traditions. Instructor 3 listed two ways of incorporating pragmatic and sociolinguistic features in the oral skills class: 1. using culturally oriented and social events as topics for speaking and listening. 2. Using non-students in the class to talk about culturally oriented events in their society. Instructor 3 stated, Students prepare presentations about culture and society and on a variety of topics. Instructor 4 show[s] videos that have cultural reference and makes students compare and contrast their culture with what is shown to them in class.

Question 17 asked the instructors if they could provide some examples of how they might teach a communication activity(s) in their foreign language class. The results showed that instructor 1 did not report any activities, whereas instructor 2 mentioned, CALL as a tool to bridge the gap in communication between native and nonnative speakers, but it is not currently used. Instructor 3 explained, to enable my students to communicate effectively, I use their listening and speaking skills by letting them listen to authentic material and take notes and summarize, after that students may talk about the topic as if they are in a real lecture. Instructor 4 listed a number of activities that are practiced in the oral skills classroom such as class work, group work, pair work, and individual exercise but the most effective in my opinion is the group work, but of course you need to monitor. Instructor 5 reported the use of face to face, pair work, group work as examples of what he called assimilated communicative activities.

Question 18 asked the instructors to reflect on the syllabus used to teach the oral skills. What would you say is the main content focus of the syllabus? Instructor 1 said

that the syllabus focuses on teaching students presentation skills participating in seminars, discussions and debates. Instructor 2 explained senior faculty members take incorrect decisions regarding the creation of the syllabus and the junior faculty members have not role in this process. Instructor 3 said the syllabus is guiding the students to how to cope up with a text when they listen and guiding them to the important and useful language for speaking. Instructor 4 stated that the main focus of the syllabus is interactive exposure whereas instructor 4 described the content as academic listening and speaking, the focus on speaking B & C is on oral presentation and seminars.

Question 19 asked the instructors to reflect on the content of the textbooks used to teach the oral skills. The purpose was to ask the instructors to evaluate the current teaching material in order to explore their awareness of any problems with its content in general. What would they say is the main content emphasis of the textbook? The results showed different instructors' attitudes towards the textbook. Instructor 1 reported the use of supplementary material in addition to the textbook I don't only use the textbook, I prefer to rely on a variety of other sources. Participant 2 said that the content of the textbook is mainly a promotion of verbal interaction; whereas instructor 3 viewed the textbooks' content as teaching the listening and speaking skills academically. Participant 4 reported that the focus of the textbook content is on academic listening and speaking skills. Instructor 5 expressed dissatisfaction with the textbook by saying the only emphasis I see [in the teaching material] is spreading ignorance. On the other hand, the head of the department stated that the main content of the teaching material is an interaction between the two skills, listening and speaking as shown in Figure 16.

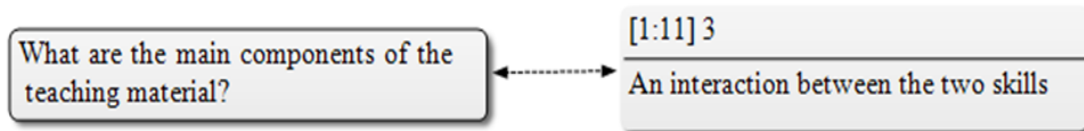


Figure 16. ATLAS.ti Display: Main Components of the Teaching Material

As was mentioned before the instructors use two separate textbooks for teaching the oral skills: *English for Academic purposes: Speaking* and *English for Academic Studies: Listening*. Each of these books has its own content and methodology. This aspect is dealt with in the textbook evaluation section to shed light on inclusion and integration of the notion of CC in each of the textbooks.

Question 20 asked the instructors about who chooses the course book (s) for teaching the oral skills. Instructor 1 said, the instructor chooses the course book, whereas instructor 2 said the senior faculty members choose the course book and I have no role. Instructor 3 and 4 reported the head of the English department chooses the course book. Instructor 5 reported taking part in the preparation of the syllabus in the process of choosing the course book for teaching the oral skills.

Question 21 asked the instructors what do you think is the most important element in helping students acquire listening and speaking skills? The results showed that instructor 1 said the most important element is to activate and extend their linguistic competence. It is also beneficial to increase their confidence and develop their abilities to analyze and evaluate spoken performance. Instructor 2 stated that a native or native-like instructor; in addition, good course materials would help the students develop their oral skills. Instructor 3 said the most important element in teaching the oral skills is some

communicative task, songs, communicative guidance. Instructor 4 stated that guided exposure is the tool to develop the oral skills competence. Instructor 5 believes that practice makes perfection: repeating words and sentences and then using them in real communication and everyday use of language.

Question 22 asked the instructors to provide two examples of how they might incorporate a teaching material that would promote sociocultural / sociolinguistic competence in their listening and/or speaking classes. In the different frameworks of CC and in the SLA literature, the terms sociocultural and sociolinguistic competence are used interchangeably to refer to the sensitivity of language teaching and learning to the conditions and sensitivity of language use. This includes conditions and sensitivity to rules of politeness, norms governing relations between generations, sexes, classes and social groups (CEFR, p. 13). Instructor 1 stated Perhaps I'd choose some topics that are related to students' cultural background. Instructor 2 delineated two components that need to be included in the teaching material to promote sociolinguistic/ sociocultural competence. The students need to listen to extracts and speak about superstitions and/ or traditions. Instructor 3 stated using culturally oriented social events as topics for speaking and listening that would promote learners' competence. This instructor suggested involving non-students in the class to talk about culturally oriented events in their societies. Instructor 4 stated that in the class, most of the topics discussed are about other cultures and how they differ from our own cultures. Instructor 5 mentioned, Class work, group work, pair work and individual exercises but the most effective in my opinion is the group work but of course you need to monitor.

## **Textbook Evaluation Results**

The instructors reported that they use *English for Academic purposes: Speaking* used as the textbook to teach the speaking skill and *English for Academic Studies: Listening* used as the textbook to teach the listening skills. In order to explore the content of these textbooks, a comprehensive evaluation was conducted using textbook evaluation criteria explained in chapter four.

**Course background** .The two books are part of the Garnet Education series English for Academic Study (EAS). The course is published in collaboration with practicing teachers of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) from the University of Reading international Study and English medium studies. The series website states, The EAS series comprises eight separate EAP Course Books, covering the essential skills for English-medium study. The series has been designed for students on pre-sessional and foundation courses within CEFR LEVELS B2 TO C2/IELTS 5.0–7.5+. This background reveals three facts about the course. First, it is designed to help international students to merge in the British academic system. Second, it is specially designed to develop English for Specific Purposes (ESP) language skills. Third, the course is based on the CEFR standards and IELTS standardized test.

**Date of publication.** The most updated edition of the textbooks is 2012; however, the English department uses the 2007 editions. The two editions have the same content. The only difference is between the heading and the subheading, e.g., in the 2007 edition of the speaking course, unit 7 heading is the world or Work and the subheading is supporting your point of view are flipped over in 2012 edition.



**The introduction claims.** The introduction to the two textbooks puts much emphasis on the ESP nature of the course. The Speaking textbook introduction states that the main aim of the book is to help the learners develop the speaking skills required for academic seminars and discussions [and for] effective [academic] presentations (the introduction). In this vein, the listening textbooks introductions specifies the focus of the content as to help the learners understand the spoken English of academic lectures and develop note-taking skills.

**The table of contents.** As shown in Tables 28, 29, 30, and 31, the tables of contents for both of the textbooks shows the focus of the teaching material. There are three headings: topic, skill focus, macro skills and language focus, and micro skills.

Table 28

*English for Academic Purposes: Speaking*

	Unit title and topics	Skills focus: macro skills	Micro Skill
Unit One	Listening and lectures Problems of listening Differences between academic lectures	Listening in different languages Issues in understanding spoken English Listening to lectures	None
Unit Two	Introduction to lectures Migration Britain and the European Monetary Union Globalization Magistrates' courts	Thinking about introductions Functions and language of lectures Listening to lectures introduction	Word Stress
Unit Three	Indemnifying key ideas in lecture Franchising	Thinking about key ideas Identifying key points in a lecture Distinguishing key points form examples	Word Families
Unit Five	Note –taking :Part 2 Language learning Changes in the world economy Health in the UK	Returning to you notes Using abbreviation s and symbols Organizing you notes	Word boundaries
Unit Six	Introducing new terminology Embedded words European Union : regulations and directives Market dominance and monopoly	Introducing new terminology Introducing terms and concepts	Weak forms of function words

Table 29

*English for Academic Studies: Speaking Table of contents*

Unit title and topics	Skills focus: macro skills	Micro Skill	Unit title and topics
Unit Seven	What lecturers do in lectures Doing market research Social learning Contestable markets	Macrostructures of lectures	Word families
Unit Eight	Digression Social learning Questionnaires design Integrated rural development	Reasons for digression Identifying digression	Common expressions in lectures

Table 30

*English for Academic Studies: Speaking Table of contents*

Unit	Topic	Skills focus: Macro skills	Language focus: micro skills
Unit One	Communicating in academic situations	Delivering a presentation	Reporting back on a discussion situations Agreeing and disagreeing Using signpost expressions
Unit Two	Seminars and discussions	Recognizing different perspectives  Reaching a balanced conclusion	Comparing perspectives Summarizing the outcome of a discussion Chairing a discussion
Unit Three		Presenting information from a text Anticipating arguments before a discussion	Referring to a text Exchanging opinions

Table 31

*English for Academic Studies: Speaking Table of contents*

Unit	Topic	Skills focus: Macro skills	Language focus: micro skills
Unit Four		Using a text to support your ideas Listening actively Exchanging information	Clarifying and confirming understanding
Unit Five		Presenting information from charts Building on what others have said	Referring to data Referring to what previous speakers have said
Unit Five		Leading a seminar	Review and consolidation
Unit Six		Finding a focus for a presentation Taking turns in a discussion Preparing for a discussion by	thinking the issues through
Unit Seven		Designing a questionnaire Participating in a debate	Expressing quantity
Unit Eight		Presenting a research proposal	Expressing doubt/belief
Unit Nine		Exchanging information	Review and consolidation

The textbooks tables of contents indicate that the focus of the course is mainly on ESP. In order to scrutinize the content, one full unit was chosen from each textbook for complete analysis. The units were evaluated according to the following criteria:

**Sample unit for evaluation from the textbook: speaking.** The importance of reflection

Studying in a new environment

Study points:

Practice exchanging information

Reflect on what you have gained from your time on this course

Task analysis

Task 1:

Students evaluate their experience in a foreign culture and new learning environment

Reflect on three aspects they have found in their new learning environment: surprising, enjoyable, difficult

Academic skill: Note taking

Task 2: Reflection

Students reflect on their cultural shock in the UK guided by psychological research findings

Academic skill: Putting events in chronological order

Activities: Pair work discussions of the stages of cultural shock

Individual work: making suggestions to people who might go through your experience

Task 3: Listening to Cultural advice

Activity: Listening comprehension:

Students listen to recordings from international graduate students at a British university recounting their experience and the problems they faced and offer advice to the future students.

Classroom activities:

Note taking, information gap activities, evaluating the two students' recounts of their task.

Task 4:

Advising other international students

Students reflect on their experience to write advice to new international students coming to their university

Activities: Group work, note taking, talking from notes

One of the group makes PowerPoint presentation of the collected information

Judging the best advice given by the different groups in the class

Task 5:

Activity: Reading

Content: Students read about different students' comments on the academic culture in their countries the readings focus on the different academic traditions around the world with regard to practices such as essay writing, group work, tutoring, opportunities to speak with your professor, societal conceptions of students (values, devalued), student-professor relationship, classroom interaction, class numbers, length of academic programs, students wellbeing and student support.

Task 6: Assessing your progress

Using student's self-evaluation descriptors to estimate their current proficiency level

Group work: Comparing the results with another student

Task 7: Developing your spoken English Further

Activity: the students are asked to identify the areas of English they need to develop

How do they plan to do so?

Writing task: write some concluding reflections on you progress in speaking on this course

Post course activities: students are encouraged to continue using their diaries

Web resources: [www.englishforacademicstudy.com](http://www.englishforacademicstudy.com). The link will provide you with comprehensive information with the theory behind curial differences

**Sample unit for evaluation from the textbook: listening.** Identifying key ideas in lectures

Study points

- practice identifying the key points a lecturer wants to make
- distinguish key points from examples
- use your understanding of examples to deduce key points
- develop your understanding of relationships between ideas
- learn patterns of pronunciation and word stress in word families

Task 1: Thinking about key ideas

Activity: group work study questions

1. Why is it important to recognize key ideas (or main points) in a lecture?
2. Why do lecturers use examples?

Task 2: Topic: Franchise

Skill: Listening

Content: Business English

Identifying key points in a lecture

Activity: listening to a lecture about franchise

Answer discussion questions about the lecture

Task 3: Discussing key points from examples

Discussing what the student thinks the lecture will talk about next with another student.

Skill: Listening

Activity: Listening to part two of the lecture about franchise

Type of activity: individual and pair work

Macro skills: taking notes, comparing notes

Skill: Listening and reading

Micro skill: identifying the supporting ideas

Task 4:

Signposting and highlighting key points

Skill: Listening to lectures part 3

Macro skills: taking notes, comparing notes

Activity: group work and individual work

Skill: writing, Fill in the blanks

Activity: listening and writing, Listening and taking notes

Task 5: Macro word families

Noun verb and adjectives that have the same stem

Syllabus stress and meaning shift (verb, noun)

Morphology: Affixation: prefix and suffix

Activity: writing, fill in the blanks

Activity: listening/ writing

Focus: using adjectives

Unit summary: students reflect on their experience of identifying main points in a lecture and how this may help them understand the content of the lecture, understanding the relationships between ideas and learning patterns of pronunciation and word stress.



**Incorporating cc features in the textbooks** .In the sample extracted from the speaking course book, the whole unit is built around the notion of cultural shock. It focuses on teaching the British culture to international students. Most of the activities are built around the positive and negative aspects of the British culture and life styles that the international students have actually experienced during their stay in the UK. The activities elicit real time experience and events from the students to make their responses. There are multiple problems here. First, the book is used in Libya in a foreign language-learning environment where the students have little or no background on how it feels to live in the British culture. Second, there is no balance of the schematic/systematic knowledge. Widdowson (1990) refers to the schematic component as the social knowledge usually acquired naturally in case of the first language. The systematic knowledge involves the linguistic component of language. He further explains that because learners in a foreign language teaching settings have already acquired their first culture component, the social and cultural aspect (schemas) introduced along with the linguistic component (system) should be presented in a framework that pedagogically compromises the sociocultural aspects of the first and the target language. The unit teaches English culture rather than developing the Libyan learners' sociocultural/ sociolinguistic competence. In language teaching, the learners input should comprise the codes of the host culture and the receiving culture by shuttling between cultures and communities (Canagarajah, 2002, p 146).

In the sample unit extracted from English for academic studies: Listening, the focus is on how students identify and distinguish key points, examples and ideas in lectures. The language content is ESP business English and the main topic in this unit is

Franchise. The unit content prioritizes ESP academic English and does very little to promote the features of general communicative competence. Tables 27 and 28 show that the activities and tasks in both the speaking and listening course are ESP oriented, conversely the English department course description states that:

The listening component aims at developing students' ability to understand real-life spoken English in both academic and social context through recordings of spontaneous, natural speech, which include a variety of voices, and speaking styles. The speaking component builds on the listening input to develop speaking skills that help students take part in class and in other academic and general situations.

The statistics in tables 32 and 33 show that a great deal of the exercises and tasks in the unit are on ESP. Additionally, even the general functions in the listening unit serve more hypothesized academic communicative purposes rather than promoting the features of natural real time social type of input.

Table 32

*Skill Distribution in the Listening Textbook*

Skill	No. of Tasks	Task Focus	No. of Tasks
Reading	25%	ESP	55%
Writing	1%	Form	24%
Listening	31%	General	
Speaking	27%	English	21%

Table 33

*Skill Distribution in the Speaking Textbook*

Skill	Task Focus		
Reading	13%	ESP	62%
Writing	20%	Form	2%
Listening	30%	Genera	38%
Speaking	27%	l English	

The syllabus and textbook analyses showed a discrepancy between what is stated in the syllabus and what the textbooks actually include. According to the syllabus, the aim of the listening component is to develop students' ability to understand real-life spoken English in both academic and social context. The aim of teaching speaking is developing speaking skills that help students take part in class and in other academic and general situations. The jargonizing in the syllabus does not serve any real pedagogical reality. EFL and ESL programs usually recognize two categories under the general umbrella of English for Academic purposes (EAP): English for general purposes (EGP) and English for specific purposes (ESP). There is a strong commonality between EAP and ESP. Widdowson 1998 argues EAP is the framework of ESP. The two versions need to be balanced for students to function effectively in their specific field of study. While ESP attends to learners' specific needs, EAP stimulates and develops general communicative competence by providing a wide range of options that address different learners' communicative needs (Hyland, 2006). Conversely, the two textbooks focus more on ESP in an EAP teaching environment, Tables 27 and 28. However, one advantage of the textbooks is the balance of the four skills: reading, writing, listening and

speaking. The skills are neatly integrated with balanced weight of tasks for each skill, but in a strictly oriented ESP context and content

Many applied linguists have defined contextualization. Mazzeo , Ran and Alssid (2003) proposed that contextualization refers to “ a diverse family of instructional strategies designed to more seamlessly link the learning of foundational skills and academic or occupational content by focusing teaching and learning squarely on concrete applications in a specific context that is of interest to the student ( pp.-4)”. The content of the course should serve as a context for teaching the different features of CC and develop the learner’ communicative skills. This can be achieved by teaching language/culture in a context that links the learners’ input to real life. The teaching content should make direct reference to real time events and practices( Marinelli- Henriques & Assiri, 2010; Sticht, 2005). In CLT, contextualized language items are presented to the learner in a meaningful textualized input rather than treated as discrete isolated items that serve compartmentalized fragments of competence. In the two textbooks for listening and speaking, the teaching material and tasks are academically oriented and have little or no relevance to real time language transactions. As stated by the course description, the head of the department and the instructors, the main goal of the Libyan English major is to get a job as teachers of English, translators, interpreters and only a few will be engaged in academic lecturing after graduation. The contextualization of the teaching content does not focus on the needs and interests of the Libyan learners.

The evaluation results revealed that the textbooks teach ESP content that focuses on one aspect of the students’ communicative competence. The extracted material from the textbooks

## **Test Analysis**

As was pointed out in chapter four, the test analysis process explored how the oral skills are tested in general and which communicative competence component (sociolinguistic, pragmatic, linguistic, and strategic) is the focus to the tests. Chappelle and Brindley (2010) define testing as “the act of collecting information and making judgments about a language learner’s knowledge of a language and ability to use it”, (p. 247). According to McManara (2000), the assessment process can be traditional that involves “paper-and-pencil language tests and performance tests or non-traditional that uses checklists, journals, logs, videotapes and audiotapes, self-evaluation, and teacher observations, etc. The other purpose of the test analysis was to explore the methods and techniques used in the oral skills testing process.

In general, the instructors were asked about the way they test the students’ oral production. Participant 1 stated that assessing the oral skills is one of the biggest challenges in language teaching. This participant uses three different tools to evaluate the students’ oral production: interviews, group work and taped answers. The overall strategy is the use of holistic approach in scoring and feedback. Participant 2 stated that at the university, the students’ record a monologue and [the instructor] grade it according to the range of vocabulary and grammatical correctness.

The same participant suggested that the oral skills should be evaluated by conducting interviews where two candidates are given prompts and assessed according to their grammatical resources, lexical resources, discourse management, pronunciation and interactive communication. Participant 3 evaluates the students by using interviews and exams. However, this participant said these strategies cannot be implemented in the

department because of its strict testing policies. Participant 4 assesses the students through breaking down the components of speaking and listening without further explanation. Participant 5 stated that assessing the oral skills is a very big issue and needs many pages since there are many ways for testing the oral skills without delineating which way the participant is using to test the students in this particular department.

In another question, the instructors were asked to state the methods they use to assess the non-linguistic aspects of language learning. The underlying rationale was to elicit any discussions of the non-linguistic components of the notion of CC, pragmatic, strategic or sociolinguistic. Participants 1 & 2 stated that they use systematic observation by keeping records while participant 3 uses interviews and exams. Participant 4 reported the use of scales for appropriateness, organization and coherence, grammar, vocabulary and spelling. Participant 5 stated that the one disadvantage of the testing system in the department is that they usually do not assess the non-linguistic aspects of the oral skills. Two of the five participants reported using specific criteria to assess the speaking ability based on Harris (1969) which focuses on testing linguistic competence. Following is the criteria that Harris suggested in order to show which component of CC it focuses on.

The students were asked to evaluate their oral skills testing experience. The results in Table 34 show the students' evaluation and reflection on the oral skills testing procedures. The satisfaction point indicates the level of agreement to the question statement. The closer the satisfaction point to 5, the higher is the number of the responses that agree with the question's statement. The students reported that they suffer from fossilization issues that have never been included in the test items. These issues are grammatical, phonological and communication. The responses point of satisfaction on 5-

point Likert scale for this question was 4.52. This means that the students strongly agreed that the testing material is not testing different aspects of the communicative competence. In order to explore this point further, the next question asked whether the testing material focused on testing the grammaticality of their oral production rather than on testing the meaningfulness of their messages. The high satisfaction rate of the responses 4.72/ 5 indicates that the students strongly agree with the statement. The students also strongly agreed with the statement though they know a lot of grammar, they face many difficulties in answering oral questions. The point of satisfaction for this response was 3.78/5. Most of the students strongly agreed that they prefer to have written than oral tests. The satisfaction point was 4.6/5. The students also strongly agreed that the testing material and processes did not give them a real opportunity to express their oral skills. The point of satisfaction is 4.3. These results indicate that the test content focuses on testing the linguistic competence rather than giving

Table 34

*Students' Evaluation of the Testing Process*

Question	Satisfaction
1. I am aware that I have grammatical, communication and pronunciation problems that were never tested by my instructors	4.52
2. The testing material focused on how to speak grammatically rather than on how to get my meaning cross	4.72
3. I know a lot of grammatical rules but I still cannot answer the speaking tasks in the test	3.78
4. I prefer to have written rather than speaking tests	4.5
5. The testing process and material did not give me real chance to express my oral skills	4.3

The exams analysis in this study aimed at investigating whether the exam content tested the different features of the students' communicative competence. The investigation focused on which feature of the notion of communicative competence (linguistic, pragmatic, strategic, sociolinguistic) was given the most importance in the teaching process, subsequently, has the most emphasis in the exam. The test content was analyzed using the same CEFR descriptors of the learner's communicative competence. Two midterm exams listening and speaking exams were analyzed in this study to investigate how the achievement of specific course objectives set up by the syllabus were assessed. The CEFR delineated 12 qualitative categories for assessing oral interaction strategies. The CEFR scales for oral assessment are:

- ❖ Turntaking strategies
- ❖ Co-operating strategies
- ❖ Asking for clarification
- ❖ Fluency
- ❖ Flexibility
- ❖ Coherence
- ❖ Thematic development
- ❖ Precision
- ❖ Sociolinguistic competence
- ❖ General range
- ❖ Vocabulary range
- ❖ Grammatical accuracy
- ❖ Vocabulary control



#### ❖ Phonological control

These descriptors are inclusive of the features of CC (linguistic, pragmatic, strategic, and sociolinguistic), therefore, they are used in this analysis as general guidelines against which the oral skills' exam was checked. According to the head of the department, the exams were created by the instructors under the supervision of the head of the department and the course coordinator. The speaking exam was conducted in the language lab and the students respond to written questions by recording their answers in audio cassettes to be evaluated by the instructors. The time allowed for the speaking midterm exam is 1:30 minutes. The speaking test has three parts. Part 1 has 9 items and the question wording says, "Respond to the following situations adequately and speak naturally". The use of the terms "adequately and naturally" might be confusing to the student; moreover, these terms do not have clear pedagogical purpose to serve in the assessment of the oral skills. The conception of adequacy in speaking is defined differently in the different pedagogical approaches to teaching the oral skills. The use of the term "natural" here is confusing to the students since different evaluators could also interpret "naturalness" in speaking differently. Part 1 of the speaking test contextualized formal and informal language use such as self-introduction, formal and informal introductions, invitations, casual encounters of people and complimenting. Part 2 of the speaking midterm exam asks the students to speak about a possible change in his/ her life and how would this change affect self-confidence. Part 3 of the exam asked the students to give the common possible meaning of a number of gestures illustrated by pictures (see Appendix 7).

A big chunk of the test dealt with the language of introduction. The test reflected situational language teaching and asked the students to recycle ready-made statements of introductions in different situations. There is no real opportunity in the exam for the students to reflect their communication abilities. The majority of the questions (85%) require short answers of isolated decontextualized sentences that would possibly allow for assessing limited features of the oral communication such as grammatical accuracy and pronunciation. Examples of such questions are:

You are at a friend's party. You see a new person standing near you. Introduce yourself

You are at a university event and your cousin is with you to meet your instructor. Introduce your English instructors. There are total of 9 items of these questions. This type of questions is indicative of the teaching content and methodology. The examiner is expecting the reproduction of different formulas for introduction memorized by the examinees in the course of their language learning. The listening midterm exam comprised two parts. In part 1, the examinees listen to a passage about dying languages and answer 10 true/ false questions items. In part 2, the examinees listen to a lecture on speaking more than one language and select the correct answers from two choices (a and b). Examining the individual test items showed that they are structured around the concept of "listening for specific information". Most of the questions 90 % asked about specific numbers, dates and names. The topic is strictly academic that reflected the content of the teaching material covered in the textbook evaluated section. The content of the question is compatible with the ESP content of the textbooks.

The most of the rubric criteria used by the instructors for evaluating the students' oral productions assesses grammatical competence. The evaluation recognized five main categories: pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension. Each category has five subcategories descending from the best response granted 5 grades to the least acceptable response, granted 1 grade. The rubric has 25 subcategories of which 19 refer to the student's ability to produce grammatically correct language content, Table 35 E.g., , the five fluency descriptors are:

1. Speech is quite flowing style, mostly easy to understand (5 points)
2. Speech seems to be slightly affected by language problems (4 points)
3. Speed and fluency are rather strongly affected by language problems (3 points)
4. Usually hesitant; often forced into silence by language limitation (2 points)
5. Speech is so halting and fragmentary as to make conversation virtually impossible (1 point)

The criteria uses qualitative terms such as “quite flowing”, “mostly easy”, “seems to be”, “slightly affected”, “usually hesitant” to indicate quantitative values. The problem with this approach is that the choice between assigning 4 points and 3 points is controlled by whether the evaluator will decide the response is “slightly affected” or “rather strongly affected” by the language problems. Further complication of the assessing process in this sense rises from defining the term “language problems”. Different evaluators may perceive these problems differently.

Table 35

*Oral Skills Rubric Used by Instructors*

Language Aspect	Score	Characteristics
Pronunciation	5	Speech consists of almost appropriate pronunciation
	4	Speech consists of hardly incorrect pronunciation
	3	Speech consists of some inappropriate pronunciation
	2	Speech consists of mostly inappropriate pronunciation
	1	Speech consists of very poor pronunciation
Grammar	5	Makes few (if any) noticeable errors of grammar or word order
	4	Occasionally makes grammatical and/ or word order errors which do not, however obscure meaning
	3	Makes frequent errors of grammar and word order which occasionally obscure meaning
	2	Grammar and word order errors make comprehension difficult. Most often rephrase sentences and / or restrict him/herself to basic patterns
	1	Errors in grammar and word order so severe as to make conversation virtually unintelligible
	5	Use of wide range of vocabulary taught previously
	4	Sometimes uses inappropriate terms and /or must rephrase ideas because of inadequate vocabulary
	3	Frequently uses the wrong words; conversation somewhat limited because of inadequate vocabulary.
	2	Misuse of words and very limited vocabulary make comprehension quite difficult
	1	Vocabulary limitations extreme as to make conversation virtually impossible

Table 36

*Oral Skills Rubric Used by Instructors*

Language Aspect	Score	Characteristics
Fluency	5	Speech is quite flowing style, mostly easy to understand
	4	Speech seems to be slightly affected by language problems
	3	Speed and fluency are rather strongly affected by language problems
	2	Usually hesitant; often forced into silence by language limitation
	1	Speech is so halting and fragmentary as to make conversation virtually impossible
Comprehension	5	Ideas highly organized , covers all of the elements of the content
	4	Ideas well organized, some covers almost all of the elements of the content
	3	Ideas less organized, some missing parts of the elements of the content
	2	Ideas less organized, covers only the main elements of the content
	1	Unorganized ideas, a lot of missing parts of the elements of the content

These findings are further discussed in the next chapter through making linkages between the different data segments to explore the internal relations between the informants responses in light of the study purpose.

## **Chapter 6: Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations**

This study explored the incorporation of the features of the notion of CC in teaching the oral skills to the Libyan English majors. Consequently, this study examined the instructors' perceptions and cognition of the notion of CC that will reflect on the incorporation and implementation of the CC features when teaching the oral skills. Teacher cognition refers to "unobservable cognitive dimension of teaching-what teachers know, believe, and think" (Borges, 2003, p. 81). The study also explored students' perceptions and evaluation of their communicative competence during and after they have finished the oral skills courses. The evaluation of the teaching material in this study aimed at investigating the incorporation of the notion of CC in the textbooks used to teach the oral skills. The investigation combined a qualitative/ quantitative data analysis tools to further the process of data exploration (Gliner, Morgan, & Leech, 2009, p. 21). The study endeavored to answer the research questions stated in chapter one. The following sections of this chapter discuss the results in light of the study research questions.

### **Recognizing Standards for Teaching Communicative Competence**

The study investigated whether the English department stakeholders follow any standards-based approach when teaching the oral skills and whether any of the features of the notion of CC (linguistic, pragmatic, sociolinguistic, and strategic) is recognized when introducing any teaching standards. Examples of teaching standards suggested in this study were the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, Learning, teaching, assessment or any local standards that would guide the learning and teaching objectives. Upon analysis of the data, the English department stakeholders are not aware

of any standards for language teaching and learning. To investigate how the instructors managed their course design and material selection, the study investigated whether the instructors introduce any common standards of reference for the oral skills instructional design.

Upon analysis of the data, the instructors responded that they do not introduce any specific standards, local or international, when teaching the oral skills. The standards movement has been a major impact in contemporary language teaching. Standards-based approaches have developed within the International TESOL Association and many versions of language teaching standards have been recognized around the world (Nunan, 2007, p. 428). Instructional design has drawn heavily on the standards-based movement to specify teaching and learning objectives. Competency-based teaching which is “criterion-referenced rather than norm-referenced” needs minimum specified standards (NSW Adult Migrant Education Service, 1993). The lack of common standards adopted by the department and the oral skills instructors might have negative impact on specifying the “what” and “how” of teaching the oral skills. Meier (1992) argues, “teachers should have the time to develop common standards for student work” (p. 602). Similarly, Hrgreaves (2000) views professionalism in language teaching as improving quality and standards of practice. Conversely, the Libyan instructors of the oral skills to the Libyan students majoring in English did not report any awareness of any of the international standards of English language teaching. Standards-based instruction underpins many of the competency-based education in North America, Europe (CEFR), Australia and Common Asian Framework of References for Languages in Learning, Teaching, and Assessment (CAFR). Most of these frameworks have drawn heavily on the

notion of communicative competence to build up competency-based language teaching and learning. The instructors' unawareness of these standards reflects negatively on the teaching process. Nunan (2007) argues: "standards are being developed for the development and evaluation of program specifications, setting criteria for professional employment, and describing and evaluation of effective teacher behavior" (p. 422). The results of showed the lack of common standards for teaching the oral skills, consequently, a lack of a framework of reference for the content, development and evaluation of the teaching and learning process.

### **Recognizing Standards for Teaching Communicative Competence**

The study investigated how teachers perceived the importance of teaching the features of the notion of communicative competence when teaching the oral skills to the Libyan majors of English." For the purpose of this study, perception was connected to scope as postulated by Eggen and Kauchak (2001) who see perception as cognitive process. Perception of CC is the process by which the instructors link their cognition to real experience and classroom practice. Perception is also the power that underpins and affects behavior (Atweh, Bleicker & Cooper, 1998; Calderhead, 1996; Cillessen & Lafontana, 2002). Instructors' perception here refers to their background knowledge that forms their perceptions schemas, consequently, influences their classroom practices. Measuring the instructors' perceptions will inform about their pedagogical beliefs and practices (Bandura, 1997). According to Tillema (2000) and Wong (2010), these beliefs play a vital role in instructional decision-making and teaching practices.

The notion of communicative competence was broken into its four main features as was discussed in the literature review, viz., linguistic, pragmatic, sociolinguistic and



strategic. The results showed that the instructors have strong positive attitudes towards teaching linguistic/grammatical competence with “teaching syntax” achieved very high satisfaction. The instructors perceived teaching cohesion and coherence, teaching sentence structures and teaching verb conjugation in the oral skills as of a very high importance.

Statistically significant results indicated that the instructors’ perceived strategic competence as of very low importance in teaching and learning the oral skills. The instructors had negative attitudes towards teaching the features of strategic competence. The instructors’ assigned low importance to teaching flexibility to differentiate according to the situation, interlocutor, etc. and to eliminate ambiguity. Teaching the ability to maneuver with language to compensate for lack of knowledge was considered of low importance. The results also showed that the instructors believed that teaching stalling or time gaining phrases such as “where are we?”, “say it again” in the oral skills class does not contribute to developing the students’ communicative competence. The instructors also perceived teaching how to integrate sub-themes, develop particular points and round off with an appropriate conclusion as of low importance to the oral skills.

The results for the instructors’ perception of the importance of pragmatic competence in teaching the oral skills showed that they have a positive attitude towards teaching pragmatic competence in general. The instructors in this study also have positive attitude towards teaching how to reformulate ideas according to the situation, interlocutor and to eliminate ambiguity and towards teaching communication in the oral skills. The instructors perceived teaching cohesion and coherence in conversations in the oral skills as of high importance; however, the instructors perceived the features of teaching

communication strategies and teaching how to choose suitable phrases from a readily available range of discourse as of low importance.

Generally, the results showed that the instructors perceived teaching the features of sociolinguistic competence as of very low importance. The instructors have a negative attitude towards teaching the sub- features of sociocultural competence in the oral skills. There is significant evidence in the results that the instructors viewed teaching routines, fixed phrases, expression, collocations and idioms in the oral skills as of low importance to promoting the oral skills. The instructors gave very low importance to teaching dialects and language varieties in the oral skills class. The feature teaching rhetorical and conversational organization in the oral skills was assigned the highest importance with regard to the other features of sociolinguistic competence.

Overall, the results indicate the Libyan university instructors perceive sociolinguistic and strategic competences as of a very low importance; consequently, incorporating and teaching these features of CC in in the oral skill class will be negatively affected. The instructors assigned high importance to the linguistic competence, which was expected, as it is the practice of traditional language teaching (Citation) however, an interesting finding of this study was that the instructors assigned very high importance to pragmatic competence. One possible interpretation of this finding is that the instructors' perception of pragmatic competence is relegated to teaching modality and speech acts through grammatical consciousness rising in the traditional framework of the notions “ cohesion and coherence; however, further investigation of the actual classroom practice might reveal more facts about this suggestion .

## **Instructors' Pedagogical Tenets and Teaching Philosophies of CC**

The study investigated the instructor's pedagogical tenets and teaching philosophy that stand behind their classroom practice with regard to teaching the oral skills. The results showed significant statistical indication that the instructors focus more on teaching the linguistic/ grammatical competence when teaching the oral skills. They put more emphasis on accuracy and grammatical correctness. There was strong evidence that the instructors focus on grammatical consciousness raising exercises involving grammatical functions and grammatical items. Their teaching methodology indicated the use of rote learning and the three Ps approach (present, practice, produce) which is associated with the audio-lingual teaching methodology. Conversely, the results showed that the instructors assign very low or no importance to teaching the non-linguistic features of communicative competence (pragmatic, sociolinguistic, strategic) when teaching the oral skills.

Though the instructors put less emphasis on teaching the nonlinguistic features of communicative competence, there is significant qualitative evidence in the teachers' narratives that they hold a positive pedagogical tenet towards the importance of non-linguistic features of CC in general. The instructors agreed that integrating social, cultural and pragmatic notions into teaching the oral skills (listening and speaking) is of great benefits to the learners. All of the instructors agreed that teaching the CC features would reduce hesitancy and awkwardness, influence impressions others have of the ELF and ESL speaker. The instructors also strongly agreed that teaching CC eliminates hesitations and awkwardness, influences impressions others have of the ELF and ESL speaker, Increase self-confidence, facilitate the acquisition of communicative functions (greetings,

apologizing, regretting ) and familiarize learners with native speaker's norms of communication ( Don't over use maybe or please) . Moreover, they agreed that integrating the features of CC would help the students “develop native speaker-like competence? It is evidenced here that there is a gap between theory and practice with regard to teaching the oral skills. Though the instructors hold a theoretical positive attitude towards teaching the nonlinguistic features of the learners' CC, it was not likely that they were able to develop instructional designs that would reflect their pedagogical tents and teaching philosophies. This could be interpreted in the context of lack of training and or it might be the outcome of strict bureaucracy that prevented these instructors from taking part in the process of teaching and learning the oral skills decision-making

### **Students' Perception of the High Importance Learning CC**

The study investigated the students' perception of the different features of the notion communicative competence. Communicative competence was broken down into its four main components recognized by pedagogical approaches: Linguistic/ grammatical, sociolinguistic, pragmatic and strategic (Bachman, 1990; Bachman and Palmer, 1996; Canale & Swain 1980; CEFR, 2012; Celce-Murcia 1995, 2007, Hymes 1972).The first component, linguistic competence, was further broken down into four main components: learning grammatical rules and decontextualized vocabulary, instructors' practices sustainability of rote learning and audio-lingual practices and learners' perceptions of the role of grammaticality in their speech production. Statistically significant evidence from the data analysis indicated that the Libyan English majors believe that grammaticalness and learning vocabulary are the most important components

for learning the oral skills. There is also an indication that learners are encouraged by their instructors to practice these items in the audio-lingual methodology framework. Their instructors encouraged them to memorize, practice and repeat many decontextualized grammatical items. The learners perceived accuracy as more important than fluency and they monitor their oral production for grammatical incorrectness.

The learners assigned the same degree of importance to learning the sociolinguistic competence. The statistical analysis showed that the learners think that teaching and learning the sub features of the sociolinguistic competence would help them improve their communication skills. The students linked proficiency in their foreign language oral production to learning the foreign language norms of use. The students also assigned high importance to teaching and learning to explore variations and options in their foreign language learning.

Statistically significant results also indicated that the students perceived teaching and learning pragmatic competence as of a very high importance. The learners allocated a high degree of importance to the subcomponents of the features of pragmatic competence : focusing on patterns of real life communication is more important than learning grammatical rules and vocabulary list, learning about the non-linguistics aspects of English (when to say what to whom and in what manner) would help me understand and use the English language better sociolinguistic, learning about the context of use would help me appreciate the English language better, learning how to use English in my listening and speaking classes would motivate me to continue learning the foreign language pragmatic, opportunities to communicate in the foreign language are an important part of becoming proficient in that language and I feel I am learning better

when I am exposed to authentic, social, and real-life uses of English. Though the students' perceived these feature as of a very high importance to teaching and learning the oral skills, there was no statistically significant evidence in the results that the instructors put much emphasis on or encourage the students to learn these features.

Equally, the students perceived strategic competence as of a very high importance. For the purpose of this study, four strategic competence subcomponent items were adopted from the CEFR pedagogical specifications of the notion of CC. First, teaching how to integrate sub-themes, develop particular points and round off with an appropriate conclusion. Second, it is helpful to learn how to maneuver with language and use other options when I lack the ability to say what I want to say. Third, I need to learn time gaining phrases such as "where are we?" "Say it again to keep the conversation going smoothly". Fourth, learning flexibility to differentiate according to the situation, interlocutor, etc. and to eliminate ambiguity would solve some of my communication problems. Statistically significant evidence indicated that though the instructors do not put much emphasis on teaching pragmatic competence, the students perceived the high importance of this construct of communicative competence.

There is significant statistical evidence that the students perceive learning sociolinguistic competence as of high importance. There were five sociocultural subcomponent items. First, the students' perceived the importance to speak a foreign language with an excellent accent. Second, culture should be presented in the oral skills class in more of "facts" approach that involved demographics, populations, climates information about government or currency, economics, etc. Third, including cultural aspects of my foreign language in the class would help me learn more about my culture

and myself. Fourth, it is necessary to know the foreign language norms of use in order to become proficient in foreign language sociolinguistic features. Fifth, comparing and contrasting different English varieties (British, American) would help me understand native speakers better than focusing on one variety". Significant number of the students perceived the importance of these feature equally high.

ANOVA single factor analysis of mean difference was used to evaluate the responses regarding the difference between the students' perception of the four features of the notion of CC. Statistically significant evidence indicated that there is no difference in the students' perception of the different features of the notion of CC(  $p > 0.05$ ) (Means are the same) P-Value 1.000. The results indicated that the students are aware of the importance of learning not only the linguistic aspects but also the other components of the notion of CC.

The results also indicated that the though students perceive learning the oral skills involves aspects other than the grammatical competence; however, the teaching practice and teaching methodology takes the learning process to another direction by compartmentalizing the learning skills. Many features of the notion of communicative competence such as strategic competence, pragmatic and sociolinguistic are applicable across the four learning skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking (Oxford, 1990). In the segregated skill approach, the teaching methodology and learning are often separate from content learning. Statistically significant evidence from the data analysis indicated that from students' perspective, the four skills are segregated rather than integrated in the oral skill class. The teachers talk most of the time to provide the oral input and the students follow up with their oral participations. Evidence from the data showed that in

the oral skill class the students suffer from a high level of fossilization. The students are aware of communication problems of which they cannot get rid. These problems are not pertinent to grammatical rules. Statistically significant evidence indicated that, in addition to grammatical fossilization, the students have problems with when to say what and to whom in an appropriate way. Their hesitancy stems from the low confidence they have in their oral production even when they are sure of their grammaticalness. More evidence from the data tells that the students highly believe that focusing on grammaticality and linguistic appropriateness alone does not build the confidence to function in a second language.

### **Students' Negative Reaction to the Teaching Material**

Significant evidence from the results indicated that the instructors do very little to teach the nonlinguistic features of the notion of communicative competence. The students' expressed low satisfaction on Likert five-point scale with their instructors' approach to teach the oral skills. The students strongly agreed that neither the teaching material nor the teaching practices focused on any of the following nonlinguistic aspects of CC: real time communication skills, opportunities to use strategies to work out communication problems such as paraphrasing, the use of time gaining phrases or conversation fillers (where are we, Hmm..., I mean..., now, let me think... Do you know what I mean? That's an interesting question. The results also showed no sign of teaching how to express appropriate messages in different social and cultural contexts of communication.



## **Differences between Students Perception of Learning the Oral Skills during and After the Course**

The study investigated differences, if any, between the students' perception of learning their communication skills during and after they have finished the course.

Question 1 of the end of term student survey explored what variety of English the instructors focused on when teaching the oral skills. Statistically significant evidence indicated that the teaching material and the instructors teach British more than American English. These results agree with some previous studies, e.g., Söderlund and Modiano (2002) which indicated that instructors of English prefer teaching British English over American English for being formal", "correct" and "strict".

As was indicated by during the term student data results, the students are suffering from fossilization. The end of term student data results indicated the same level of fossilization problems that the students have during the course. Fossilization, as defined by Selinker and Lamendella (1978), is a permanent state of stagnation of the language learner in interlanguage competence. Interlanguage competence fossilization hinders the development of the target language norms at all levels including linguistic and nonlinguistic and is the result of factors such as training transfer (Graham, 1981) learning strategies (Sims, 1989), communication strategy (Ellis, 2002) or overgeneralizations (Ellis, 2000). The results indicated that even after finishing the oral skill courses the students are still suffering from linguistic as well as sociolinguistic fossilizations. However, more investigation required to distinguish between four different categories of fossilization (Selinker, 1978). There is the individual fossilization persistence of individual learners and group fossilization that is the plateau in the

diachronic development of a community language. The other category is temporary fossilization which indicates that the development of given features is arrested for a shorter or longer periods whereas permanent fossilization takes place because of social, psychological and interactive variables. No statistically significant difference was found between during the term and end of the term data regarding their language competence fossilization. Persistent features of fossilization may imply training transfer, Learning strategy, communication strategy (Ellis, 2002)

The students are aware of their competence fossilization and they do continual editing and monitoring at the time of their oral productions, thus, communication is hindered. Statistically significant evidence from the results indicated that 61% of the students utilize monitoring and make pauses to edit their oral production.

### **Lack of Communicative Competence Enhanced Hesitancy and Awkwardness**

In his theory of second language acquisition, Krashen (1982) argued that learners who use their monitoring system suffer from hesitancy and overcorrection when they use their language. Accuracy oriented approach to teaching the oral skills that emphasizes grammatical competence to achieve accuracy that encourages learners to utilize their monitoring system excessively. As a result, these learners may resist exposure to challenging structures and resort to negative learning strategies such as avoidance, frequent pauses and hesitancy that would cause communication breakdown (Crystal, 1977; Bryne, 1986 ; Nation, 1991; Ellis, 2009)

The end of term data results also showed that a significant number of students reported having difficulties when engaging in real time communication. There is a lack of ability to cope up with the context of use in real time communication. Statistically

significant results indicated that level of difficulty to modify speech according to the context of use when speaking English is high. These difficulties hindered the students from using their oral skills to communicate effectively outside of the classroom. Their low oral communicative competence effected job opportunities for teaching, translation, clerks in the oil field, and employees in aviation and working for the local and international media. Because of this low oral communicative competence, statistically significant evidence in the results indicated that 87% of the students will join outside of the university classes after they have finished the university to develop their oral communicative competence.

The students will seek to improve their English accent. Statistically significant number of students, 97%, believe that it is of high importance to speak English with an excellent accent. In addition to accent, the end of term data showed that the students 75% believe that learning about the rules of use and language appropriateness is more important than learning about rules of grammar. However, statistically significant evidence from the students' data indicates that the instructors put less emphasis on these features of communicative competence.

### **The Program Did Not Meet Students' Learning Expectations**

The study investigated how the students evaluate their communicative competence after they have finished listening and speaking course C. Self-evaluation descriptors results indicated that the students use American and British English almost equally with 52% to English and 48% to American English. These results are incompatible with during the term data results that the instructors focus on teaching British more than American English. This finding supports Outland's (2005) claim that

learners of English usually mix the two varieties under the influence of media. This might indicate that the students use English for real time communicative function such as using the social media and networks. Instructors can use this potential of real time target language use to promote learning and create communicative task. Another result indicated that after they had finished the program, 89% of the students perceive themselves as foreign language speakers and they do not have enough confidence to work in jobs that require high level of language proficiency. To overcome this problem, 67% of the students expressed their willingness to seek future opportunities to improve their speaking and writing skills outside of the university classes. The results indicated that 10% of the student feel that their English language competence is generally limited after they had finished four years of English major and they think they have no confidence to use their English for any kind of job.

The students defined their communication English skills expectations according to three criteria: First, significantly, 57% of the students were expecting to be as fluent in English as they are in their first language, whereas 23% of the students were expecting to be able to understand native and non- native speakers. The other 20% were expecting to be able to speak as fast as the native speakers do with a good accent. The results showed the students had high learning expectations from their foreign language learning; however, the teaching material and teaching methodology did not adequately address the learners' needs and expectations with regard to teaching and learning the oral skills.

### **The Instructor Depend On the Textbooks to Teach the Oral Skills**

Statistically significant evidence indicated that the instructors depend heavily on the textbook to teach the oral skills. Significantly, 83% of the students reported that the textbook is the source of teaching in the oral skill class. There is no evidence in the results that the instructors use supplementary material or technology such as web tools, cassettes and CDs to sustain the textbook content. These results are supported by the instructors' data results and the textbook evaluation that there is no evidence of standard-based approach that is based on clear pedagogical principles for teaching the oral skills communicatively. The results also indicated that the instructors follow teacher-centered approach in teaching the oral skill. Significantly 86% of the students reported that the instructors follow topics in the textbooks and 16% said that sometimes the instructor asks the students to come up with a topic for discussions.

### **Self-Evaluation Descriptors Revealed Learners' Low Oral CC**

The end of term students' self-evaluation descriptors comprised features of the notion of communicative competence ( linguistic, pragmatic, sociolinguistic, strategic) the results showed that statistically significant evidence indicated that the students have difficulty in performing the different communicative functions of pragmatic competence. Significantly, 85% of the students cannot perform complex interactions between third parties in-group discussion and debate, especially when including abstract, complex and unfamiliar topics. The descriptors indicated that only 19% of the learners could perform the function of understanding complex technical information, such as operating instructions, specifications for familiar products and services. Significantly, only a low number of students 15% indicated they can perform the communicative

function of understanding any native speaker, even on abstract and complex topics of a specialist nature beyond their own field and can adjust to a non-standard accent or dialect. Of the students, (91%), reported they cannot keep up their side of the dialogue extremely well and cannot structure the talk and interact with complete fluency as interviewers or interviewees at no disadvantage to a native speaker. Those who cannot perform the function of giving clear, smoothly flowing, elaborate and often memorable descriptions counted for 89% and only 13% said they can show great flexibility reformulating ideas in differing linguistic forms to give emphasis, to differentiate according to the situation, interlocutor etc. and to eliminate ambiguity. Statistically significant evidence indicated that the students, 65%, can perform communicative functions pertinent to the different feature of linguistic competence. High number of the students can convey finer shades of meaning using grammatical devices such as e.g. adverbs expressing degree, clauses expressing limitations. They indicated their ability to convey finer shades of meaning precisely by using, with reasonable accuracy, a wide range of descriptive devices. Higher number of students can eliminate grammatical ambiguity 74%. The students reported their ability to use grammatically correct sentences; however, they need to make occasional pauses to reflect on the word flow 83%. Of the students, 81% said they can perform grammatical precision tasks and 93% can maintain consistent grammatical control of complex language.

In general, responses to the can-do statements indicated that the students have low pragmatic competence. Only 5% can extract specific information from public announcements in a station, sports stadium and 19%, whereas 11% can hold their informal discussion of complex issues, putting a clear and persuasive argument. The

students who cannot handle difficult and /or hostile questioning counted for 15% , and those who can select a suitable phrases from a readily available range of discourse functions to preface remarks appropriately in order to get the floor, or to gain time and keep the floor whilst thinking were 8%. Only 11% of the students reported they can do advanced pragmatic functions. Examples of these functions are giving elaborate descriptions and narratives, integrating sub-themes, developing particular points, ending with an appropriate conclusion, and selecting a suitable phrase from a readily available range of discourse functions to preface remarks appropriately in order to get the floor, or to gain time and keep the floor whilst thinking.

For the sociolinguistic competence can-do statements, the results indicated that most of the students have problems with this feature of CC. Of the students 93% cannot follow specialized lectures and presentations employing a high degree of colloquialism, regional usage or unfamiliar terminology and with understanding a wide range of recorded and broadcast audio material, including some non-standard English usage, and cannot identify finer points of detail including implicit attitudes and relationships between speakers. Only 13% reported they can converse comfortably and appropriately, unrestricted by any linguistic limitations in conducting a full social and personal life and 11% can present a complex topic confidently and clearly to an unfamiliar audience. Lesser number of students 6% has a good command of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms with awareness of connotative levels of meaning, whereas 11% can appreciate fully the sociolinguistic and sociocultural implications of language used by native speakers and can react accordingly.

The results of the student self-descriptors indicated that there is a statistically significant difference between the students' responses to the different communicative competence can-do statements. ANOVA indicated that  $f$  value is higher than  $f_{crit}$  and  $p < 0.05$ , then, the difference between means is real. Since linguistic competence descriptors have the highest mean, the students have significantly higher control over linguistic competence descriptor than over the pragmatic, sociolinguistic and strategic competences can-do descriptors. These results support the other results in this study that the focus of teaching methodology, teaching practice and teaching material was on teaching the linguistic competence in the oral skills classes.

### **Problems with Integrating and Teaching the CC**

This study investigated the incorporation of the features of CC in the teaching material intended to teach the oral skills. The results for the teaching material were obtained from three sources. The students' views on the teaching material, the instructors' evaluations and the results of textbook evaluation process conducted in this study. As was shown in the results of the instructors' data, the teachers of the oral skills used two textbooks, one for teaching listening and one for teaching speaking, imposed by the department. These results were confirmed by results from the students' data. Eighty three percent of the students confirmed that all the oral skill instructors depend on the textbooks to teach the oral skills. The results showed that the students have a negative reaction towards the teaching material. Significantly, 78% of the students said the teaching material does not expose the students to how to use language in real time communication through socially oriented practices. The results also indicated that the features of strategic competence were not part of the teaching material. Eighty two



percent of the students indicated that the teaching material did not give the students opportunities to use strategies to work out communication problems such as paraphrasing, summarizing, the use of time gaining phrases or conversation fillers (where are we, Hmm..., I mean..., now, let me think... Do you know what I mean? That's an interesting question. The results also showed that 86% of the students strongly agreed that the teaching material included teaching how to express appropriate messages in different social and cultural contexts of communication.

The study investigated the instructors' evaluation of their teaching material. Upon analyzing the data, the results showed that the instructors use two textbooks to teach the oral skills: English for Academic purposes: Speaking and English for Academic Studies: Listening. The instructors are convinced the textbooks imposed by the department do not achieve their goals for promoting their students' oral skills. The main problem reported by the instructors regarding the teaching material was the academic, ESP nature of the textbooks content. The focus of the material is mainly on teaching students presentation skills, participating in seminars, discussions and debates. In their comments on the textbooks, the instructors described the content as it does very little to teach the oral skills communicatively, it rather confines the learning of the oral skills to learning academic listening and speaking. The results also showed that the instructors do not believe that the book meets the general standards (the department course description) for teaching the oral skills.

These results were further investigated by conducting a comprehensive textbook evaluation study using pedagogical criteria (see chapter 5). The outcome of the textbooks evaluation supported the results from the instructors and students' data. The evaluation

results showed that the two textbooks are built around ESP content and tasks. One very important finding in the textbook evaluation was that the textbooks designer used the CEFR levels, student competence descriptors, and the CEFR standards for language teaching as the general reference for the content and methodology. Furthermore, the evaluation results showed that the students must achieve CEFR LEVELS B2 to C2 or IELTS 5.0–7.5+ in order to cope up with the content. Previous results in this study showed that neither the English department stakeholders nor the instructors are aware of the CEFR competence descriptors and standards of language teaching and assessment.

The results of the textbooks evaluation showed that most of the content was built around ESP concepts and teaches the culture of academic life in the UK. E.g., one unit is tailored around the positive and negative aspects of the British culture and life styles that the international students have actually experienced during their stay in the UK. The activities elicit real time experience and events from the students to make their responses. There are multiple problems here. First, the book is used in Libya in a foreign language-learning environment where the students have little or no background on how it feels to live in the British culture. Second, there is no balance of the schematic/systematic knowledge. Widdowson (1990) refers to the schematic component as the social knowledge usually acquired naturally in case of the first language. The systematic knowledge involves the linguistic component of language. He further explains that because learners in a foreign language teaching settings have already acquired their first culture component, the social and cultural aspect (schemas) introduced along with the linguistic component (system) should be presented in a framework that pedagogically compromises the sociocultural aspects of the first and the target language. The unit

teaches English culture rather than developing the Libyan learners' sociocultural/ sociolinguistic competence. In language teaching, the learners input should comprise the codes of the host culture and the receiving culture by shuttling between cultures and communities. (Canagarajah, 2002, p.146). The evaluation results also showed that the activities and tasks in both the speaking and listening course are ESP oriented, conversely the English department course description states that:

The listening component aims at developing students' ability to understand real-life spoken English in both academic and social context through recordings of spontaneous, natural speech, which include a variety of voices, and speaking styles. The speaking component builds on the listening input for developing speaking skills that help students take part in class and in other academic and general situations.

In the sample extracted from the speaking course book, the whole unit is built around the notion of cultural shock. It focuses on teaching the British culture to international students. Most of the activities are built around the positive and negative aspects of the British culture and life styles that the international students have actually experienced during their stay in the UK. The activities elicit real time experience and events from the students to make their responses. There are multiple problems here. First, the book is used in Libya in a foreign language-learning environment where the students have little or no background on how it feels to live in the British culture. Second, there is no balance of the schematic/systematic knowledge. Widdowson (1990) refers to the schematic component as the social knowledge usually acquired naturally in case of the first language. The systematic knowledge involves the linguistic component of language. He further explains that because learners in a foreign language teaching settings have

already acquired their first culture component, the social and cultural aspect (schemas) introduced along with the linguistic component (system) should be presented in a framework that pedagogically compromises the sociocultural aspects of the first and the target language. The unit teaches English culture rather than developing the Libyan learners' sociocultural/ sociolinguistic competence. In language teaching, the learners input should comprise the codes of the host culture and the receiving culture by shuttling between cultures and communities. (Canagarajah, 2002, p. 146)

In the sample unit extracted from English for academic studies: Listening, the focus is on how students identify and distinguish key points, examples and ideas in lectures. The language content is ESP business English and the main topic in this unit is Franchise. The unit content prioritizes ESP academic English and does very little to promote the features of general communicative competence. The results showed that the activities and tasks in both the speaking and listening course are ESP oriented, conversely the English department course description states that:

The listening component aims at developing students' ability to understand real-life spoken English in both academic and social context through recordings of spontaneous, natural speech that include a variety of voices and speaking styles.

The speaking component builds on the listening input to develop speaking skills that help students take part in class and in other academic and general situations.

The current textbooks used to teach the oral skills do not align with these descriptions.

EFL and ESL programs usually recognize two categories under the general umbrella of English for Academic purposes (EAP): English for general purposes (EGP)

and English for specific purposes (ESP). There is a strong commonality between EAP and ESP. Widdowson (1998) argues EAP is the framework of ESP. The two versions need to be balanced for students to function effectively in their specific field of study. While ESP attends to learners' specific needs, EAP stimulates and develops general communicative competence by providing a wide range of options that address different learners' communicative needs (Hyland, 2006). Conversely, the two textbooks focus more on ESP in an EAP teaching environment. The textbook analysis results showed that the textbooks lack proper material contextualization with regard to teaching general communicative competence. Many applied linguists have defined contextualization. Mazzeo, Ran and Alssid (2003) proposed that contextualization refers to "a diverse family of instructional strategies designed to more seamlessly link the learning of foundational skills and academic or occupational content by focusing teaching and learning squarely on concrete applications in a specific context that is of interest to the student (pp. 3-4)". The content of the course should serve as a context for teaching the different features of CC and develop the learner's communicative skills. This can be achieved by teaching language/culture in a context that links the learners' input to real life. The teaching content should make direct reference to real time events and practices (Marinelli-Henriques & Assiri, 2010 ; Sticht, 2005). In CLT, contextualized language items are presented to the learner in a meaningful textualized input rather than treated as discrete isolated items that serve compartmentalized fragments of competence. In the two textbooks for listening and speaking, the teaching material and tasks are academically oriented and have little or no relevance to real time social language transactions. As stated by the course description, the head of the department and the

instructors, the main goal of the Libyan English majors is to get a job as teachers of English, translators, interpreters and only a few will be engaged in academic lecturing after graduation. The contextualization of the teaching content does not focus on the needs and interests of the Libyan learners.

### **Indications of the Testing Material**

The study investigated how the oral skills were tested. The test analysis process explored how the oral skills are tested in general and which communicative competence component (sociolinguistic, pragmatic, linguistic, and strategic) is the focus of the tests. Chappelle and Brindley (2010), defined testing as “the act of collecting information and making judgments about a language learner’s knowledge of a language and ability to use it” (p .247)). According to McNamara (2000), the assessment process can be traditional that involves “paper-and-pencil language tests and performance tests or non-traditional that uses checklists, journals, logs, videotapes and audiotapes, self-evaluations, and teacher observations, etc. The other purpose of the test analysis was to explore the methods and techniques used in the process of testing the oral skills. The test analysis results showed that the test focuses mostly on testing linguistics competence and it did not include any features that would measure the other aspects of the learner’s communicative competence such as pragmatic, strategic and sociolinguistic. The purpose of most of the test items was to elicit discrete sentences and decontextualized responses that are hardly indicative of the students’ general communicative competence. The test also reflected the ESP content of the textbooks. Many test items require memorizations and prescribed linguistic formulas for answers. Though some teachers mentioned that they use communicative, non-traditional approaches in testing the oral skills such as

interviews, the analysis of the test content showed that the testing process is controlled by traditional non communicative methods that are compatible with the traditional teaching and testing practices.

The results of this study indicated that teaching the oral skills is conducted through traditional non-communicative methods and methodology that mostly promote linguistic competence and does very little to incorporate, teach and test the non-linguistic aspects of the notion of communicative competence, namely, pragmatic, sociolinguistic and strategic competence.

### **Practical Implications**

This study brought out implications pertinent to teaching and learning CC in the oral skills as the springboard for CLT in general and implications that are specific to teaching the oral skills communicatively in the Libyan context. It is clear from the results of this study that teaching the notion of communicative competence in the oral skills requires pedagogical specifications that reflect the sub features of the notion of CC. The importance of this study is that, to the researchers' best knowledge, it is the first study to address the different components of CC and conduct comprehensive evaluations of teaching these components in the oral skills involving the instructors, students and the teaching and testing material. The results are informative to teaching the oral skills in general and teaching the notion of CC in particular. One implication to teaching the oral skills was that creating or adopting well defined standards for teaching and testing would provide common guideline and road map for the policy makers, the instructors and the learners to achieve the goal of the teaching process. These standards should be accompanied by strategies for implantations and practice to help the language instructors

making appropriate decision on implementing and using these strategies in the language classroom. These strategies need to be updated employing input from theories of the fields of teaching, learning and language acquisition. It is clear from the analysis in this study that the instructors lack awareness of crucial pedagogical conceptions regarding their students' communicative competence. These conceptions can be brought about by updating the instructors' knowledge through professional development, especially on how to incorporate communication strategies and communicative competence features in the teaching material and the teaching practices. The oral skills teaching material and methodology were not compatible with the aims set out by the departmental syllabus. In order to bridge the gap between theory and practice in teaching the oral skills, a follow up policy is required to ensure the effectiveness of the teaching process. The outcome of the analyses in this study showed that this policy was absent and the head of the department confirmed that there has never been a follow up policy to ensure effectiveness.

Furthermore, the instructors complained of the senior instructors' monopoly of decision making with regard to the syllabus creation and material selection. The instructors are directly responsible for implanting and achieving the goals of teaching the oral skills, so they should be part of the decision making process of the syllabus creation and material selection. There was strong evidence in the results of this study that teaching the oral skills leans towards focusing on teaching the linguistic competence. Knowing one component of what makes up communicative competence does not guarantee the ability to use the language. Teaching the oral skills communicatively entails teaching the other components of the notion of CC. As was shared in chapter 1 ; English is not a foreign language anymore; therefore, teaching for building broader communicative competence



ability caters for the need to learn English for international communication. This implies that promoting the learners' communicative competence requires a comprehensive survey of the learners' needs and expectations of their language learning. The analyses of this study showed that the learners have high expectations from their oral skills learning to the extent that a significant number of them stated that they were expecting to achieve a native speakers competence ability by the end of their 4 years majoring in English. This implies a learners-centered approach that takes into consideration the learners needs, expectations, and attitudes towards their foreign language learning. All the parties involved in the teaching and learning process should jointly participate, department, instructors and the students. Another implication is pertinent to the use to students' self-descriptors. The results showed that the use of these descriptors revealed some pedagogical facts about the students' communicative competence, what they can and cannot do in their foreign language. These descriptors should be used to place the students, evaluate the status quo of their competence, know what they know and what they need to learn and can work as a good indicator for testing and assessment.

The study results revealed that the instructors vaguely perceive the concept of CLT and CC. Though this conclusion needs more in depth analysis, it informs about a problem in paradigm shift. As was mentioned in the literature review, language teaching in Libya has been slowly shifting from audiolingualism and behaviorism to communicative language paradigm. The results of showed that at the highest level of the education system in Libya, this shift is far from being achieved. This implies that not only training programs need to be updated, but also concrete mechanisms for how to implement the principles of CLT need to be introduced.

It was clear from the literature review in this study that no studies have been conducted on teaching the oral skills to the English majors. The results of this study revealed informs on teaching the oral skills communicatively and effectively to the Libyan English majors at the college level. The accuracy of the claim in the departmental course description that the oral skills teaching material and methodology are communicative is questioned now in the light of this study's results. One implication is that the whole program needs comprehensive revision based on well-defined pedagogical criterial and standards. This study extracted criteria from The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching and Assessment (CEFR) to evaluate the inclusion and teaching of the notion of CC in the in the Libyan context. The CEFR proved to be effective pedagogical tools that have international principles applicable to any EFL program. The CEFR can be used as a springboard to set up a local Libyan standard for foreign language teaching. Furthermore, this study validated the internationalism of the CEFR as a reference to language learning, teaching and assessment.

The use of the end of term student self-descriptors revealed the students can and cannot do in their foreign language. Multiple problems were revealed in the students' communicative competence. This implies two things to teaching the oral skills to the Libyan English majors: First, there is a real need to expand teaching the oral skills from the limits of teaching linguistic competence to explore real opportunities of authentic real time communication practices that address pragmatic, sociolinguistic and strategic competence. Second, there is a real need to conduct needs analysis surveys and

administer self-evaluation descriptors to tap on the students' communicative needs and communicative competence status quo.

It was evidenced in the results of this study that teaching the oral skills was mostly confined to input from the textbooks. Modern language teaching employs technology to bridge the gap between foreign language teaching settings and real time language use. Many studies suggested that using Web 2.0 tools would promote learners communicative competence and provide more communicative and authentic teaching and learning material. Examples of these studies are: using podcasting to promote pronunciation and enhance vocabulary and sociocultural aspects (Belanger, 2005), using social networking in task-based experiential learning in which students used a wide range of resources to promote sociocultural competence (Waugh, 2008), microblogging, such as twitter, provide opportunity to negotiate meaning and promote native speaker-like pragmatic and sociolinguistic competences (Antenos-Conforti, 2009), social web applications give language instruction the possibility of creating truly interactive distributed- learning environments (Colpaert, 2004), RSS based activities addressed challenges involved in the instruction of Spanish heritage speakers such as reported in (American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (2000), García and Blanco (2000), (Leeman & Martínez, 2007), Montrol, Thornhill, Foote, Perpignan, & Vidal, (2006), Potowski and Carreira, (2004), Schwarzer & Petró, (2005), Valdés, (2002), Villa (2002) linguistic and academic variety of Spanish among students that is not addressed by the limited number of course offerings, (b) the imbalance between oral and written skills in the students, (c) the scarcity and limitations of commercial learning materials, (d) the emphasis in programs and teaching materials on language as

commodity, (e) the particular affective and social needs of SHL students, and (f) the scarcity of teacher training programs and materials (Roman-Mendoza, 2009 p. 103).

CALL activities must not be merely introduced onto a course for the sake of modernize teaching, but must serve to further well-defined learning goals and standards (Richards, 2005). This implies that it is not enough that the instructor knows the purpose of web-based activity and the course objectives, this goal should also be clarified to the students in order to convince them of the communicative potentials of technology driven assignments. Espousing Call with traditional language teaching creates more opportunities for addressing learning styles, learning needs and learning potentials that emerge from the process student competence progression in the course of their language learning.

### **Limitations**

There are some limitations to this study that may hinder overgeneralizations of the results. The study informants were Libyan instructors and students therefore the results might be more pertinent to the Libyan context of teaching the oral skills. The study informed about the lack of communicative approach in teaching the oral skills to the Libyan major in one particular university at a certain point of time. Changes might happen at any point of anytime and program updating might occur with a sudden change in the course admiration, the teaching material or the instructors' pedagogical tenets and teaching philosophy. Off course, this change is neither random nor spontaneous; however, it is possible and attainable. Another limitation to this study stemmed from the unstable political situation of the country where this study was conducted. This instability hindered extending the study time duration beyond one semester. Prolonging the study

would have given more opportunity to observe whether the teaching and learning process is static or dynamic with regard to the teaching material and teaching methodology. The study purpose was to provide an idea of how the notion of CC is defined and incorporated in the general framework of CLT in a foreign language-teaching environment. Another limitation rose from the lack of consensus on a pedagogical framework of the notion of communicative competence. The results evidenced that there is not much of communicative competence features taught to the Libyan students in the English oral skills classes ; however, no inference can be made here that the English teaching process in the Libya is not communicative. Exploring teaching and learning the skills of reading and writing might reveal that the approach for teaching the oral skills might be governed by factors that hindered adopting CLT approaches. Unavailability of resources such the Internet, equipped language labs, updated teaching materials may be the main reason behind adopting more straightforward linguistic approach that depends on traditional classroom practices

### **Conclusion**

This study was driven by suggestions from research in ethnography, second language acquisition and language teaching that the ability of language users to reach their communicative goals in life is largely controlled by the level of their communicative competence CC (Hymes 1962, 1964, 1972). The notion of CC was expanded by applied linguists to account for the ability of survive not only the linguistic aspects of language use but also the pragmatic, sociolinguistic and strategic components of language interactions (Bachman & Palmer 1996; Bachman, 1987; Canale & Swain, 1980; Celce-Murcia 1985, 1987, 2007).Swain, 1983 ;). The influence of this trend was that second

language acquisition is no more learning how to speak or write grammatically only, rather, it was expanded to develop the ability of language acquirers to address other areas of appropriateness: “when to speak, when not, what to talk about with whom, when, where, in what manner” (Hymes, 1972, p. 277). With the advent of the tools of globalization such as the media, Internet and travel, English has been given the status of a “lingua Franca” (LF) in 90 of the world’s 193 countries. It became the language of information, education, science, commerce, medicine, aviation, media, diplomacy and international relations (Canagarajah, 2006; Crystal, 1992, 2002; 2003; Graddol, 2003,). In order to meet these new developments, English programs around the world updated their theories and practices. These programs started since the 1980<sup>s</sup> to incorporate schematic (culture and values), pragmatic and strategic knowledge in their standards, objectives, practices and teaching and testing materials. Current approaches to teaching the oral skills in particular have emphasized topdown level oral skills learning that enable the learner to employ not only the linguistic ability but also nonlinguistic components such as topic, genre, culture, and other schema knowledge (Vandergrift, 2007). If English language teaching programs in Libya are going to develop, ways are to be sought to contextualize this development in the international trend of English language teaching theory and practice. The results of this study evidenced that the current situation of English language teaching is suffering even at the highest level. Taking teaching the oral skills as a sample, the study showed that the ELT program is suffering from a lack of a comprehensive policy that addresses the different aspects of teaching and learning. The lack of this comprehensive policy negatively affected instructional designs, objectives, decisions and practices. The low quality instruction that resulted in low students’

communicative competence, as it was evidenced from the analyses in this study, has long-term consequences on the socioeconomic status of some of the students involved in this study. It was concluded that most of the students do not have enough confidence to work in jobs that require acceptable English language proficiency and another important number of the informants confirmed that they are going to seek opportunities to improve their speaking skills, which they did not expect when they first joined the English department.

Expanding the teaching of English beyond the traditional trend of focusing on the linguistic competence exposes the learners to the conceptions, norms and values of the target language, thus, the students have more opportunities to learn about and similarities between their own lives and cultures those of the target language. Learning these aspects will enable the students to act in the foreign language with confidence, knowing when to say what to whom and in what context.

### **Future Research**

This study adds to the literature in foreign language teaching and learning, especially in incorporating and teaching the notion of CC in the oral skills class. The study sheds light on current foreign language practices where English is required as international language for communication and work. This study was essential to uncover the tenets, philosophies, theories and practices adopted to run the program and achieve its goals. The current study dealt with three variables, the instructors, students and the teaching and testing material. The study focused on how each of these variables contributed, negatively or positively, to achieving the goal of acceptable student competence by the end of the four-year teaching program. The informants were the

fourth year students and the data understudy was collected from the status quo of the teaching process. This is not sufficient to form a panoramic view of the whole teaching and learning situation of teaching the oral skills in the department. There is another side of the coin. More longitudinal studies are needed to trace the practices in the lower levels. There is a possibility that the instructors are just following the norms of teaching that are established in the lower levels and avoid changes that would provoke resistance on part of the students and hinder learning. With regard to teaching and learning the notion of communicative competence with its different components, more studies are needed to measure the students' readiness to learn these features and explore if updating the content an practice of teaching the oral skills will actually create any difference in the students' communicative competence quality. Case studies that use experimental and control groups would inform better in this vein. Such studies may, e.g., detail the practical advantages and/or disadvantages of teaching one or some of the features of CC instead of focusing solely on the linguistic competence. Currently, teaching the oral skills in the English department is geared towards using traditional methods and methodology. Future research may look at the reasons that stand behind this choice in order to explore whether this choice is random or it is driven by adherence to teaching philosophies that are justified by pedagogical realities. Such future research will take over from where this study has ended to help understand the process of building up language learners' communicative competence. This understanding would help ensure the achievement of the teaching and learning goals, consequently, help the learners to attain a level of communicative competence that would make them achieve what they wanted to do with their foreign language learning.



## References

- Al Moghani, H. (2003). *Students' perceptions of motivation in English language learning in Libya*, Durham theses, Durham University. Available at Durham E-Theses  
Online: <http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/1745/>
- Alderson, J. (2006). *Diagnosing foreign language proficiency: The interface between assessment and learning*. London: Continuum.
- Alderson, J. (1991). Bands and scores. In: Alderson, J.C. and North, B. (eds.): *Language testing in the 1990s*, London: British Council/Macmillan.
- Allwright, R. (1981). What do we want teaching materials for? *ELT Journal*, 36(1), 5-18.  
doi:10.1093/elt/36.1.5
- Applegate, R. (1975). The language teacher and the rules of speaking. *TESOL Quarterly* 9(3), 271-281.
- Ashiurakis, M. (1987). *The influence of the socio-educational reading environment in an Arab university upon English reading performance*. (Unpublished doctoral) dissertation. University of Aston.
- ATLAS.ti software (1993-2014). [http://atlasti.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/atlasti\\_v7\\_manual\\_201312.pdf](http://atlasti.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/atlasti_v7_manual_201312.pdf)
- Atweh, B. Cooper, T. J., B., & Robert, E. (1998). The construction of the social context of mathematics classrooms: A sociolinguistic analysis. *Journal for Research in Mathematics Education*, 29(1), 63-82.
- Austin, J. (1962). *How to do things with words*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Bachman, L. (1990). *Fundamental considerations in language testing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Bachman, L., & Palmer, A. (1982). The construct validation of some components of communicative proficiency. *TESOL Quarterly*, 16 (4), 449-65.
- Bachman, L., & Palmer, A. (1996). *Language testing in practice: Designing and developing useful language tests*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press.
- Balhough, S. (1982). *Problems Encountered By Libyan Learners of English with Special Reference to The Lexicon*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Sheffield.
- Bardovi-Harlig, K. (2001). Evaluating the empirical evidence: Grounds for instruction in pragmatics. In G. Kasper, & K. Rose (Eds.). *Pragmatics in language teaching* (pp. 13-32). Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- Broadbent, D. (1958). *Perception and communication*. New York: Pergamon Press.
- Brown, D. (2000). *Principles of language learning and teaching*. Longman.
- Brumfit, C. (1981). *Problems and principles in English teaching*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Brumfit, C. (1984). *Communicative methodology in language teaching: The roles of fluency and accuracy*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Bygate, M. (1987). *Speaking*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press.
- Canagarajah, A. S. (2002). *Critical academic writing and multilingual students*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Canagarajah, S. (2006). Changing communicative needs, revised assessment objectives: Testing English as an international language. *Language Assessment Quarterly*, 3(3), 229-242. doi:10.1207/s15434311laq03031

- Canale, M., & Swain, M. (1980). Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics*, 1, 1-47.
- Canale, M., & Swain, M. (1983). From communicative competence to communicative language pedagogy. In J. Richards & R. Schmidt (Eds.), *Language and communication*. London: Longman.
- Capresi, V. (2009). *L'utopia costruita*. Bologna: Bononia University Press.
- Celce-Murcia M. (2007). Rethinking the role of communicative competence in language teaching. In Alcón Soler E & Safont Jordà MP (Eds.). *Intercultural Language Use and Language Learning*, 41–57. Dordrecht: Springer.
- Celce-Murcia, M., Dörnyei, Z., & Thurrell, S. (1997). Direct approaches in L2 instruction: A turning point in communicative language teaching? *TESOL Quarterly* 31(1), 141-152.
- Celce-Murcia, M., Dörnyei, Z., & Thurrell, S. (1995). Communicative competence: A pedagogically motivated model with content specifications. *Issues in Applied Linguistics* 6, 5–35.
- Chapelle, C. A., & Geoff, B. (2010). *Assessment*. In Norbert Schmitt(Eds). *An introduction to applied linguistics* (2nd ed.). (pp. 247-267). London: Hodder Education.
- Chapelle, C., Grabe, W., & Berns, M. (1997). *Communicative language proficiency: Definition and implications for TOEFL 2000*. Princeton: Educational Testing Service.
- Chomsky, N. (1957). *Syntactic structures*. The Hague: Mouton
- Chomsky, N. (1965). *Aspects of the theory of syntax*. Cambridge: M.I.T. Press.

- Chomsky, N. (1980). *Rules and representations*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Chomsky, N. (1986). *Knowledge of language: Its nature, origin, and use*. New York: Praeger.
- Chomsky, N. (1972). *Language and mind*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich
- Cicourel, A. V. (1992). The give and take of everyday life: Language socialization of kaluli children. *AMAN American Anthropologist*, 94(1), 209-210.
- Cohen, A. (1996). Speech acts. In S. L. McKay and N. H. Hornberger. (Eds.). *Sociolinguistics and Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University
- Collins, K., Onwuegbuzie, A., & Jiao, Q. (2006). Prevalence of mixed-methods sampling designs in social science research. *Evaluation & Research in Education*, 19(2), 83-101. doi:10.2167/eri421.0
- Cook, G. (1989). *Discourse*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Corder, S. (1967). The significance of learner's errors. *IRAL - International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 5(1-4). doi:10.1515/iral.1967.5.1-4.161
- Corder, S. P. (1971). Idiosyncratic dialects and error analysis. *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching*, 9(2), 147-160.
- Corder, S. P. (1981). *Error analysis and interlanguage*. London; New York: Oxford University Press.
- Council of Europe. (2001). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching and Assessment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Crystal, D. (1992). *Introducing linguistics*. London: Penguin English.

- Crystal, D. (1997). *English as a global language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Crystal, D. (2002). *Language death*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Crystal, D. (2003) *English as a global language* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.
- Crystal, D. (2005). *The Stories of English*. London: Penguin.
- Cummins, C., Cheek, E., & Lindsey, J. (2004). The relationship between teachers' literacy beliefs and their instructional practices: A brief review of the literature for teacher education. *E-Journal of Teaching & Learning in Diverse Settings*, 1(2), 175–188.
- Cummins, J. (1981). *Bilingual and Minority-Language Children*. Toronto: OISE
- Cummins, J., & Swain, M. (1986). *Bilingualism in Education*. New York: Longman.
- Cunningsworth, A., & Tomlinson, B. (1984). *Evaluating and selecting EFL teaching materials*. London: Heinemann Educational.
- Cunningsworth, A. (1995). *Choosing your Coursebook*. Macmillan Education.
- Davies, A. (2005). *A Glossary of Applied Linguistics*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press
- Dornyei, Z., & Thurrell, S. (1994). Teaching conversational skills intensively: course content and rationale. *ELT Journal* 48(1), 40-49.
- Doughty, C., Williams, J. (1998). *Focus on form in classroom second language acquisition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Eggen, D., Kauchak, P. (1999). *Educational psychology: Windows on classrooms*. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Merrill.

- Ellis, R. (1994). *The study of second language acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ellis, R., Tanaka, Y., & Yamazaki, A. (1994). Classroom interaction, comprehension, and the acquisition of L 2 word meanings. *Language Learning*, 44(3), 449.
- Ellis, R. (1985). *Understanding second language acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Fairclough, N. (1995). *Critical discourse analysis: The critical study of language*. London; New York: Longman.
- Fasold, R. (1990). *Sociolinguistics of Language*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Félix-Brasdefer, J.C. (2008). Teaching Spanish pragmatics in the classroom: Explicit instruction of mitigation. *Hispania*, 91(2), 477-492.
- Fenish, M, (1981). *English As A Foreign Objectives And Activities As Perceived By Three TEFL Groups*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of New Mexico.
- Firth, J. R. (1964). *The tongues of men, and speech*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Firth, J. R. (1930). *Speech*. London: Ernest Benn.
- Fraser, B. (1978). Acquiring social competence in a second language. *RELC Journal*, 9, 1-21.
- Fulcher, G, Davidson, F. (2009). Test architecture, test retrofit. *Language Testing*, 26(1), 123-144.
- Gardner, R. (1985) *Social psychology and second language learning: The role of attitudes and motivation*. London: Edward Arnold.Gardner,
- Garrett, P., & Baquedano-Lopez, P. (2002). *Language Socialization*. Reproduction

- Gass, S. M. (1997). *Input, interaction, and the second language learner*. Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Gass, S., Mackey, A., & Pica, T. (1998). The role of input and interaction in second language acquisition: introduction to the special issue. *MODL the Modern Language Journal*, 82(3), 299-307.
- Genesee, F. (2001). Evaluation. In R. Carter & D. Nunan (Eds.), *The Cambridge guide to teaching English to speakers of other languages*, (pp. 144-150). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Goffman, E. (1981). *Forms of Talk*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Goldstein, G., & Hersen, M. (1984). *Handbook of psychological assessment*. NY: Pergamon Press.
- Gonglewski, M. (1999). Linking the internet to the national standards for foreign language learning. *Foreign language annals*, 32( 3), 348-362.
- Gonzalez-Lloret, M. (2003). Designing task-based CALL to promote interaction: En busca de esmeraldas. *Language Learning & Technology*, 7(1), 86-104.
- Graddol, D. (2003). *The Future of English*. The British Council.
- Graham, J. G. (1981). *Overcoming fossilized English*.
- Graves, K. (2008). The language curriculum: A social contextual perspective. *Language Teaching*, 41(02). doi:10.1017/s0261444807004867
- Greene, J., Caracelli, V., & Graham, W. (1989). Toward a conceptual framework for mixed-method evaluation designs. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 11(3), 255-274. doi:10.3102/01623737011003255

- Grillo, J. Pratt., & Street, B.V. (1987). Anthropology, linguistics and language. In J. Lyons (ed.), *New horizons in linguistics*. London: Penguin. 268–95.
- Gumperz, J. (1999). Sociocultural knowledge in conversational inference. In Jaworski, A. and Coupland, N. (Eds.) *The Discourse Reader*. Oxon: Routledge.
- Gumperz, J. J. (2001). Interactional sociolinguistics: A personal perspective. In D. Schiffrin, D. Tannen, and H. E. Hamilton (Eds.) *The Handbook of Discourse Analysis*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Gumperz, J., & Hymes, D. (1972). *Directions in sociolinguistics; the ethnography of communication*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Habermas, J. (1970) Toward a theory of communicative competence. In: H. P. Dreitzel (Ed.), *Recent Sociology*.( 2) 115–148.
- Halliday, M. A. K. (1975). *Learning how to mean : Explorations in the development of language*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Halliday, M. A. K. (1977). *Explorations in the functions of language*. New York: Elsevier North-Holland.
- Halliday, M. A. K. (1978). *Language as social semiotic : The social interpretation of language and meaning*. Baltimore: University Park Press.
- Halliday, M. A. K. (1989). *Spoken and written language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hedge, T. (2000). *Teaching and Learning in the Language Classroom*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Howatt, A. (1984). *A history of English language teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.



- Hymes, D. (1967). *On communicative competence*. Unpublished manuscript, University of Pennsylvania.
- Hymes, D. (1971). On communicative competence. In C.J. Brumfit & K. Johnson (Eds.) (1979), *The communicative approach to language teaching* (pp. 5-26). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hymes, D. (1972). On communicative competence. In J.B. Pride and J. Holmes (Eds.), *Sociolinguistics*. Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books.
- Hymes, D. H. (1974). *Foundations in Sociolinguistics: An Ethnographic Approach*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Hymes, D.H. (1967). The anthropology of communication. In F.E. Dance (Ed.), *Human communication theory: Original essays*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Jacobs, G., & Farrell, T. (2001). Paradigm shift: Understanding and implementing change in second language education. *Tesl-Ej*, 5(1)
- Johnson, R. B., Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2004). Mixed methods research: A research paradigm whose time has come. *Educational Researcher*, 33(7), 14-26.
- Kasper, G. & Blum-Kulka, S. (1993). *Interlanguage Pragmatics*. Oxford: Oxford.
- Koike, D.A. (1992). *Language and Social Relationship in Brazilian Portuguese*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.
- Kramsch, C. (2006). The Uses of Communicative Competence in a Global World. *Review of Applied Linguistics in China*( 2), 30-50.
- Krashen, S. (1976). Formal and informal linguistic environments in language acquisition and language learning. *TESOL Quarterly*, 10 (2), 157-168.

- Krashen, S. (1982). *Principles and practice in second language acquisition*. New York: Prentice-Hall.
- Krashen, S. D. (1985). *The input hypothesis : Issues and implications*. London; New York: Longman.
- Krumm, H. J. (2007). Profiles instead of levels: The CEFR and its (ab) uses in the context of migration. *Modern Language Journal*, 91(4), 667-669.
- Kunschak, C. (2004). *Language variation in foreign language teaching: On the road to communicative competence*. Frankfurt am Main; New York: P. Lang.
- LaFontana KM, C. A. (2002). Children's perceptions of popular and unpopular peers: A multimethod assessment. *Developmental Psychology*, 38(5), 635-47.
- Larsen-Freeman, D. (1991). Second language acquisition research: Staking out the territory. *TESQ TESOL Quarterly*, 25(2), 315-350.
- Leung, S. (2001). Language socialization: Themes and advances in research. *TESOL/Applied Linguistics Ed.D. Research Paper*, ( 1), 77-85.
- Likert, R. (1932). *A technique for the measurement of attitudes* Available from /z-wcorg/.
- Llobera, M. (1996). Discourse and foreign language teaching methodology. In McLaren, N. and Madrid, D. *A Handbook for TEFL*. Alcoy: Marfil.
- Lock, G. (1996). *Functional English grammar: An introduction for second language teachers*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Long, M. (1996). The role of the linguistic environment in second language acquisition. In W. C. Ritchie & T. K. Bhatia (Eds.), *Handbook of research on language acquisition*. *Second language acquisition*,(2), 413-468). New York: Academic Press.

- Long, M. H. (1989). Task, group, and task-group interactions. *University of Hawai'i Working papers in ESL*, 8, 1-26.
- Long, M. H. (2005). *Second language needs analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Long, M. H. (1983). Linguistic and conversational adjustments to non-native speakers. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 5(2), 177-93.
- Long, M. H. (2005). *Second language needs analysis*. Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Long, M. H. (2005). *Second language needs analysis*. Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Loschky, L. (1994). Comprehensible input and second language acquisition: What is the relationship? *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* /, 16(3), 303.
- Madrid, D., & McLaren, N. (1995). *Didactic procedures for TEFL : Teaching English as a foreign language*. Zaratán, Valladolid: La Calesa.
- Masgoret, A., & Gardner, R. (2003). Attitudes, motivation, and second language learning: A meta-analysis of studies conducted by Gardner and associates. *LANG Language Learning*, 53(S1), 167-210.
- McKay, S. L. (2002). *Teaching English as an international language: Rethinking goals and approaches*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Mcmanara, T. (2000). *Language Testing*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- Meho, L. I. (2006). E-mail interviewing in qualitative research: A methodological discussion. *ASI Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, 57(10), 1284-1295.

- Miles, M., Huberman, A., Saldaña, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook*. Angeles, California: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Miles, M. B. (2013). *Qualitative data analysis. a methods sourcebook miles, miles,*. Los Angeles, California: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Moran (2001). *Teaching culture: perspectives in practice*. Newbury House Teacher
- Morris, F. A. (2001). Language learning motivation for the class of 2002: Why first-year Puerto Rican high school students learn English. *Language and Education, 15(4)*, 269-78.
- Nattinger, J., DeCarrico, J. (1992). *Lexical phrases and language teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Nemser, W. (1971). Approximative systems of foreign language learners. *IRAL - International Review Of Applied Linguistics In Language Teaching, 9(2)*.  
doi:10.1515/iral.1971.9.2.115
- Nunan, D. (1991). *Language teaching methodology: A textbook for teachers*. New York: Prentice Hall.
- Nunan, D. (1999). *Second language teaching & learning*. Boston, Mass.: Heinle & Heinle Publishers.
- Oller, J. (1979). *Language tests at school*. London: Longman.
- Olsen, S.A. & Brown, L.K. (1992). The Relation Between High School Study of Foreign Language and ACT English and Mathematics Performance. *ADFL Bulletin,(3)*, 23,54 -50
- Omaggio-Hadley, A. (2001). *Teaching language in context*. Heinle & Heinle.

- Omaggio-Hadley, A. (2000). *Teaching Language in Context: Proficiency-Oriented Instruction*. Boston, Heinle & Heinle.
- Orafi, S., & Borg, S. (2009). Intentions and realities in implementing communicative curriculum reform. *System*, 37(2), 243-253. doi:10.1016/j.system.2008.11.004
- Oxford, R. (1990). *Language Learning Strategies*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
- Pawley, A., & Syder, F. H. (1983). Two puzzles for linguistic theory: Native-like selection and native-like fluency. In J. C. Richards and R. W. Schmidt (Eds). *Language and Communication*. New York: Longman.
- Pérez Martín, M. C. (1996). Linguistic and communicative competence. In McLaren, N. & Madrid, D. *A Handbook for TEFL*. Alcoy: Marfil.
- Petrosky, A. (1977). Research Roundup: Grammar Instruction: What We Know. *The English Journal*, 66(9), 86. doi:10.2307/815294
- Rea-Dickens, P., & Germaine, K. (2001). Purposes for evaluation, in Hall, D R & Hewings, A. *Innovation in English Language Teaching*, Routledge, New York.
- Richards, J. (1971). A Non-Contrastive Approach to Error Analysis1. *ELT Journal*, (3) 25, 204-219. doi:10.1093/elt/xxv.3.204
- Richards, J. (1980). Conversation. *TESOL Quarterly* 14(4), 413-432.
- Richards, J. (2005). *Communicative language teaching today*. Singapore: SEAMEO Regional Language Centre.
- Richards, J. (1990). Conversationally speaking: approaches to the teaching of conversation. In Richards, J (Ed), *The Language Teaching Matrix*, (pp 65-90). Cambridge: Cambridge

- Richards, J.C., & Renandya, W.A. (Eds). (2002). *Methodology in language teaching* (120-172). Cambridge University Press.
- Sachs, H., Schegloff, E., & Jefferson, G. (1974). A simplest systematics for the organization of turn-taking for conversation. *Language* 50(4): 696–753.
- Sarwark, S. M. (1995). *A study of characteristics of the SPEAK test*. Princeton, N.J.: Educational Testing Service.
- Savignon, S. (1972). *Communicative competence: An experiment in foreign language teaching*. Philadelphia: Center for Curriculum Development.
- Savignon, S. J. (1983). *Communicative competence: Theory and classroom practice*. Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley.
- Saville-Troike, M. (1989). *The ethnography of communication: An introduction*. Oxford, UK: B. Blackwell.
- Searle, J. R. (1969). *Speech acts: An essay in the philosophy of language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Selinker, L. (1972). Interlanguage. *IRAL*, 10, (3), 209-231.
- Simon, H. A. (1957). *Models of man: Social and rational; mathematical essays on rational human behavior in society setting*. New York: Wiley.
- Sims, W. R. (1989). Fossilization and Learning Strategies in Second Language Acquisition. *Minne TESOL Journal*, 11(3).
- Söderlund, M., & Modiano, M. (200). Swedish upper secondary school students and their attitudes towards AmE, BrE and Mid-Atlantic English'. In M. Modiano (Ed.), *Studies in Mid-Atlantic English*.(147-171).Gävle: Högskolan i Gävle,

- Swales, J. (1990). *Genre analysis: English in academic and research settings*. Cambridge [England]; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Tarone, E.(1985). Variability in interlanguage use: A study of style shifting in morphology and syntax. *Language Learning*, 35(3), 373-403.
- Tarone, E., & Yule, G. (1989). *Focus on the Language Learner*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Tarone, E. (1983). On the variability of interlanguage systems. *Applied Linguistics* *Applied Linguistics*, 4(2), 142-164.
- Tauroza, S., & Luk, J. (1997). Accent and second language listening comprehension. *RELC Journal* *RELC Journal*, 28(1), 54-71.
- Tesch, R. (1990). *Qualitative research : Analysis types and software tools*. New York: Falmer Press.
- The five CS: the standards for foreign language learning video*. American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages. (Director). (1998).[Video/DVD] Boston, Mass.: Heinle & Heinle.
- Thornbury, S., & Slade, D. (2006). *Conversation : From description to pedagogy*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Tillema, H. (2000). Belief change towards self-directed learning in student teachers: Immersion in practice or reflection on action. *Teaching and Teacher Education*., 16(5-6), 575-591.
- Tomlinson, B. (1998). *Materials development in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Van-EK,J. (1975). *The Threshold Level*. Strasboure: council of Europe

- Van Lier, L. (1996). *Interaction in the language curriculum : Awareness, autonomy, and authenticity*. London; New York: Longman.
- White, L. (1987). Against Comprehensible Input: The Input Hypothesis and the Development of Second-language Competence. *Applied Linguistics*,( 8) 2, 95-110.
- Widdowson, H. G. (1978). *Teaching Language as Communication* .Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wolfson, N. (1983). Rules of speaking. In J. C. Richards and R. Schmidt, (Eds), *Language and Communication* . New York: Longman. Yoshida, K., & Sophia University Applied Linguistics Research



## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Head of the English Department Survey

Please answer the following survey questions:

1. What is the responsibility of the head of the department for the listening and speaking C courses?
2. What is the role of the course coordinator?
3. How does the department assign the listening and speaking course to the instructors?
4. Is there a limit to the number of classes each instructor teaches ?
5. What are the department's priorities in teaching the oral skills?
6. Does the department have any follow up policy with the instructors' to evaluate the outcomes of their teaching?
7. How are these instructors assigned by the department to teach Listening and Speaking C
8. Do they receive any special training to teach the oral skills?
9. Do the teachers meet to discuss the course policies and development? If yes, how often do they meet
10. 8. What are the major points of discussions in the meeting?
11. What do you think are the main goals for the English majors?
12. How does the department choose the teaching material?
13. What is the main content and objectives of the teaching material?
14. Do you think the instructors use any supplementary materials? If yes, what are they?
15. What do you think is required to promote the learners' communicative competence?
16. Is teaching communicative competence an important part of a foreign Language classroom in your department? If yes, why? If no, why?
17. Is teaching culture an important part of a foreign language classroom? If yes, why? If no, why?

18. What English variety (American, British ... etc..) does the teaching material focus on ?

19. Other comments:

.....

.....

Thanks for your participation

## Appendix 2: Instructor Questionnaire

Contact information: Name: Issa Amrife Bldiar

Emails: [emrife@yahoo.com](mailto:emrife@yahoo.com)      Phones: Libya: 091- 328 - 7697

[iabldiar@memphis.edu](mailto:iabldiar@memphis.edu)      USA : 901- 428 - 4614

### Foreign Language Teaching Research Questionnaire (Teachers)

Thank you for participating in this research study. This questionnaire is for research purposes only and is meant to understand your teaching philosophy as a teacher of the listening and/ or speaking skills. The data collected via this questionnaire are highly confidential and are part of a research project conducted by Issa Amerife Bldiar, a Ph.D candidate at the Department of English/Applied Linguistics, University of Memphis, Tennessee, USA. The purpose of this study is to investigate the integration of the notion of communicative competence into teaching the oral skills to the fourth-year English major Libyan students at the Department of English/ Benghazi University. This project is under the supervision of Professor Teresa Dale.

#### Demographics:

- 1) Gender \_\_\_\_\_ male \_\_\_\_\_ female
- 2) Age: \_\_\_\_\_ 20-25 \_\_\_\_\_ 26-30 \_\_\_\_\_ 31-40 \_\_\_\_\_ 41-49  
\_\_\_\_\_ over 50
- 3) Nationality ( a ) Libyan ( ) (b) Non- Libyan ( ) , please, specify \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) How long have you been teaching in the department \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) How long have been teaching listening and/or speaking \_\_\_\_\_
- 6) Position title: \_\_\_\_\_
- 7) First Language: \_\_\_\_\_
- 8) Second Language: \_\_\_\_\_
- 9) Third Language: \_\_\_\_\_
- 10) What semester or year do you teach \_\_\_\_\_

#### Education:

- 11) What is your undergraduate degree in? \_\_\_\_\_
  - 12) Where did you receive your undergraduate degree? \_\_\_\_\_
  - 13) Where did you earn your advanced degree, MA, Ph.D \_\_\_\_\_
- 

14) Do you have any contributions (papers, conferences, publications ... etc.. in teaching oral skills (listening and/ or speaking)

---

15) What are your career aspirations regarding teaching the oral skills?

---

16) Did you teach English as a foreign language before coming to this department?  
If yes, please describe where and for how long.

---

17) Before coming to this institution, did you receive any type of training with regards to teaching the oral skills? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No  
If yes, please explain.

---

18) Since coming to this institution, what type of programs did you attend as far as Teaching English is concerned.

---

19) What was the content focus of these program(s)?

---

20) What is the most important element in helping students acquire listening and speaking skills?

---

21) Are you aware of the *American National Standards for Foreign Language Learning* or the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

22) If yes, can you provide examples of how you try to introduce these standards in your listening and speaking classes?

---

23) How do you assess the speaking and / or listening skills?

---

**Course:**

24) What material and/ or textbooks do you use for this course?

---

25) Who generates the syllabus? \_\_\_\_\_

26) Do you have any role in the creation of the syllabus? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

27) What would you say is the main content focus of the syllabus?

---

28) Do you feel the syllabus aligns well with your objectives of teaching the oral skills? \_\_\_\_\_

Yes \_\_\_\_\_

No \_\_\_\_\_

In what ways?

---

29) Do you think the syllabi specify how communicative competence will be integrated into the class? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

Please explain?

---

30) Who chooses the textbook?

---

31) What would you say is the main content emphasis of the textbook?

---

33) Do you believe the textbook meets the standards of teaching the oral skills? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes  
 \_\_\_\_\_ No  
 In what ways?

**Teaching Practices:**

32) What should be the overall goal of teaching listening and speaking?

33) What role does teaching culture play in your foreign language teaching?

34) Can you provide two examples of how you might incorporate a cultural lesson in your listening and/or speaking class?

35) What role does authentic communication opportunities in the target language play in your listening and/or speaking class?

36) Can you provide some examples of how you might teach a communication Activity(s) in your foreign language class?

36) How high or low do you rank the **importance** of the following components in teaching the oral skills?

Assessment scale: 1= very high 2=Rather high 3=Medium 4=Rather low 5= Very low  
 Please mark with a cross in every case (X)

a) Interaction and conversational organizations	1	2	3	4	5
b) Grammaticality	1	2	3	4	5
c) Sentence structure	1	2	3	4	5
d) Verb, tense and aspect	1	2	3	4	5
e) cultural aspects of language use	1	2	3	4	5
f) Real time language use (TV, Radio, Internet)	1	2	3	4	5
g) Pragmatics (the ability to use and understand speech in different situations)	1	2	3	4	5
h) Strategic competence ( go around what you don't know by using different strategies	1	2	3	4	5
i) Syntax ( the organization of words to make correct sentences)	1	2	3	4	5
j) Dialects and language varieties	1	2	3	4	5
K) Cohesion and coherence in conversations	1	2	3	4	5
L) Routines: fixed phrases, expression, collocations and idioms	1	2	3	4	5
M) Stalling or time gaining phrases such as "where are we?"	1	2	3	4	5

Say it again

37) The most appropriate approach to teach listening and speaking is:

(a) Role-play and scene acting

(1) Strongly agree ( ) (2) Agree ( ) (3) Neither agree nor disagree( ) (4) Disagree ( ) (5) strongly disagree ( )

(b) Dialogs and conversations

1) Strongly agree ( ) (2) Agree ( ) (3) Neither agree nor disagree( ) (4) Disagree ( ) (5) strongly disagree ( )

- ( c ) create interactive scenarios  
 1) Strongly agree ( ) ( 2 ) Agree ( ) ( 3 ) Neither agree nor disagree( ) ( 4 ) Disagree ( ) ( 5 ) strongly disagree ( )
- ( d ) Use videos or computer programs demonstrating real time language use  
 1) Strongly agree ( ) ( 2 ) Agree ( ) ( 3 ) Neither agree nor disagree( ) ( 4 ) Disagree ( ) ( 5 ) strongly disagree ( )
- ( e ) Teach when to say what and to whom appropriately  
 1) Strongly agree ( ) ( 2 ) Agree ( ) ( 3 ) Neither agree nor disagree( ) ( 4 ) Disagree ( ) ( 5 ) strongly disagree ( )
- ( f ) Refer learners to online collaborative tasks such as social networking and blogging  
 1) Strongly agree ( ) ( 2 ) Agree ( ) ( 3 ) Neither agree nor disagree( ) ( 4 ) Disagree ( ) ( 5 ) strongly disagree ( )
- ( g ) Teach dialog completion( )  
 1) Strongly agree ( ) ( 2 ) Agree ( ) ( 3 ) Neither agree nor disagree( ) ( 4 ) Disagree ( ) ( 5 ) strongly disagree ( )
- ( h ) Teach learners strategies to negotiate meaning: ask for clarification, paraphrase, and use circumlocution.  
 1) Strongly agree ( ) ( 2 ) Agree ( ) ( 3 ) Neither agree nor disagree( ) ( 4 ) Disagree ( ) ( 5 ) strongly disagree ( )
- j) Analyze social sensations and issues  
 1) Strongly agree ( ) ( 2 ) Agree ( ) ( 3 ) Neither agree nor disagree( ) ( 4 ) Disagree ( ) ( 5 ) strongly disagree ( )
- l) Teach socially and culturally appropriate language choices  
 1) Strongly agree ( ) ( 2 ) Agree ( ) ( 3 ) Neither agree nor disagree( ) ( 4 ) Disagree ( ) ( 5 ) strongly disagree ( )
- o) Let the students repair communication breakdowns on their own  
 1) Strongly agree ( ) ( 2 ) Agree ( ) ( 3 ) Neither agree nor disagree( ) ( 4 ) Disagree ( ) ( 5 ) strongly disagree ( )
- q) Eliciting student interaction by asking questions on different issues of interest  
 1) Strongly agree ( ) ( 2 ) Agree ( ) ( 3 ) Neither agree nor disagree( ) ( 4 ) Disagree ( ) ( 5 ) strongly disagree ( )
- u) Promote scaffolding and instructional supports that enable learners to be successful in their verbal interactions  
 1) Strongly agree ( ) ( 2 ) Agree ( ) ( 3 ) Neither agree nor disagree( ) ( 4 ) Disagree ( ) ( 5 ) strongly disagree ( )
- 

38) What do you perceive the advantages of integrating pragmatic, sociolinguistic, strategic features in teaching the oral skills ( Listening and Speaking)

1. Influence view of the interlocutor of the EFL and ESL speaker( )
2. build up self-confidence reliance ( )
3. Develop native-like competence( )
4. Reduce hesitations and awkwardness( )
5. Facilitate the acquisition of communicative functions (greetings, apologizing, regretting ...etc

6. Familiarize learners with native speaker's norms of communication ( Don't over use maybe or please) ( )
7. Other, please specify and describe-

8.

39 ) Did you notice any difference between the students in the upper and lower levels regarding the development of the feature of their communicative competence ( pragmatic, sociolinguistic, linguistic , strategic)

---

44) What difficulties do you face when integrating the non-linguistic aspects in second language classes (social, cultural, pragmatic)

---

40 ) What approaches, models or methods do you use to assess the non- linguistic aspects of language learning?

---

41 ) Are there any other aspects of EFL and ESL that you teach and would like to mention here?

---

42) Who do you choose your textbook / teaching material?

---

**Thanks for participating in this survey**

### Appendix 3: Students' Questionnaire (during the semester)

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this survey on communicative competence incorporating and instruction in EFL and ESL oral skills teaching and learning materials and practices. This survey is an integral part of my study and the obtained information will be used anonymously and only for this research purposes.

Personal information questions:

- (1) age : -----
- (2) Sex: ( ) Male ( ) Female
- (3) Year or semester : -----
- (4) First Language: -----
- (5) Foreign languages other than English:-----
- (6) English Language learning outside of the English Department : -----
- (7) Nationality: -----

8) Read the statements below and Check (✓) the answer that applies to you

a) Good accent is essential to succeed in using it.

- (1) Strongly agree ( ) (2) Agree ( ) (3) Neither agree (4) Disagree ( ) (5) strongly disagree ( )  
nor disagree( )

b) It is important to check the grammaticality of my sentences before saying them .

- (1) Strongly agree ( ) (2) Agree ( ) (3) Neither agree (4) Disagree ( ) (5) strongly agree( )  
nor disagree( )

c) I am aware of doing some mistakes that I cannot get rid of.

- (1) Strongly agree ( ) (2) Agree ( ) (3) Neither agree (4) Disagree ( ) (5) strongly agree ( )  
Nor disagree ( )

e) Learning vocabulary lists is important to develop my speaking ability

- (1) Strongly agree ( ) (2) Agree ( ) (3) Neither agree (4) Disagree ( ) (5) strongly agree ( )  
nor disagree( )

f) learning grammar rules is the best way to develop the communication ability

- (1) Strongly agree ( ) (2) Agree ( ) (3) Neither agree (4) Disagree ( ) (5) strongly agree( )  
Nor disagree( )

g) It's important to repeat and practice a lot and my teachers encourage me to do so.

- (1) Strongly agree ( ) (2) Agree ( ) (3) Neither agree (4) Disagree ( ) (5) strongly agree( )  
Nor disagree( )

h) Real time language use in the foreign language is an important part of becoming proficient in that language

- (1) Strongly agree ( ) (2) Agree ( ) (3) Neither agree (4) Disagree ( ) (5) strongly agree( )  
nor disagree( )

i) I was given ample time in my speaking and listening classes to converse in the language throughout the semester.

- (1) Strongly agree ( ) (2) Agree ( ) (3) Neither agree (4) Disagree ( ) (5) strongly agree( )  
nor disagree( )

j) I felt like I was exposed to authentic, social, and real-life uses of English.

Please list some examples:



---

---

9) The focus of my listening and/ or speaking classes this semester was based more on real-life communication than it was on developing my grammatical ability.

(1) Strongly agree ( ) (2) Agree ( ) (3) Neither agree ( ) (4) Disagree ( ) (5) strongly disagree ( )  
nor disagree ( )

10) Grammar accuracy, vocabulary and sentence structure were the most important things I learned in the listening and speaking classes this semester.

(1) Strongly agree ( ) (2) Agree ( ) (3) Neither agree ( ) (4) Disagree ( ) (5) strongly disagree ( )  
nor disagree ( )

11) In general, the focus of my listening and speaking classes more on oral activities and practice than it was on reading and writing.

(1) Strongly agree ( ) (2) Agree ( ) (3) Neither agree ( ) (4) Disagree ( ) (5) strongly disagree ( )  
nor disagree ( )

13) Learning how to interact verbally was the most important thing I learned in my speaking and listening classes this semester.

(1) Strongly agree ( ) (2) Agree ( ) (3) Neither agree ( ) (4) Disagree ( ) (5) strongly disagree ( )  
nor disagree ( )

12) It is necessary to rules of language use in order to communicate efficiently in a foreign language.

(1) Strongly agree ( ) (2) Agree ( ) (3) Neither agree ( ) (4) Disagree ( ) (5) strongly disagree ( )  
nor disagree ( )

13) I was exposed to different varieties of English (British, American ...etc)

(1) Strongly agree ( ) (2) Agree ( ) (3) Neither agree ( ) (4) Disagree ( ) (5) strongly disagree ( )  
nor disagree ( )

14) The culture of the English language was presented to me in forms of information and knowledge about the lives of its people and the systems and structures of its countries,

(1) Strongly agree ( ) (2) Agree ( ) (3) Neither agree ( ) (4) Disagree ( ) (5) strongly disagree ( )  
nor disagree ( )

15) The topics in my oral skills class gave me opportunities to compare elements of my culture and the culture of my second language.

(1) Strongly agree ( ) (2) Agree ( ) (3) Neither agree ( ) (4) Disagree ( ) (5) strongly disagree ( )  
nor disagree ( )

16) learning about English language this semester made me understand my first language better.

(1) Strongly agree ( ) (2) Agree ( ) (3) Neither agree ( ) (4) Disagree ( ) (5) strongly disagree ( )  
nor disagree ( )

17) Learning how to use English in my listening and speaking classes has motivated me to continue learning the foreign language and use it outside of the classroom

(1) Strongly agree ( ) (2) Agree ( ) (3) Neither agree ( ) (4) Disagree ( ) (5) strongly disagree ( )  
nor disagree ( )

18) Learning about the non- linguistic aspects of English (when to say what to whom and in what manner) part of my listening and speaking class and helped me understand the English language better.

(1) Strongly agree ( ) (2) Agree ( ) (3) Neither agree ( ) (4) Disagree ( ) (5) strongly disagree ( )  
Nor disagree ( )

19) Learning about the context of use helped me appreciate the English language better.

(1) Strongly agree ( ) (2) Agree ( ) (3) Neither agree ( ) (4) Disagree ( ) (5) strongly disagree ( )  
nor disagree ( )

20) Learning about different varieties of English was part of my oral skills class this semester.  
 Strongly agree ( ) (2) Agree ( ) (3) Neither agree ( ) (4) Disagree ( ) (5) strongly  
 nor disagree( ) disagree ( )

21) The test focused on how to say what to whom in real time interaction  
 Strongly agree ( ) (2) Agree ( ) (3) Neither agree ( ) (4) Disagree ( ) (5) strongly  
 nor disagree( ) disagree ( )

21) The testing material focused on how to speak grammatically rather than on how to get my  
 meaning Strongly agree ( ) (2) Agree ( ) (3) Neither agree ( ) (4) Disagree ( ) (5)  
 strongly nor disagree( ) disagree ( )

How would you integrate communicative competence activities in your listening and speaking  
 classes:

---

**22)How high or low do you rank the importance of the following components in teaching  
 the oral skills?**

**Assessment scale: 1= very high 2=Rather high 3=Medium 4=Rather low 5= Very low.**

Please mark with a cross in every case 1 2 3 4 5

verb type , tense and aspect	1	2	3	4	5
Pronunciation and sounds	1	2	3	4	5
Interactions and communication	1	2	3	4	5
Interaction with English speakers	1	2	3	4	5
Accuracy , grammaticality and correctness	1	2	3	4	5
Speaking activities	1	2	3	4	5
Listening activities	1	2	3	4	5
reading reading activities	1	2	3	4	5
writing activities	1	2	3	4	5

**23) Which of the following was used in your listening and /or speaking classes? Check all  
 that applies.**

- Role-play and interaction ( )
- Dialogs and acting out sciences ( )
- Create scenarios to promote communicative competence ( )
- Use technology to demonstrate proper language use ( )
- Use language according to rules of appropriateness ( )
- I was referred to online collaborative tasks such as social networking and blogging ( )
- I was taught strategies of how to negotiate meaning: ask for clarification, paraphrase, and  
 use ( )
- Circumlocution(getting the meaning indirectly) ( )
- Analyze social events, sensations and issues ( )
- I was taught socially and culturally appropriate language choices ( )
- I was given chance to repair communication breakdowns by working with the other  
 students ( )
- My teacher always intervenes to correct me when I suffer communication breakdowns ( )
- I am always given the chance to start and lead conversations in my class and my teacher  
 intervenes ( )
- only when I suffer breakdowns ( )
- My teacher forces me to speak and if I don't, it is considered a failure ( )

My teachers help and support in the class enables me to develop my speaking and listening skills ( )

Other , please specify and describe ( )

#### Appendix 4: End of Term Student Questionnaire

I am Issa Emrife, a PhD candidate at the University of Memphis, Tennessee, USA. The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect some information from the students about the teaching of Listening and Speaking C in the department of English. This information will be used in my PhD research only and will be confidential.

Thanks for your help. Contact information: Issa Emrife, [Emrife@yahoo.com](mailto:Emrife@yahoo.com)

#### Personal questions

Your semester or year: .....

Gender: Male ( ) , Female ( )

What is the name of the textbook you studied for **listening and speaking C** .....

Teacher's Nationality ..... Gender: Male ( ), Female ( )

**If you agree, put ( ✓ ) in front of the statement; if you disagree, put ( ✗ )**

#### 1-Who chooses the topics in the listening and speaking classes?

The teacher ( )

The students help the teacher with choosing the topic ( )

The class just follows the topics in the book ( )

I don't know ( )

#### 2-Which of the following activities do you do in the listening and speaking classes:

1. Students prepare written topics and present them individually in the class ( )
2. The teacher explains the topic, and then, the students take part ( )
3. The students prepare written topics and present them in groups ( )
4. The students interact with the teacher by answering oral questions ( )
5. The teaching material is mainly written topics and the students read and talk about the topic ( )
6. The students interact and discuss topics of their interest ( )
7. Both the teaching material and the teacher give the students opportunities to talk about themselves and express ideas ( )
8. The students interact with each other to gain information and knowledge about the topic ( )
9. The teacher talks most of the time and the students listen passively ( )
10. The teaching material is interactive and the students interact by acting out sciences ( )
11. The students do information gap activities and dig out for information ( )
12. The students listen to watch / listen to a teaching material, then answer written questions ( )
13. The students watch videos and talk about them ( )
14. The students use online resources to get information about the topic ( )
15. The students watch You Tubes about the culture and use of English ( )
16. The students listen to radio programs at home and then talk about them in the class individually( ), in groups. ( )
17. The students read and discuss newspaper articles and talk about them individually( ), in groups ( )

- 18. The students talk about current events individually ( ), in groups ( )
  - 19. The students read texts on different topics and themes, individually ( ), in groups ( )
  - 20. The students take part in conversations in the class by role play ( )
  - 21. The students prepare written projects and read them in the class ( )
  - 22. The teacher asks the students to negotiate meaning when we don't know how to talk about the topic (e.g., The teacher asks for clarifications, paraphrases, and explanations) ( )
  - 23. The teacher gives pair work and small group work to speak English in the class ( )
  - 24. The teacher uses Arabic when the class does not understand the topic ( )
  - 25. Other activities or exercises please list below:
- 
- 
- 

**3-Which type of English do you think you speak?**

British ( ) American ( ) Canadian ( ) New Zealander ( ) Other.....

**4-After I have completed Listening and speaking C level, I consider myself:**

- 1. A bilingual (a person who speaks two languages well) ( )
- 2. I can work in any job that needs a fluent English speaker ( )
- 3. I am planning to improve my spoken English outside of the university classes ( )
- 4. My spoken English is still limited and I can read and write more than I can speak ( )

**5-In your speaking class, the teacher refers most of the time to which of the following Englishes:**

- 1. American English %
- 2. British English %
- 3. Australian %
- 4. New Zealander %

**6-Which of the following does the teacher use to teach the listening and speaking skills. Please give a percentage**

- 1. The book %
- 2. Topics from outside of the book %
- 3. Internet %
- 4. Films %
- 5. You tubes %
- 6. CDs and Cassettes %
- a)
- Others:.....

**7- I consider my English perfect if I can:**

- 1. Understand native and non- native speakers ( )
- 2. Speak as fast as the native speakers do with a good accent ( )
- 3. Read and understand written texts only and speaking is less important to me ( )

4. Read, write and speak ( )
5. Be fluent in English as I am fluent in my first language ( )  
( )

**Thanks for your cooperation**  
**Issa Emrife Bldiar**

## Appendix 5: Student Self-Assessment Descriptors (CEFR)

### Linguistic Range

#### GENERAL LINGUISTIC RANGE

- Can exploit a comprehensive and reliable mastery of a very wide range of language to formulate thoughts precisely, give emphasis, differentiate and eliminate ambiguity. No signs of having to restrict what he/she wants to say.
- C2** Can select an appropriate formulation from a broad range of language to express him/herself clearly, without having to restrict what he/she wants to say.
- C1**

#### VOCABULARY RANGE

- C2** Has a good command of a very broad lexical repertoire including idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms; shows awareness of connotative levels of meaning.
- C1** Has a good command of a broad lexical repertoire allowing gaps to be readily overcome with circumlocutions; little obvious searching for expressions or avoidance strategies. Good command of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms.

#### GRAMMATICAL ACCURACY

- C2** Maintains consistent grammatical control of complex language, even while attention is otherwise engaged (e.g. in forward planning, in monitoring others' reactions).
- C1** Consistently maintains a high degree of grammatical accuracy; errors are rare and difficult to spot.

#### VOCABULARY CONTROL

- C2** Consistently correct and appropriate use of vocabulary.
- C1** Occasional minor slips, but no significant vocabulary errors.

#### PHONOLOGICAL CONTROL

- C2** No descriptor available
- C1** Can vary intonation and place sentence stress correctly in order to express finer shades of meaning.

### Control Sociolinguistic

#### SOCIOLINGUISTIC APPROPRIATENESS

- C2** Has a good command of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms with awareness of connotative levels of meaning  
Appreciates fully the sociolinguistic and sociocultural implications of language used by native speakers and can react accordingly  
Can mediate effectively between speakers of the target language and that of his/her community of origin taking account of sociocultural and sociolinguistic differences.
- C1** Can recognise a wide range of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms, appreciating register shifts; may, however, need to confirm occasional details, especially if the accent is unfamiliar.  
Can follow films employing a considerable degree of slang and idiomatic usage.  
Can use language flexibly and effectively for social purposes, including emotional, allusive and joking usage.

### Pragmatic

#### FLEXIBILITY

- C2** Shows great flexibility reformulating ideas in differing linguistic forms to give emphasis, to differentiate according to the situation, interlocutor etc. and to eliminate ambiguity.

**C1** No descriptor available

**TAKING THE FLOOR (TURNTAKING)**

**C2** No descriptor available

**C1** Can select a suitable phrase from a readily available range of discourse functions to preface his remarks appropriately in order to get the floor, or to gain time and keep the floor whilst thinking.

**COHERENCE**

**C2** Can create coherent and cohesive text making full and appropriate use of a variety of organisational patterns and a wide range of cohesive devices.

**C1** Can produce clear, smoothly flowing, well-structured speech, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.

**PROPOSITIONAL PRECISION**

**C2** Can convey finer shades of meaning precisely by using, with reasonable accuracy, a wide range of qualifying devices (e.g. adverbs expressing degree, clauses expressing limitations).

Can give emphasis, differentiate and eliminate ambiguity.

**C1** Can qualify opinions and statements precisely in relation to degrees of, e.g., , certainty/ uncertainty, belief/doubt, likelihood etc.

**SPOKEN FLUENCY**

**C2** Can express him/herself at length with a natural, effortless, unhesitating flow. Pauses only to reflect on precisely the right words to express his/her thoughts or to find an appropriate example or explanation.

**C1** Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously, almost effortlessly. Only a conceptually difficult subject can hinder a natural, smooth flow of language.

## **Appendix 6: Institutional Review Board Approval**

Subject: A Study of the Integration of Communicative Competence (CC) Features in Teaching the Oral Skills (Listening and Speaking) to English Majors at the Department of English, University of Benghazi/ Libya

(#2226)

Approval Date: July 13, 2012

This is to notify you of the board approval of the above referenced protocol. This project was reviewed in accordance with all applicable statuses and regulations as well as ethical principles. Approval of this project is given with the following obligations:

1. At the end of one year from the approval date, an approved renewal must be in effect to continue the project. If approval is not obtained, the human consent form is no longer valid and accrual of new subjects must stop.
2. When the project is finished or terminated, the attached form must be completed and sent to the board.. No change may be made in the approved protocol without board approval, except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards or threats to subjects.

Such changes must be reported promptly to the board to obtain approval.

3. The stamped, approved human subjects consent form must be used unless your Consent is electronic. Electronic consents may not be used after the approval expires. Photocopies of the form may be made. This approval expires one year from the date above, and must be renewed prior to that date if the study is ongoing.

Chair, Institutional Review Board

The University of Memphis