Introducing audio-visual aids in teaching phonetics to first year students. The case of first year students of English at batna University

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INTRODUCTION

Recent theories on second and foreign Language learning are challenging educators and researchers who engage in an attempt to clarify some of the basic issues in teaching /learning process. The challenge consists of demystifying certain controversial subjects, such as "language mastery", "proficiency level" and "communicative skills" which have been for so long considered as undeniable constraints to for both students and teachers of a foreign language .The target expected here is to find some common clear and precise points that can hopefully help language teachers and learners to set the ground for their educational objectives. Most of the emerged points shape the beliefs and attitudes of those educators and language researchers towards the teaching /learning process.

Approaching native speakers' language proficiency is the promised level of the communicative skills set as the primary aim of learners. it became an urgent necessity for language teachers to exert themselves to the utmost of their power to benefit fully from the works of language researchers. In the context of TEFL, the necessity became really a priority simply, because learners' need to communicate using the target language is their ultimate objective.

In fact, almost all language instructional approaches promote the integration of the four language skills (listening, reading, speaking and

writing) in ways that reflect natural language communication, outside and inside the classroom. According Brown (1994),to Outside the classroom, listening is used twice as often as speaking, whereas Rivers (1981) has already stated that:

"Inside the classroom, speaking and listening are the most often used skills"(p.102)

These facts, added to my personal experience as a former student and actually as a teacher, I realized that teaching phonetics module for learners of English at the University of Batna does not fully undergo the prescribed methodology to reach the targeted objective. Theoretically, learning phonetics is the direct path a student has to follow to get familiar with the English sound system and its specificities. In practice however, first year courses are purely descriptive of the general framework and conditions where an English sound occurs. Introducing the English sounds, phonemes, allophones and most of segmentals in a classical teaching way does not bring much . The learner even though well provided with information, still lacks realization of these performances in concrete acts of speech. To him this is not enough to end up with a near native pronunciation, as he never listens decodes and analyses the sounds of the language as produced by its speakers. Undoubtedly, the best way to get this at this early stage is learning through audiovisuals where he can see, and listen to natives languages.

It goes without saying that in modern EFL classes the language laboratory is the unique milieu of instructions where the learner feels a foreign language society like environment. There, he is in an artificial but continuous contact with the foreign language speakers and most of the cultural aspects which

influence the language. The image that he sees through the screen complete what his ear could not grasp of what he hears. Combining both listening and seeing faculties, the learners advances to a considerable extent in manipulating the language phonological system right at the beginning of the four year term of training. This gives us enough conviction that delaying such an opportunity to the third year (as prescribed in the official syllabus) simply worsens the situation and postpones real <u>occasions</u> of learning. These factors well examined and analyzed converge to one central point that the present way of teaching phonetics to first year University students of English at Batna university is a problem; and therefore, it needs to be solved.

HYPOTHESIS

After varied and thorough experiments, language specialists noticed that for many foreign language students , learning to speak accurately and fluently in English is a priority. It is the skill by which they are frequently judged while first impressions are being formed. The main method of exposing students to spoken English (after the teacher) is through the use of taped material which allows learners to listen to a variety of speakers on a variety of topics in a variety of genres such as: dialogues, interviews, lectures, stories…etc.

Listening to appropriate tapes in language laboratory provides exposure to spoken English, so that students get vital information not only about grammar and vocabulary but also about pronunciation, intonation, pitch and stress. Listening through taped instructional material in language laboratory is a way to bring different kinds of speaking into the classroom to help the learner to understand as well as to perform well while speaking English.

The main hypothesis we set for this study is that introducing phonetics course to first year students through audiovisual aids would be more beneficial to both teachers and learners. On the one hand students find less difficulties in pronouncing correctly the English sounds as they are supplied by a real model. On the other hand teachers themselves work in a guided environment which simplifies the discrete points of the course in practical activities.

Obviously, the other hypothesis is that the language laboratory is one of the best ways to teach phonetics to first year students, as it contains both audio and visual facilities.

In deed, the main problem of learners who have weak oral performances is that they are not used to every day language spoken naturally. This is what leads to their failure to understand the language they hear. Therefore, it becomes an obstacle to communicate and interact with aural /oral incompetence. In our opinion as to most of them, this can be diminished when learners feel that they are given real opportunities to practice both sets of skills -listening and speaking- and to integrate them in conversation. Here, two questions seem worth asking:

a-to what extent can laboratory-based language teaching have a significant degree of effectiveness in developing students' aural-oral skills in the course of phonetics ?

b-to what extent can listening in language laboratory be a real language experience which can help learners of English at the University level to develop and reinforce their speaking skill in general?

Moreover, the lack of exposure to spoken English through audiovisuals contributes to underachievement in speaking skill. Learners who are not used to listen to authentic spoken English are typically limited to the voice of their teacher and their mates. Thus, authenticity of spoken language and its specificities present obstacles for quick and spontaneous understanding and decoding of language as it is used by its native speakers and obviously leads to ill-performance in speaking.

Objectives

Investigating the issue of introducing audio visuals in teaching phonetics to 1st year Enlish language students is conducted in the general percpective of verifying our hypotheses.Next, we would like also to reach , among other points, a number of objectives that we classift in the followings:

- To show that eposing learners to listening in language laboratory is an active action to learn not only the foreign language , but also things related to it.
- To show that audio visual material used in the language laboratory is one of the most convenient means of bettering students assimilation of phonetics courses which develop their aural-oral skills;
- To suggest some teaching recommendations concerning the use of audiovisuals in the language laboratory to develop and integrate both listening and speaking skills.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

CHOICE OF THE METHOD:

The present work investigates the the effectiveness of introducing laboratory teaching to develop learners' aural-oral skills part of phonetics courses at the University level. The investigation follows a descriptive way of the current situation rather than establishing a cause/effect realinoship.In our case we need first   opinions and attitudes of teachers and learners and their evaluations of the actual situation of teching/learning phonetics.We believe that our own   comments and analysis of the situation adds important dimentions to understand the problem better.

Through this work, we are not intending to manipulate one variable (the independent) to influence the other (the dependent). Cases like these require investigating the issue to explore the strength of relationships between the two variables using the experimental method, which we have avoided for two main reasons:

- Conducting the work through a descriptive way is appropriate in gathering data through questionnaires and surveying students and teachers conceptualization of the problem of teaching phonetics in the actual situation. The experimental method would be used if we had to test learners' listening and speaking skills' proficiencies and the degree of language proficiency guaranteed by the use of language laboratory

- the experimental method can not be successfully applied with such a study unless adequate care should be taken to control the extraneous variables which might affect the results of the study. One major obstacle here is the practicability of the experiment: our issue concerns the learners and the teachers of the course of phonetics at Batna University and, despite the looks, The Department is not yet equipped with functional language laboratories.Such a reality makes us bound to use the research methods and tools at hand.

POPULATION AND SAMPLING

Conducting an investigation on 720 students, the entire population of first year students in the department of English at the University of Batna during the academic year 2006-2007, is neither wise nor possible. Researchers say that sufficient data can be obtained through the study of a proportion of the population, that is a sample.

The population of this study consists of two groups:

-The teachers in charge of the module of phonetics.They are eight, including those who teach second and third years; and

 -Students registered in the first year for the B.A in English, including the ones repeating the year. All these students are registered in lists following an alphabetical order. What these students do not have as a common characteristic is their educational streaming: they came from different streams; literary, scientific and technical.

This is not an influential variable in our investigation. All of these students are introduced for the first time to the course of phonetics, and all of them do

not take its courses in languae laboratories.Therefore, randomization would be the best way to select the sample subject of the study. Our sample, than, will consist of six

groups of thirty individuals from a total of eighteen groups. The percentage of 30% will be reliable to draw conclusions and generalize findings on the entire population.Out of these 180 subjects, we count only 42 boys. The disproportion of the gender among our respondents is not surprising when we know that the department has the female overrepresentation as it its main characteristic.

The choice of the six groups meant by the study was done according to certain facilities.Chief among them is the concordance of their time table with the our's.This enables possible and continuous contact with the respondents throughout the period of the inevestigation.As a matter of fact, two of the six groups are my own groups and all the research activities were conducted independent of the course sessions.

DATA GATHERING TOOLS

To obtain sufficient data from our sample, we have decided to use the questionnaire as the main data gathering tool.Among other advantages, the questionnaire helps the researchers to get direct access to the opinions, attitudes and points of view held by the subjects. It also provides adequate evidence on the respondents' perception and conceptualization of the situation they are in. This raw material of data helps us for the analysis and examination of the possible solutions to be suggested at the end of the study. the common research techniques to do so are the "elicitation techniques". Following Nunan (1999),

"Elicitation is a range of procedures for obtaining speech samples and other data from subjects. Such procedures may range from administration of standardized tests through to questionnaires and interviews" P. 230

Therefore, the main data gathering tools used in this study are two questionnaires, administered to first year students and their teachers of phonetics module.we will use such tool to obtain different perspectives about the subject through students and teachers' opinions and standpoints concerning the items under investigation. The aim is giving students and teachers the opportunity to reveal their difficulties and barriers in the learning-teaching of phonetics with the absence of the language laboratory in particular. Informal interviews may also be used in cases which require discussing the issue in depth more than what the questionnaire allows.

Before administering the questionnaire to the 720 participants, it will be first piloted to a group of students 50 to ensure a well-construction of the questionnaires. As far as the teachers' questionnaire is concerned, we intended to have our colleagues and teachers' comments and opinions for the well-constructing, wording and general format of the questionnaires items.

THEORETICAL OVERVIEW

CHAPTER I: LANGUAGE SKILLS AND TEACHING AIDS

INTRODUCTION

The conventional approaches to language teaching have emphasized the necessity of teaching the so called 'four skills' (listening, reading, speaking and writing), but with different priorities. Language teachers are supposed not only to teach these skills but also to facilitate learning them using what is called 'teaching aids'.Thus the role of laboratory-based language teaching in developing aural /oral skill in its context is of importance. Language laboratory is one of the classroom' teaching aidsIt is therefore of value to highlight the different ways they are taught and learnt, then the various available teaching aids (visual, audio and audiovisual) and the appropriate techniques of using them in language classroom to teach the above skills ; with special emphasis on speaking and pronunciation being the major concern of the present work.

I-1. LANGUAGE SKILLS

Teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) aims at developing within the learners   abilities in receiving and producing oral and written discourses This requires exposing students to the four skills: listening,

reading, speaking and writing, at different,t paces and levels. If the learner has mastered these four skills successfully, he/she may receive and understand language discourses as well as he/she can produce and convey messages "accurately and fluently" (Ur, 2000)

Language skills are divided into two broad categories: receptive and productive skills.

I.1-1 RECEPTIVE SKILLS

Harmer (2001.199) says that:"receptive skills are the ways in which people extract meaning from the discourse they see or hear."This process of extracting meaning is linked to the two skills: reading and listening. In spite of the differences between the ways they are taught and learned, they require a complete deploy of the 'schematic knowledge' to approach the process of comprehension;that is making a sense of any discourse we see or hear involves 'pre-existing knowledge' or more accurately 'schema'. The term has been defined by Cook Hedge (2000.) as:

> "[…] Mental representations of typical
>
> situations…used in discourse processing
>
> to predict the contents of the particular
>
> situations which the discourse describes."
>
> (P.190)

Current researches into the reading and listening processes have demonstrated that particular words, discourse patterns or contexts activate the pre-existing knowledge (schema in the mind of the reader or listener). Thus,

schematic knowledge helps us to recognize what we see or hear for it fits into patterns that we already know.

Harmer (2001) presented the example of a British reader who reads the newspaper headlines "England in six-wicket collapse" he/she will guess that the England cricket team has failed in an international match. This certainly indicates that the reader's guess is based on his pre-existing knowledge of how English newspapers headlines are formed. It is based also on his understanding that wicket is a cricketing term and his previous knowledge that England has not been doing well in the sport lately.

The above example shows that understanding a piece of written or spoken discourse requires much more than just knowing the language. Our schematic knowledge helps us to identify the topic or the idea being talked about so that good readers and listeners have such receptive skills that allow them to perceive and understand the discourse as it progresses.

I-1-1-a-LISTENING SKILL

The common belief about listening is that it is passive, neglected and taken for granted skill. Yet it is vital, active and complex skill (Broughton and others.1980, Hedge.2000, Anderson and Lynch.1988, Rost.1994).

In the TEFL context, the meaning of the word listening differs from one teacher to another. Many teachers agree that listening skill involves sub-skills or components employed during listening practice in second language instructions. Rost (1994.) draws up a particular list of components:

- Discriminating between sounds.
- Recognizing words.
- Identifying stressed words and groping of words.

- Identifying functions (such as apologizing) in conversations.
- Connecting linguistic cues to paralinguistic cues (intonation and stress) and to non- linguistic cues (gestures and relevant objects in the situations) in order to construct meaning.
- Using background knowledge and context to predict and then to confirm meaning.
- Recalling important words, topics and ideas.
- Giving appropriate feedback to the speaker.
- Reformulating what the speaker has said.

Like in reading skill, students in listening should deploy all these sub-skills to reach successful listening. In this sense, He still argues that:

> "Successful listening involves an integration of these component skills. In this sense, listening is a co-ordination of the component skills, not the individual skills themselves. This integration of these skills constitutes a person's listening ability" (P.142)

FL instructors teach listening for comprehension and communication. They mainly expose their students to spoken language to give them opportunities to hear native speakers' language with all different varieties and accents Teaching listening especially through tapes is that it is a good factor that helps students to acquire different patterns of language.This is what Harmer (1998) wrote:

> "Listening to appropriate tapes provides such exposure and students get vital

information not only about grammar and vocabulary but also about pronunciation, rhythm, intonation, pitch and stress." (P. 89)

No one can deny the role of listening instruction in EFL classroom. This is simply because listening is vital in the FL teaching to provide "input" for the learner. It is due to this input that learning FL effectively begins.According to Rost (1994),authentic listening material exposes students to the natural language of native speakers.In his own words:"Authentic spoken language presents a challenge for the learner to attempt to understand language as it is actually used by native speakers". (P.141)

Like teaching reading, there are certain principles behind the teaching of listening. The major principle is the tape recorder that the teacher uses for listening activities. It should have a good speaker and a good motor speed in order the tape not to go faster or slower and to be heard all around the class.Creating interest and activating motivation while doing listening tasks depends on the teacher's right choice of topic, level and task. Teachers can also exploit listening texts to the full (harmer, 1998.100) by using different applications and varying kinds of study.

As with the reading skill, listening also involves the two different aspects: "bottom-up and top-down" processes. Hedge (2000) defines the former as follows:

"In the bottom-up part of listening process, we use our knowledge of language and our ability to process acoustic signals to make sense of sounds

that speech presents to us. In other words,

we use information in the speech itself to

try to comprehend the meaning". P.230

In top-down process, the listener bridges his previous knowledge with the text using certain "contextual clues" (Hedge, 2000) such as: speaker(s), topic, setting…etc. it is the employ of schematic knowledge in the spoken text.EFL teachers should encourage students to engage in the listening process by involving them in both extensive and intensive listening.

What is important for extensive listening is that it gives the learners the chance and the choice to develop their listening skill, improve their language abilities and enjoy themselves. It is usually taken outside the class and done for its own sake. Extensive listening material can be found in recordings of stories and other texts taken from books and magazines, and informally recordings from radio and television where spontaneous conversations can be a good resource for advanced learners.

Teachers can carry out an effective extensive listening in EFL classes by providing appropriate tapes in different levels and genres across variety of topics to be organized, then, as a small library available for students. They can encourage extensive listening by asking students to perform certain tasks. Students can report what they have recently listened to, evaluate the level of difficulty and summarize the content of the tape. The aim of such tasks is to give students more and more reasons to listen.

As far as intensive listening is concerned, many EFL teachers prefer to use taped material(ref). They certainly agree that there are numerous advantages in using audiotapes. It is one of the easiest ways for teachers to

bring into the classroom a variety of voices (male, female, different ages, different accents) on a variety of topics in a variety of genres (dialogues, interviews, lectures, stories and poems). In some teaching situations it may be the learner's only opportunity to hear native speakers, and to hear FL-speaking voices other than the teacher's.

Another way to carry out a successful intensive listening is what Harmer (2001.) named 'live listening' which can take many forms. Teachers' reading aloud to a class can be really an enjoyable activity to deal with live listening for it allows students to hear the spoken version of the written text. Story-telling, holding a
conversation with a colleague and live interviews are also effective tools for live listening. Although, live listening is not a substitute for audiotapes but it provides another perspective for intensive listening

I-1-1-b-TEACHING RECEPTIVE SKILLS

EFL students and teachers usually face particular problems when dealing with receptive skills. These problems as viewed by Harmer (2001) are those of language, topic, the task and the expectation they have of reading and listening.

Language**:** the basic problems of language are those of sentence length (C. Wallace, 1992) and number of unfamiliar words in the text (W. Underwood, 1989). The most efficient ways to address the problem of language- according to this same author

- Pre- teaching vocabulary: the aim is to remove some obstacles of comprehension which they are likely to encounter.

- Extensive reading and listening: this can help students to develop their language patterns and be more positive about reading and listening. It certainly promotes their comprehension skills and enriches their vocabulary bank and normally their schematic knowledge.

- Authenticity: authentic material in FL teaching is the only way to bring the natural language of native speakers to the classroom and get students to contact directly with the real language that they have to work hardly to understand.

Topic: if students encounter unfamiliar topic, they will certainly show less success than expected in learning receptive skills. The lack of engagement will appear as a major hindrance to successful reading or listening in the case of unfamiliar genre or uninteresting topic. To deal with this problem, teachers need to choose appropriate topics and use different genres so that students will show a full engagement. Questionnaires, interviews and the reaction of students to the previous topic can be a good procedure to achieve teacher's aim. Teachers also need to include different topics across a variety of lessons so that they can possibly meet the maximum of students' different interests and needs. To make the chosen topic interesting and create motivation, Harmer (2001) states:

> "[…] we can get students engaged by talking about the topic, by showing a picture for prediction, by asking them to guess what they are going to see or hear on the basis of few words or phrases from the text, or by having them look at headlines or captions before they read the whole thing"

P. 206

Thus, by varying topics and genres and creating the interest, we are automatically activating students' schemata before they read or listen.

Comprehension tasks: successful teaching and learning of receptive skills depend widely on the right choice of comprehension tasks. Students usually complain that certain tasks in listening or reading are likely to be testing than teaching. Harmer (2001) confirms that:

> "Sometimes such tasks appear to be testing the students rather than helping them to understand. Although reading and listening are perfectly proper medium for language and skill testing, nevertheless, if we are trying to encourage students to improve their receptive skill, testing then will not be appropriate way of accomplishing this."

P.207

The appropriate way to teach comprehension tasks is the one which makes the task activating students' expectations and motivating their abilities of grasping the meanings from spoken or written messages. Activities like "fill in gaps" forms on the basis of a listening tape, or solving reading puzzles can help students to improve their receptive skills in comprehension tasks.

Dudley and Johns (1981: 37-39) suggested two patterns of activities to deal with comprehension tasks:

- Global understanding pattern which involves questions to check students' understanding of the main points without referring to their notes.

- Understanding of detail pattern which is like "global understanding" but with referring to some points in the lecture like the examples given during the lecture.

The level of the task raises another problem. To avoid activities and tasks that are either too difficult or too easy, teachers have to bridge between the task and the text. They can make from a difficult text an easy task. Students' attitude towards written or spoken texts and tasks is usually negative. EFL teachers hear the phrase" sir, it is too difficult"; here, it is the job of the teacher to resolve such negative expectations and attitudes by choosing the right level in terms of language, text and task in both reading and listening skills. By doing this procedure successively, we probably erase the previous attitudes and expectations and thus creating new conditions for further engagement.

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I-1-2. PRODUCTIVE SKILLS

successful communication requires a well-built structure of discourse (written or spoken) in order to be well received and appropriately perceived by listeners or readers. According to Harmer (2001), written discourse particularly has to be both coherent (following the sequence of ideas and points) and cohesive (connecting ideas across phrases and sentences), whereas spoken discourse (speech) appears to be more spontaneous, disorganized and "considerably more chaotic" (Harmer. 2001. 246) for speakers do not pay attention to use organized language structures as writers do.

Shared Schemata make spoken and written communication efficient (i.e. it helps participants to communicate effectively). Harmer (2001) states that :

> "When people with similar cultural and linguistics backgrounds get together they speak to each other easily because they know the rules of conversation in their language and their shared culture. When they write to each other they obey certain conventions […] our shared schemata helps us to communicate successfully"

P.246

Holding a conversation with someone of similar cultural and linguistic background demands following certain socio-cultural rules in terms of formality, the level of language (high or low), distance and closeness of participants…etc. these cultural habits justify the differences between man and woman talk, high and low social status, behaviors and other speech acts varieties and so on. To hold a successful conversation also requires what is called "turn taking" in which participants recognize verbal and visual signals and it allows them to finish or to take a speaking turn.

In any communication (written or spoken), some parameters are systematically demonstrated: participants, genre, setting, channel (vehicle) and the purpose. These parameters vary from one situation to another; giving a lecture (genre) to students (participants) in a classroom (setting) to clarify certain facts (purpose) is different from performing a play (genre) in a theatre (setting) to the audience (participants) using a microphone (channel) for entertainment (purpose). Writing has parameters too. Writing a letter to a

friend requires kind of language unlike the newspapers' language and unlike the one of formal letters or essays…etc.The genre of the audience determines the kind of language, style and the way the writer or speaker should use. This obviously depends on the ability of the writer or the speaker to change his/her style and language to meet the needs of the audience.

I-₁-₂-ₐ-THE SPEAKING SKILL

What should be firstly mentioned is that many TFL researchers agree that speaking is the most complex and important skill which deserves more attention in teaching any foreign language (T. Hedge. 2000, P. Ur. 2000, M. Bygate. 1987).

Ur (2000), for example, declares that speaking skill is the most important skill in the course of teaching and learning a foreign language:

> "Of all the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), speaking seems intuitively the most important: people who know a language are referred to as 'speakers' of the language, as if speaking included all other kinds of knowing; and many if not most foreign language learners are primarily interested to speak."

P.120

Many FL students do believe that learning to speak is an urgent priority. It is the skill by which they are usually judged. People often ask such a question

"can you speak English, French…?" But not "can you write, read English, French …?", and the following statements are very common: "he/she speaks English very well."; "he/she speaks American/British English."

In fact, it is the most complex skill to teach for it involves network of elements linked to each other. Speaking fluently, according to Harmer (2001) requires not only knowledge of language features but also the ability to process information and language.

As far as language features are concerned, FL students have to master some language elements and practice them away from language drills for better improvement in their spoken productions. These elements are the following:

- Connected speech: to speak effectively in any FL, students need to produce connected speech rather than individual phonemes. This can be successfully achieved through the right application of assimilation, elision, and weak forms' rules. For instance, instead of saying: "I would have been", he/ she say: "I'd've been".

- Expressive devices: the ability to convey meanings in face to face interaction requires changing pitch and stress, vary volume and speed and using paralinguistic signs.

- Lexis and grammar: different functions of communication (greeting, apologizing, agreeing, expressing surprise, etc.) are vital elements of spontaneous speech. Teachers can get students to use these functions in different contexts and at different steps of any interaction.

- Negotiating language: it is like a channel between the listener and the speaker to get clarification and show the structure of their discourse.

Mental and social processing determines the success of language production too. It involves three main elements contributing in the ability to process information and language.

- Language processing: Harmer (2001) presents a good explanation of language processing. He states:

> "Effective speakers need to be able to process language in their own heads and put it into coherent order so that it comes out in forms that are not only comprehensible, but also convey the meanings that are intended."

P. 271

It is the act of retrieving words and phrases from one's memory and as a result "the words are being spoken and as they are being decided and as they are being understood" (Bygate: 1987.11)

- Interacting with others: in any interaction, participants (speakers and listeners) have to be not only language processors but also language communicators. This means that effective speaking involves effective listening, sharing information and turn-acting.

- (On-the-spot) information processing: it is obvious that we make a response to others' feelings and their speech, we need also to process the information we receive the moment we get it. This kind of processing is instant and culture-specific.

Classroom speaking activities differ from one teacher to another, yet currently and the most widely-used activities fall at "the communicative end of the communicative continuum" (Harmer. 2001).

- Acting from a script is one of these activities in which the teacher can ask his students to act out scenes from a play, course book's conversations or students written dialogues in front of the class. What should be taken into account when acting out is giving students the adequate time to rehearse their dialogues before asking them to perform. Teachers should also pay attention to students 'used stress, intonation and speed.

- Carrying out a discussion is a very common speaking activity in language classrooms. Teachers can prepare a topic for discussion to give his students a chance to express their own opinions in front of the class. The formal debate, in which students prepare arguments either with or against various topics, has the ability to enhance students' speaking skill. Most teachers may complain that discussion activities are facing failure. In this sense, Harmer (2001) explains:

> "One of the reasons that discussions fail (when they do) is that students are reluctant to give an opinion in front of the whole class, particularly if they cannot think of any thing to say and are not, anyway, confident of the language they might use to say it. Many students feel extremely exposed in discussion situations"

P. 272

Thus, to avoid this failure, teacher needs to prepare his students in advance to the topic, determine clearly his aim in doing such an activity and give appropriate time to think of ideas and language

expressions. His success in doing so depends largely upon his ability to change his attitudes to errors and mistakes, in addition to his progressive help and encouragements.

- Another speaking activity, which most teachers do believe that it falls at the communicative end of the communicative continuum, is the communication games. They are frequently done between two students in terms of an information gap (a puzzle to solve, describe and draw activity, describe and arrange or find similarities and differences between pictures). All these activities depend on both fluency and accuracy. The teacher here has to take into account the determined aim, the level and students' interests.

- Simulation and role- play activities are of great benefits for students because they are likely to bring the outside world into the classroom and use all the common expressions and language structures of various situations. Simulating real- life situations (invitations, business meetings, interviews, friends' talk, etc) needs a full engagement of students in taking the role of a character (with all his thoughts ideas and feelings) different from themselves. The aim of role play activities is to enhance general oral fluency and train students for different language expressions and language structures in a variety of situations. In addition to that, they decrease the level of hesitation and help shy and passive students to be more dynamic and effective in class.

Teaching speaking to EFL students helps them express their opinions and ideas on a variety of topics in a variety of situations fluently and accurately. The role of the teacher is to assist them to develop certain "communication strategies" (Bygate: 1987) and prepare students' speaking

abilities for their further careers. He should teach not only speaking in isolation but also to combine it with activities that increase their communicative competence including grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary. Speaking is intended to be taught in parallel with listening for better improvement of students' both receptive and productive skills.

All in all, the teaching of productive and receptive skills is an overlapped process; the two feed each other in a number of ways. Reception can be a part of production (the child speaks the language he hears). This kind of interrelation is obvious and clear in conversations where listening and speaking mixed together, writing also depends on what we read, etc. thus, teachers need to teach the four skills in parallel and should not have their students practice skills in isolation.

I-1.2. b - TEACHING PRODUCTIVE SKILLS

The aim of teaching productive skills is to reach a communicative purpose rather than practicing language for specific points. Thus, language drills in speaking and writing sentences to practice grammar points are not productive skills for they have no communicative value. Hedge (2000) confirms that speaking – as a productive skill- should be practiced within the context of communicative approach:

> "As communicative approaches have developed, teachers have been concerned to ensure that students not only practice speaking in a controlled way in order to produce features of pronunciation, vocabulary and structure accurately, but

also practice using these features more
freely in purposeful communication."

P. 261

Hence, FL teachers tend to believe that the extent of success in language learning program depends basically on freely practicing tasks either in spoken or written productions. In this sense, harmer (2001.250) states that the freer the task the greater the chance of seeing how successful a language learning program has been.

The teaching of productive skills in FL classroom aims at assessing students' oral and written performance. Teachers can assess their students' work using comments (saying "good" or "not exactly" or writing something like "a very interesting composition" or "the topic is a bit mixed up because the sequence of events is not clear"), marks and grades and reports (sent to student, school or parents for further improvement and progress of students' language production).

As in receptive skills, EFL students feel that producing language discourses (spoken or written) is difficult particularly with activities and tasks of communicative purpose. In this case, the role of teacher is very significant for they have to help students to manage and perform this kind of tasks according to their language level. Making students aware of the determined purpose of the task can help them to get better results in language production. Above all, teachers should build up students' confidence step by step to enhance their fluency in speaking and creativity in writing. They also need to be aware of the level of language, topic and genre for they may create barriers in front of students' improvement and progress in productive skills.

The major problems facing EFL students in language production are those of language, topic and genre (Harmer 2001.252).

Language: when expressing themselves, students encounter the barrier of words and grammar. This, of course, makes a very mixed up writing process and non-spontaneous speech.

To deal with this problem, two main steps should be taken into consideration:

- Supply key language: before engaging students in spoken or written tasks, teachers have to provide them with phrases or questions that will help them to perform the task successfully.

- Plan activities in advance: such activities like a warm-up to use the new language points. They bridge between the new supplied language points and the students' ability to use them fluently and accurately.

What should be taken into account is that these supplied key language points and activities should fall at the communicative purpose.

Topic and genre: uninteresting topics create lack of engagement and prevent students to invest their language production. Unfamiliar genre does the same thing too. Teachers, then, may expect failure in students' language production unless they follow certain procedures of avoiding such a failure:

- Choosing interesting topics (interviews and questionnaires are very efficient ways to know the favorite topics of students).

- Creating interest in the topic (group work can be a good way to create the interest).

- Varying topics and genres (variety is a vital way to meet the students' needs and interest).

- Providing necessary information (the aim is to clarify the way writing or speaking tasks should be carried out).

advanced) across variety of lessons.

Chapter II: -AUDIO VISUALS AND THE LABORATORY LANGUAGE TEACHING.

II-1 AUDIO AIDS

Audio material proved its efficacy in teaching languages particularly for L2 learners because it is the only way to bring the natural language of native speakers into the classroom to be used for different purposes and by different people.

Audio aids, like visuals aids, are very useful resources available for language teachers not only to facilitate learning but also to make the course interesting and motivating.

II-1-1. AUDIO CASSETTE/ TAPE RECORDER

The first thing coming into someone's mind, when talking about audio aids, is the audio cassette and the tape recorder. The use of audio tapes is essential in FL classes since they help students to improve their receptive skills particularly listening and enhance their abilities in oral productions. Marsha Chan (2004) says:

> "The use of audiotape is essential in the
> oral skills classes. For receptive skills

development, the tape player is the easiest way for students to listen to a variety of speakers on a variety of topics in a variety of genres –dialogues, interviews, lectures, stories, songs and poems-. For productive skills, the audiotape recorder is currently the most accessible piece of voice recording equipment"

In **www.suburstmedia.com**

The purpose of EFL teachers to use taped material, as one of the most useful teaching aids in language classrooms, is to allow their students to practice and develop their skills mainly listening skill because audiotapes offer students the opportunity to hear different voices of native speakers in a variety of situations and places.

In addition to that, taped material can be effectively used to bring sound effects into the classroom to be used as cues for drills and sound stories (Peter Hubbard: 1991).sound stories consist of sounds which suggest something happening when taken together. Allan Malley and Allen Duff suggest an example to show what sound stories are:

"Airport lounge – bustling noises- *'FAG announces the departure of flight FAG 61 to New York and Los Angeles. Passengers are requested to proceed to gate number 20...'* – feet –more bustle- whine of jet engines- feet on tarmac, upstairs into plane- ffff of seats being sat

on- *please fasten your seat-belts and do*
not smoke until we are air born'…."

In Peter Hubbard and others
(1991.123)

Teachers can exploit sound stories to develop students' vocabulary and their writing ability through different activities and tasks such as: writing a composition, based on sound effects, guessing what is happening and where the sounds take place. They can include a dialogue between two or three people talking about something in the place where the sounds are.

For jigsaw listening, the teacher need more than one tape recorder (usually three), then he divides the class into three groups and each group listens to their special tape. Finally, they exchange the information they have found out. The groups can be given different parts of a story or problem to solve so they exchange the information until they discover the whole story or find a solution to the given problem.

Jigsaw listening is really an excellent and enjoyable task to integrate the four skills (listening to the tape, writing dawn the grasped information, reading the other group's part and writing it dawn and speaking to each other and to other groups using L2)

Tape recorder is used not only to play back previously recorded material but also to make recordings in the classroom particularly of the students themselves. The teacher can record them during a discussion, dialogue, storytelling, etc to evaluate their speaking skill and provide further remedial work and needed feedback.

Like other teaching aids, taped material chosen for use in class should be interesting, motivating and natural as much as possible (it should include

redundancies, imperfect speech of real life, hesitation, connected speech, etc).
In this sense, Mary Underwood (1991) states:

> "Most teachers are not able to choose
> what material to use. But if *you* are in a
> position to make that choice, be sure to
> listen to as large a part of any recording
> as you can before making up your mind"

P. 84

She advices language teachers to be sure that:
- The recording is really clear, not just for one person to listen but for use in large classroom.
- It fits the right level of the students.
- It is easy to use (there is a clear division between exercises and sections).
- It should provide a good language work.
- It should contain a suitable content for students.
- It is interesting and motivating.

Before playing the recording, the teacher should determine precisely the purpose, the instructions and activities of the listening task.

What should be finally mentioned is that audiotapes improve not only students' listening ability and skill but also their reading ability; the teacher can allow them to read the related printed material while listening to the recording. They can also do pronunciation work by imitating the model.

Generally speaking, taped material is really an available teaching tool for language teachers to provide their students with a significant source of authentic material.

II-1-2-. AUDIOVISUAL AIDS

They can be considered as the integration of audio and visual aids. They basically bring the potentiality of sound and image into the language classroom so that they offer extra dimensions to language teaching and learning. Here the most commnly used ones by language teachers

II-1-2-1-. VIDEOTAPES

Video is really potential, powerful and useful educational equipment for it brings the outside world into the classroom and exploits both audio and visual aids at the same time. Language teachers can benefit from the fact that all students are accustomed to gain knowledge about the world from TV. they can use videotapes as a versatile teaching aid. In this sense, Shan (2004) states:

> "Videotape is a step up from audiotape. First of all, playing recorded tapes provides the audiovisual information that helps students observe, understand and imitate oral communication, from language expressions and sentence structure to lip shape, facial expressions, gestures and distance between speakers, not to mention other cultural, behavioral and sociological aspects of language."
> In**www.sunburstmedia.com**

The use of videotape in foreign language classrooms has become a common feature in recent years (ref). Most teachers believe that it adds an extra substance to the teaching –learning experience. In addition to all advantages of audiotapes, video has more. It allows students not only to hear language but to see it through speakers' gestures and facial expressions. All these visual clues- or 'paralinguistic features'- help students in comprehension and seeing beyond what they are listening to, and thus interpret the text more deeply .

Besides seeing language in use, video material conveys native speakers' cultural identities through their way of life, habits and attitudes. Students can discover, for example, typical British body language when doing or saying something,or the American way of speaking to particular people. It is really a vehicle to transmit other countries' culture and bring it actually into the classroom.

Teachers can ask their students to make their own videos using their personal video camera. This actually allows them to create something memorable and enjoyable where he can communicatively use the language. For the above reasons and others, students show a high level of interest when using the video in the classroom. It basically creates motivation and makes the course more interesting and attractive. Like audio material, the choice of video material should be matched to the students' level, needs and purpose.

In spite of these advantages, video material have considerable drawbacks such as poor quality tapes and disks, bad viewing conditions, boring stop and start process, the length of extracts and the luck of control and the risk of making students passive viewers. It is necessary to mention that teachers can use video for a variety of tasks and activities using a wide range of teaching techniques (viewed techniques and

listening techniques). So, they are invited to exploit all its advantages to improve students' performances in different language skills.

II-2-The language laboratory

Other educational equipment that is available for the promotion of receptive and productive and mainly pronunciation skills is the language laboratory.The modern language lab has from ten to twenty booths, each equipped with a tape deck, headphones, microphones and now computers. It is built in such a way to allow students to work on their own, they can be paired, grouped with other students, interact with each other through their headphones and microphones.

The most significant advantage of language lab is the opportunity for students to be independent and work alone on their own. Underwood (1991) declares that:

> "If your class is working in a language laboratory, most students will be able to concentrate for a little longer. This is partly because they are, as it were, 'alone', and partly because they feel less threatened when they are able to control their own machines and go back if they miss something".

P.85

Language lab is really seen as an opportunity for students to work on their own pace and in their own way. Teachers thus should not keep on interrupting

them and intervening unnecessarily while they are working but to guide them and facilitate their learning.

Since privacy is one of the most significant advantages of language lab, students can talk to each other through their microphones, record onto the tape, wind and rewind tapes without disturbing each other. The teacher can also talk to individual students in the lab from the consol and hold a private conversation. Another function of the language lab is the noticeable help to train students. They can listen to what they say and how they say it. They can correct and improve their pronunciation by comparing it with the correct original version on the tape so that they can discover the differences and be aware of them. After a period of training, they will certainly improve their listening skill and their pronunciation.

language lab undoubtedly brings a significant innovation to the teaching-learning environment. It is available to teach the four skills if the teacher is able to use it effectively and appropriately. Language laboratory is able to act as a strong motivator for students as well as a powerful aid for teachers.

II-2-1-Laboratory Work Practice

Language laboratory has come to be an invaluable teaching aid to the language learner and teacher as well. It represents the single largest investment of audio resource in education. In spite of all the critical judgments on its effectiveness, it has never been an issue whether to use it or not but it has been a question of how. Teachers' mastery and control over language laboratory's functions and procedures determine its instructional validity, and their lack of mastery should not be an excuse for them to under-use it. In fact,as will be seen later in the text, teachers' questionnaire revealed that although our department provides a number of language laboratories, they are

still under-used. Jordan (2000. 350) claims that: "this is wasteful of an excellent resource that can be used either for group sessions or for self access/library purposes".

Research studies on language laboratory's history have been conducted to prove its effectiveness as an educational technology in the language classroom, regardless of the questions they are intended to answer. However, "the effectiveness of laboratory work still requires experimental investigation" (Dakin: 1973. 165).A Systematic and beneficial use of the laboratory , according to this same autor, goes through four main stages which he describers in the following points:

II-2-1-1 Preparation

Teacher's good preparation is the key to laboratory work' success. It demands an insightful vision to every step of the laboratory practice process. Each step should be previously planned, studied and clearly determined in terms of aims, purposes and procedures.

In fact, good preparation prevents the teacher from getting into such an instructional pbroblrm. It guarantees a smooth learning process where no gaps or accumulation are allowed. Language laboratory preparation starts from the teacher's awareness of the instructional tool's value he is exploiting. Moreover, he can take into consideration the following points.

- Before carrying out any task with students, the teacher must experience it himself first to find out if it really works as it is intended to. This step allows him to establish what is suitable and appropriate for students and improve his way of teaching as well. In this sense Dakin (1973. 02)

declares that: "our success in teaching is dependent on our understanding of learning".

In fact,a clear determination of the course aims put the teacher in a good position to achieve his target in terms of the linguistic input and output he wishes to submit to his students.

-   teach and improve aural-oral skills rather than to test them.

-   Having the 'right' or 'wrong' choice of teaching material depends on the teacher's insightful vision and his well thought decision. He gets the right choice if he selects what fits his students 'needs, interest and level, and of course vise versa.

-    Finally, try to use the course planning sheets as much as possible to be a guidance of your work. You can write down the course title, allotted time, the reference (the book and its cassette)…etc.

II-2-1-2. PRE-LAB PRACTICE' STEP

This step is very important in spite of its short duration. It provides students self-confidence and comfort. It may take up to 5-10 minutes; yet it determines the success of the whole time work. Pre- lab practice step is intended to:

-   Make students fully aware of the current task (what to learn, how to accomplish it and what should be focused on).
-   Create motivation, interest and feeling of security, so that the student feels engaged and then can perform appropriately the task.

- Make students fully aware that the listening task is closely associated with the speaking task so that they will make efforts to well exploit the listening text.

II-2-1-3 WHILE-LAB PRACTICE STEP

When the lab user has already set all things and is ready to begin the task in the language laboratory, these instructions are thought to help him and guide work.

- Lab practice should cover the two components of communication (listening and speaking) and they should be interdependent.
- The listening task should contain the three main stages: pre, while and post-listening in order to make the most of the listening extract.
- Make clear, precise and well-formed instructions to avoid any sort of misunderstanding. All your students are supposed to accomplish appropriately the task. Your help, guidance and monitoring are also necessary from time to time to deal with students' serious difficulties. The appropriate use of the console switches will certainly guarantee the success of your monitoring and supervision.
- Remind your students that looking at the script (if it is available) while listening to the passage changes the purpose of the task from listening to reading.
- Listening carefully to the recording is the key basis to the success of the task achievement.
- In the case of speaking practice, inform your students that they are equipped with a tape-recorder in which they can listen to a pre-recorded lesson and record their own voice at the same time. Hence, any student should be made aware that to speak up in a clear, strong voice when

doing "imitation of a model" or recording his own performance version. "The front and the sides of the booth have been constructed of sound-absorbing materials so nobody else will hear your voice" (Stack: 1971. 270).

- Remark that "Audio-Active-Compare" lab procedure is the students' space for speaking practice, therefore, you must frequently control and check the lab equipment for their suitability and well-functioning.

II-2-1-4.POST-LAB PRACTICE STEP

This step is said to be the checkpoint of your students' degree of understanding. After finishing the task (listening or speaking), ask your students about their reaction, impression and general comments of the material being presented in terms of difficulty, interest and motivation. You can hold a small debate at the end of the lab-practice to submit further advice and feedback concerning the task being performed. In this step, you can seize the opportunity to give the headlines of the coming course to prepare them in advance.

Post-lab practice fosters the intercommunication between the teacher and his students i.e. they can share and discuss ideas, suggest their own tasks and give critical judgments concerning the current task and the method of work in general.

II-2-2. LABORATORY MATERIAL SELECTION

The present study tries to find out the appropriate way of exploiting laboratory material in order to develop and improve first year students' aural-oral skills. The selection of lab material should be built on well-thought

criteria; many points can be taken into account (most of them are adapted from Stack: 1973. 76).

- The quality of the recording should be good, clear and free of hiss, background noise, sudden changes in volume and other distractions.
- The speakers should have pleasant and well-modulated voices; they also have to sound enthusiastic and interesting.
- Careful attention should be given to the speed of speech delivery (not too fast and not too slow).
- The content of the tape (dialogues, drills, interviews, stories…) must be properly constructed in terms of learners' conceptual and linguistic competence.
- The duration of extracts are supposed to be short in order not to feel bored and uncomfortable. The present study revealed that short extracts create motivation and interest in learners more than the long ones. If the listening extracts are long, the teacher, then, can divide it into sections and allow students to remove their headsets to rest their ears.
- Variety of laboratory material should be also stressed on. The teacher must frequently vary the type of recording to bring different speakers, accents and topics. Variety can range from simple pattern drill to dialogues, narration to pronunciation practice.

II-2-3. AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS INTEGRATION

The conventional language laboratories provided by the department of English at Batna University are typically audio-based equipments; they allow only the use of audio-taped materials. Although they offer certain facilities that can not be found in a typical classroom, many language teachers saw that its failure to achieve 'perfect' effectiveness in teaching and learning is due to

the absence of the 'visual potentiality'. This later can be defined in terms of video materials and computer programs.

In fact, modern language laboratories are equipped with "Dial-access Video". Stack (1971) claimed that:

> "Dial switching may also be used in conjunction with video tape players located in the source room. This will permit a student to receive programs consisting of video taped visual material plus sound on the TV receiver located in his booth"

P.15

This clearly shows the possibility of video integration in the language laboratory in order to add another vital dimension of language learning process (audio-visual aids). The use of video in L.L,as Harmer (2001. 282) declares, is "just listening with pictures".

Thus, if the conventional L.L in our department is equipped with "Dial-access Video", it will certainly offer extra advantages and facilities for both teacher and students especially those of paralinguistic features and visual clues (gestures and facial expressions…). Moreover, it demonstrates native speakers' cultural and social aspects of life both in audio and video forms. Providing language laboratory with video will certainly increase the level of motivation and interest in students since they "have a chance to see language in use as well as hear it" (Harmer: 2001. 282).

Modern labs are also equipped with computers; hence there is another possibility to add another facility to the conventional L.L. this will offer

students the chance to study grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, listening to texts, practicing speaking via recording system device and practice writing with "word processor".

So, integrating language laboratory with video and computers will make it really a "perfect" teaching aid that can help students to improve their language skills especially aural-oral ones.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we tried to examine some pedagogical implications which we think they may contribute in helping phonetics' teachers to visualize the language laboratory as an educational aid in developing students' listening and speaking skills. What is commonly said here is that it is the job of the 'good' teacher to exploit the provided teaching equipments and instructional tools to the full in order to hopefully achieve his teaching goal. In fact, the lack of experience and mastery could never be an excuse for the teacher to waste such a unique and invaluable teaching aid like language laboratory especially when it is equipped with video and computers. Therefore, he should look for real training and establish his own method that suits him to deal with his learners' aural-oral barriers.

Chapter III: - PHONETICS AND THE ENGLISH PHONOLOGY

Introduction

English is classified genetically as a Low West Germanic language. The early history of the Germanic languages showed that the invaders spoke a language that was known as Germanic which is related to what emerged as Dutch, Frisian, German and the Scandinavian languages. Sanskrit contained many cognates to Greek and Latin. It proved that a Proto-Indo-European language had existed many years before. Although there is no concrete proof to support this language had existed, it is believed that a lot of languages used in Europe and Western Asia are probably derived from one common language.Speakers of Proto-Indo-European **(PIE)** called **the kurgans**   and lived in Southwest Russia many centuries before. They had words for animals

similar to those in the modern Indo-European languages. They succeeded to form words by using the concept of compounding

III-1-Diachronic of English Pronunciation

The study of sound changes in and between languages is a relatively new field of common interest to linguists(ref). In the English language, it is approximately around the fourteenth century, that English began to witness the great vowel change where the high long vowels *[i:]* and *[u:]* in words like *price* and *mouth* changed to diphthongs, first to *[əu]* and *[au]* (where they remain today in some environments and some accents such as Canadian English and later to their modern aspect*[ai]* and *[au]*.

The other changes concern the long vowels when they came higher; this means the description and the articulation of theses sounds according to the height of the tongue in the mouth

-**[e:]** became **[i:]** (for example *meet*),

-**[ai]** became **[ei]** (later diphthongized to **[ei],** for example *name*),

-**[o:]** became **[u:]** (for example *goose*),

- **[u:]** become **[o:]** (later diphthongized to **[ou**], for example *bone*).

Stress also did not escape the different changes in many English words when the word was used as either a noun or a verb. For example, a *rebel* (stress on the first syllable) is inclined to *rebel* (stress on the second syllable)in phonetics it is known as the word-class- pairs. The number of words using this pattern as opposed to only stressing the second syllable in all circumstances doubled every century or so(ref). Now ,English words such as; object, convict, and addict etc…follow the same rules depending on the grammatical category to which the belong.

Although regional variation is very great across English dialects, some generalizations can be made about pronunciation in all (or at least the vast majority) of English accents:

-the voiceless stops **/p, t, k** / at the beginnings of words are (for example *tomato*) and at the beginnings of word stressed syllables (for example *potato*).

-A distinction is made between tense and lax vowels in pairs like **beet/bit and bait/bet**.

-Wherever **[ɹ]** originally followed a tense vowel or a diphthong (in early modern English) a schwa off glide was inserted resulting in centering diphthongs like in beer, poor, and fire.

III-1-a.Pronunciation and Spelling

In most languages there is a fairly clear link between sounds and symbols: some letters or combinations of letters are pronounced in certain ways, and if there are variations, these are results of very specific rules: when for example the letter **c** in English is pronounced **/k/ or /s/**or the letter **s** or the plural form **es** are pronounced as **/s / , / z / or / iz** /. There are, of course languages with exceptions to such rules, where many words' pronunciation could not be logically deduced or predicted from their spelling, and vice - versa .

III-1-b.The alphabet

The basic sound-symbol correspondence is learned at the stage of learning the alphabet. If the alphabet is a totally new one, then there is a lot to learn, but it is clear that every new symbol needs to be taught with its specific pronunciation. If, however, the learner is using more or less the same alphabet

but the letters represent slightly or very different sounds (as in the case of English speaking

III-2-The development of The English Phonology.

The main changes through which present English went can be summarized in three stages:

III-2-1.Old English (449 - 1066)

The Old English language (also called Anglo-Saxon) dates back to 449. The Germanic tribes from the present-day area of Denmark arrived in England .Although the Danes brought their own writing system, called the Futhorc, it was not used in England. The name of the writing system used there was The *Insular Hand*, and it contained many symbols that were not preserved in Modern English .Pronunciation was characterized by putting stress on the first syllable. The length of the vowels was phonemic. There were 7 long and 7 short vowels. There were also two front rounded vowels that are put aside in modern English, **[i:]** and **[ɪ:]**. The **i**-mutation occurred if there was a front vowel in the ending, and then the root vowel became fronted. For example, *fot* becomes *fot+i* = **fet**

III-2-2. Middle English (1066 - 1500)

Middle English was characterized by The Norman invasion of 1066 CE up to 1250 CE No great shift in sound symbolism was seen in that period. The most distinguishing features of the writing system which witnessed many changes in Middle English in the period between 1250 to 1400 can be seen in the following table :

Table 1:early middle English

•   Þ and ð were replaced by th (and sometimes y, as in **ye** meaning **the**)
•   **C** before i or e became ch
•   **sc** became sh
•   an internal **h** was added after g
•   **hw** became wh
•   **cw** became **qu**
•   the new symbols **v** and **u** were added; **v** was used word initially, and **u** was used everywhere else
•   **k** was used much more often (cyning became king)
•   new values were given to old symbols too; **g** before **i** or **e** was pronounced ĭ; ȝ became **j,** and **c** before **I** and **e** became **s** in some cases
•   a historical **h** (usually not pronounced) was added to some words (it was assumed that these words had once begun with an **h**): honor, heir, honest, herb, habit
•   Sometimes words were written with **o** but pronounced as [ʊ] but later were pronounced [ʌ]**:** son, come, ton, some, from, money, honey, front, won, one, wonder.

Middle English lost the case suffixes at the ends of nouns ,because of the stress shift to the beginning of the word. Phonological changes also

occurred because of this, some consonants disappeared while some vowels became ə and omitted too. The generalized plural marker became **s,**

The changes that occurred in pronunciation do not concern the writing system alone but the sound system as well; this is why many changes in pronunciation took place.

Table 2:middle English

•   Loss of initial **h** in a cluster (hleapan – to leap; hnutu - hut)
•   **[w]** lost between consonant and back vowel (**w** is silent in two, sword, answer)
•   [**č**] lost in unstressed syllable (ič - I)
•   **[v]** lost in middle of words (heofod - head; hæfde - had)
•   Loss of final -**n** in possessive pronouns (min fæder – mi fæder) and the addition of –**n** to some words beginning with a vowel (a napron - an apron, a nuncle - an uncle)
•   Voiced fricatives became phonemic with their voiceless counterparts
•   [**ž**] phoneme was borrowed from French as the voiced counterpart for **[š]**
•   Front rounded vowels merged with their unrounded counterparts
•   Vowel length became predictable (lost phonemic status); an open syllable with no consonant following it contained a long vowel, while a closed syllable with at least one consonant following it contained a short vowel

III-2- 3.Early Modern English (1500 - 1650/1700)

During this period ten thousand words were added to English as writers created new words by using Greek and Latin affixes. Several words were also borrowed from other languages as well as from Chaucer's works.

The Great Vowel Shift (1400-1600) changed the pronunciation of all the vowels. The tongue position changed and was placed higher in the mouth, and all the verbs moved up. Vowels that were already high **[i]** and **[u]** added the diphthongs **[ai]** and **[au]** to the vowels of English.

Several consonants were no longer pronounced, and had become silent letters in many words that are used nowadays such as; lamb, castle etc…. The consonants lost include:

Table:3 early modern english

•	Voiceless velar fricative lost in night; pronounced as **f** in laugh
•	**[b]** in final –**mb** cluster (dumb, comb)
•	**[l]** between **a** or **o** and consonant (half, walk, talk, folk)
•	**[r]** sometimes before **s** (Worcestershire)
•	initial clusters beginning with **k** and **g** (knee, knight, gnat)
•	[g] in –ing endings (more commonly pronounced **[in]**)

Following The "Grimm's Law",also called "the First Sound Shift",(ref), there is a classification which explains the consonant changes from P-I-E to Germanic. These changes are resumed as follows:

-Aspirated voiced stops became Unaspirated voiced stops (**b^h, d^h, g^h** became **b, d, g)**

-Voiced stops became voiceless stops like : **b, d, g** became **p, t, k**

-Voiceless stops **p, t, k** became voiceless fricatives **f, θ, ks (h).**

Also, the "Verner's Law**"ref)** explains other exceptions that Grimm's Law does not include.They concern:

. *Weak Past Tense*: we used a dental or alveolar suffix to express the past. Several examples can be given for **ed** in English, **te** in German, or **de** in Swedish.);and

Fixed Stress: This means that the stress of words was put on the first syllable and it does not move i.e. not a free stress system.

Stress also did not escape the different changes in many English words when the word was used as either a noun or a verb. For example, a *rebel* (stress on the first syllable) is inclined to *rebel* (stress on the second syllable)in phonetics it is known as the word-class- pairs. The number of words using this pattern as opposed to only stressing the second syllable in all circumstances doubled every century or so, now English words such as; object, convict, and addict etc…follow the same rules depending on the grammatical category to which they belong.

Although regional variation is very great across English dialects, some generalizations can be made about pronunciation in all (or at least the vast majority) of English accents:

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- -A distinction is made between tense and lax vowels in pairs like beet/bit,and bait/bet.

-Wherever **[ɹ]** originally followed a tense vowel or a diphthong (in early modern English) a schwa off glide was inserted resulting in centering diphthongs like in beer, poor, and fire. learners of Spanish, for example) you may have a more subtle teaching problem.

III-3- **Aspects of Teaching Pronunciation and Spelling**

In most languages there is a fairly clear link between sounds and symbols: some letters or combinations of letters are pronounced in certain ways, and if there are variations, these are results of very specific rules: for example when, the letter **c** in English is pronounced **/k/ or /s/**or the letter **s** or the plural form **es** are pronounced as **/s / , / z / or / iz** / There are, of course languages where there are many exceptions to such rules, many words whose pronunciation could not be logically deduced or predicted from their spelling, and vice -versa English being an example.

Once learners have mastered the basic sound-symbol correspondence they may in some languages be immediately able to understand and pronounce correctly any written text or write down a spoken one. In others, it may not be so simple. They may need a whole set of sound-symbol rules to know that, -**tion** at the end of a word in English is usually pronounced **/ ∫∂ n /**, or that the letter **s** in German is pronounced / ∫ **/** when it occurs before **/t/ or /p/.** Some of these are more common and urgent for successful reading and writing you will need to teach consciously and early;

Learning phonetic symbols may not be worth doing for its own sake. However, it is invaluable as a tool for decoding and pronouncing words correctly. As Anderson et Al. (1985) recommend

"*Phonetic symbol instruction should be completed at the early stages of learning. Once students have some facility in reading words, they no longer need instruction in this skill unless there is a special need. Emphasis should be placed on applying the knowledge of phonetic symbols to actual pronunciation rather than to the learning of generalizations".*

The knowledge of the phonetic symbols and letter-sound combinations positively helps the learners acquire a wide range of vocabulary..

Achieving good pronunciation and limiting the interference of the students' native language can be a hard task but it is with considerable efforts that we improve the quality of EFL teaching and learning and to solve

pronunciation problem that requires urgent attention.

III-3-1.The General Framework

The following suggested teaching strategies can be applied to classroom instruction in teaching pronunciation

1. Make analogies from the known to the unknown**.** Sometimes EFL learners can find solutions to pronunciation problems by putting into practice what they know about familiar sounds to unfamiliar ones (Brown et Al. 1989). Teachers may start with frequent sounds in the learners' native language and in English, and then ask the learners to practise them.

2. Teach sound symbols that are unknown and unfamiliar to the learners**.** The focus should be placed on those sounds that are unique to English so learners become would be able to make   differences between the target language and their mother tongue and be very attentive when they have to read words containing these unique sounds. So the exact pronunciation should be explained clearly in class. So particular and specific emphasis should be given to the correct pronunciation.

3. Choose and prepare some common letter combinations and teach pupils the easiest way to pronounce them**.** For example, the letter combination *ea* is often pronounced as [i:] as in *peak*, *team*, *beat* and *treatment*; ope is

pronounced as [əup] as in *cope*, *microscope*, *antelope* and *envelope* we must not exaggerate in using this strategy because English does not have a fixed correspondence between letters and sounds.

4. Encourage the pupils to use the sound in communicative context. For example, teachers may ask learners to create a shopping list of all sorts of things (real and imagined) that a store might sell. The teacher can make a game of it by saying "I went to the store and I found a balloon to buy." Then each learner must add something to the list that begins with the same letter and sound as balloon, banana, basket, bread, book, biscuit, bean, etc. A list of the sounds on the chalkboard confirms and attests that everyone knows each sound under review.

5. Stimulate learners to look for words spelled with letter combinations that represent more than one sound. For example, students might look in reading material for words that have an **oo** combination, such as cook and school. They then put words into columns according to the sounds. For the **oo** example, learners would make two lists: words in which **oo** represents the sound heard in cook, look, book, took, and shook; and words in which **oo** represents the sound heard in school, tool, boost, boot and noodle. Learners can then checks lists with everyone in the class and discuss the different sounds the letters in combinations.

III-3-2. Pronunciation and spelling activities .

Dakin (1974) proposes many comprehension activities about any listening message (description, narration, conversation, instructions, prose or verse…etc). and which help developing lzearners' both competence and performance in pronunciation . These activities are:

 Answering questions:

in this activity, the teacher has the right to employ different kinds of questions (true or false statements, blank-filling prompts, multiple choice and open ended questions). The aim of the teacher in asking such questions is "to find out whether they have **heard** and understood". He is not generally concerned with what the learner tells him, but whether they can tell him (Dakin: 199974.93). Another aim is to teach the learner not only to make grammatical correct answers but to know how to pronounce correct answers

 Dictation :

laboratory dictation involves not only the ability to spell words and punctuate sentences but the ability to hear correctly what *he* has to write down. According to Dakin (1974.111), the student must overcome four problems to hear the passage correctly and then write down successfully. These problems are:

- Recognition of distinctive sounds (it → eat), (place → plays).
- Identification of homophones (which doctor is he? → He's a witch doctor, is he?).
- Identification of words, phrases and sentences where the problem is in the rapid speech for syllables (not at all → not a tall), (time zone → time's own).
- Identification of intonation patterns (that's your pencil? → That's my pencil.)

Following instructions**:** in this exercise, the teacher tends to tell students to do something (identifying a place in a map) and see if he really understands the tape's instructions and do successfully the exercise.

This kind of intensive listening deals primarily with language items as part of the language teaching program. The teacher tends to get students notice particular features of language (pronunciation, and spelling).

Laboratory material provides the features of oral language which are radically different from their written form. Hence listening to conversation-as an example- makes the student accustom his ear to what he would hear from the native speakers. It makes them also aware of colloquial expressions, idioms, and other non-written and informal expressions…etc.

Discrimination exercises**:** they can be done with pronunciation,

grammar and vocabulary.

Discrimination exercises for pronunciation are designed to make the

student able to distinguish and "decide which of two or more sounds, stress,

rhythm patterns or intonation pattern he can hear on the tape. For instance, the

teacher can get students to hear some sentences (isolated or in a dialogue) and

ask them to decide which of the following utterances are questions and which

are not (here the intonation indicates the nature of the statement):

- You didn't go to France?
- You didn't go to France!
- You didn't go to France.
- She was alone?
- She was alone!
- She was alone.

Hunting exercises:

Hunting exercises are principally discrimination exercises but they
provide variety of activities for students. They can be practiced also with
pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary.

Hunting exercises for pronunciation depends on giving a dialogue to learners
and ask them some particular questions. The following dialogue is taken is a
good illustration:

Mum: Henry!

Henry: yes

M: breakfast's ready. Are you up yet?

H: well…ready. Where's my jacket?

M: on the back of your chair, I expect.

H: oh yes, thanks mum.

M: quick, your eggs getting cold.

Questions**:**

- How many words have the sound /a/?
- How many words have the sound /e/
- How many words have the sound /I/

In *hunting exercises for grammar,* students would be asked to listen to particular grammatical points (phrases expressing direction with the preposition "to"). The teacher then can get them listen to a dialogue containing phrases with "to" (I drove to a garage) and others without "to" (I drove home). Students' task is to classify the phrases which they are going to hear into phrases expressing direction with "to" in one list and phrases expressing direction without "to" in another. (This is just an example).

As far as *hunting exercises for vocabulary*, the teacher's aim is to expose them to new vocabulary items, thus he may get them listen to a story, dialogue or poem and ask them –for example- to find synonyms of any verb, noun or phrase of his choice.

Dictation exercises:

Howatt and Dakin (1974) classify dictation exercises into tow types: general dictation and specific dictation.

General dictation is a normal dictation where the text is simply recorded for lab use. The students task is to listen carefully and write down what they have

heard. Their work can be corrected in the follow-up class or taken in by the teacher.

Specific dictation is also called "fill in gaps activity". Its aim is to attract the students' attention on to a specific linguistic point (s). The text (story, dialogue, song…etc) would be recorded on a tape and students would have to fill in the gaps with the missing words in the gapped version copy. Here is an example given by Howatt and Dakin (1974) which aims at practicing the weak forms and strong forms (I'm ----   I am, you're ------ you are).

Input	**activity**
Bob: you're late Jim	B: …….late, Jim
Jim: no, I'm not. It's only ten o'clock ten o'clock	J: no….not. It's only
B: you are, you know, the game started at night the game ….	B: ……, you know,
J: oh, I'm sorry…etc oh,…….sorry…etc.	J:

We can find a set of activities and ideas about pronunciation and spelling.

Dictation: of random lists of words, of words that have similar spelling problems, of complete sentences, of half-sentences to be completed.

Reading aloud: of syllables, words, phrases, sentences

Discrimination (1): prepare a set of 'minimal pairs'- pairs of words which differ from each other in one sound-letter combination (such as *dip-deep* in

English). Either ask learners to read them aloud, taking care to discriminate, or read them aloud yourself, and ask students to write them down.

Discrimination (2): provide a list of words that are spelt the same in the learners' mother tongue and in the target language: read aloud, or ask learners to, and discuss the differences in pronunciation (and meaning!).

Prediction (1): provide a set of letter combinations, which are parts of words the learners know. How would the learners expect them to be pronounced? Then reveal the full word.

Prediction (2): dictate a set of words in the target language which the learners do not know yet, but whose spelling accords with rules. Can they spell them? (Then reveal meanings

Some ideas that practise pronunciation-spelling correspondences may be found in pronunciation books, such as those listed under **further reading*;*** books on spelling usually just give rules, lists of words and then suggest practicing through dictation and spelling tests. Dictation is of course one excellent technique (Davis and Rinvolucri, 1988, for some imaginative variations); and spelling tests can help, but there are also many more possibilities to improve pronunciation and spelling

III-4.Phonetics in some teaching methods

III-4-1.*The Direct Method*

This method of language instruction which was adopted in the late

1800's, and was formed from observations of children acquiring their first language.

According to this view, students would imitate a model of the target language that was used by the teacher or by recordings and try to do the same through repetition drills. Later models that were built on this approach include Asher's (1977) Total Physical Response and Krashen and Terrell's (1983) Natural Approach. Before learners are asked to speak, an intensive listening comprehension is applied. These methods stress on listening without forcing the learners to speak, gives the learners the opportunity to learn well sound system of the target language. According to Murcia et Al. 1996,when learners start speaking later, their pronunciation is nearly quite good despite the fact that students never followed a specific training for pronunciation .

III-4-2.*The Reform Movement:*

In the 1890's the developers of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), Henry Sweet, Wilhelm Viëtor and Paul Passy, led a movement in language teaching that was generally known as the Reform Movement. These phoneticians did a lot to encourage the teaching of ***pronunciation*** with their

support to the development of a system for describing and analysing the sound systems of languages and by advocating the following guidelines :

-The spoken form of a language is primary and should be taught first.

-The findings of phonetics should be applied to language teaching.

-Teachers are required to have solid training in phonetics.

- Learners should be given phonetic training to establish good speech habits.

III-4-3.*the Oral Approach*

The contribution of the recent   linguistic approach to pronunciation pedagogy was of a great contribution to the noticeable movements which emerged in the 1940's and 1950'.

In the United States, this approach is known as Audiolinguism and in Britain the Oral Approach. They were two methodologies that were based on the very specific explanation of phonological aspects of language. These two methods were in competition with the Direct Method by using recordings or the teacher as a model of the target language followed by the students' repetition of that language. However, the teacher also drew from their knowledge of phonetics and for the first time used simplified charts of the IPA and of articulatory models in the classroom. He also used the practice of

minimal pairs for listening practice and oral production. This technique was based on the concept of the phoneme as a minimally distinctive sounds.

III-4-4.The Cognitive Approach

The 1960's was the decade which was mainly concerned by the several attempts to influence the teaching of pronunciation.

An influential new movement, Transformational-generative grammar, (Chomsky 1965) asserted that language was essentially rule-governed behaviour and not habitually learnt. This view, which found support in English language teaching circles, affected the role of pronunciation in language acquisition and supported the teaching of grammar and vocabulary .They affirmed that trying to reach a like-native pronunciation is unlikely to happen and time should be better spent in teaching grammar and vocabulary rather than pronunciation.

III-4-5.The Silent Way

In the early 1970's pronunciation returned to favor with the development of the *Silent Way* (Gattegno 1972, 1976). In this methodology (which is still in practice in the U.S.A) segmentals as well as suprasegmentals

are highlighted from the very beginning of learning. The pupils are exposed to different forms of speech using the different phonological patterns.

As the name shows, teacher talk in this method is kept to a minimum. Instead of complicated articulatory and phonetic explanations, the teacher indicates through gestures what the students should do. Teachers use fingers to indicate the number of syllables in a word, tap out rhythmic patterns and model the place and manner of articulation with their own lips and throat or with a *hand puppet* of the tongue and oral cavity. Also central to the Silent Way are visual teaching aids that have been found useful in demonstrating some of the more abstract principals of pronunciation to second language learners.

III-4-6.The Communicative Approach

The Communicative approach holds that *oral* communication is the primary use of language and therefore should be central to the mode of instruction. Although pronunciation is not an explicit feature in this mode of instruction, the importance of pronunciation has been highlighted by it. By focusing more on active communication in the classroom, it has been recognized by Bailey 1980 that:

> "Pronunciation competence below a certain threshold renders
>
> even the most grammatically and lexically

Advanced student unintelligible."(p.26)

This focus on pronunciation has raised many new obstacles to the teacher working within the Communicative Approach (ref). One problem is that the artificial and contrived teacher centered nature of previous pronunciation instruction techniques does not allow for a comfortable fit with the discourse-based Communicative Approach (Brumfit and Johnson 1979). As a result of teacher training methods centered on the Communicative Approach and the strict use of Presentation, Practice, Production (PPP) model of instruction, a generation of teachers impartial to, and inadequately trained in the instruction of pronunciation has been produced.

In trying to keep pronunciation communicative, materials writers have developed materials that emphasize on suprasegmental aspects of pronunciation. Generally, integration of pronunciation was only treated with token significance by material developers in the 1980's and was more or less used outside to be taught in isolation by practitioners who are interested by its several aspects

III-4-7.The Competency-Based-Approach C.B.A

It is an approach that appeared mainly in Canada and the U.S.A. at the end of the last century. These parts of the world receive many emigrants each year from different parts of the world. They are of different races, customs,

languages cultures and educational levels. They are in need of special and specific courses in order to behave properly in the society; so a very special language policy must be established for their integration in the new society and to have a positive effect in their work places. It has been developed in the above mentioned regions to give a hand to immigrants and refugees learn and acquire English and skills at the same time. Like the communicative approach, the competency-based-approach bases its teaching on interaction; it focuses on developing the language to perform different skills. It is an approach aiming at establishing a link between the learning acquired at school and the context of use outside the classroom. This approach enables the learner to know how: to learn, to share, to exchange and to cooperate with others. It encourages the oral performances and devotes an independent step specific to pronunciation

Although there is no single best way to teach English pronunciation and no superiority was shown of one approach over another, yet we think that the competency-based approach is quite the one that emphasized the great importance of pronunciation teaching in middle schools syllabus. A lot of things should be done to promote and encourage the teaching of pronunciation as it is an essential part of speech.

Conclusion

There is a close relationship between sounds and letters of the alphabet in some languages, that is, most letters have just one sound. This is not the case of English, however, so teaching phonetic symbols might create special difficulties for those non-native speakers of English who thought that there is a link between sounds and letters. English is characterized by highly variable spelling system. Students must learn how to make use of sound-letter combinations and develop their abilities to pronounce correctly or approximately correct sounds when they encounter the written forms of unknown words.

Learning phonetic symbols can be worth doing for its own sake. However, it is invaluable as a tool for decoding and pronouncing words correctly.

The knowledge of the phonetic symbols and letter-sound combinations positively helps the learners acquire a wide range of vocabulary. Achieving good pronunciation and limiting the interference of the students' native language can be a hard task but it is with considerable efforts that we improve the quality of EFL teaching and learning and to solve pronunciation problem that requires urgent attention. There is also a tendency for us to stress on production as the main problem affecting our learners. But most research however, shows clearly that the problem is more likely to be reception of

what learners don't hear, and why they can't say it prop5rperly. Moreover, if the "English" sound is not clearly received, the brain fails in wrongly analysing it and then formulating inappropriate responses.

Apart from this, teachers should be aware of their students pronunciation problems. it is also useful to have some prior knowledge of what elements of English phonetics and phonology are likely to cause problems.. Having been informed of the main areas of contrast between native language and target language and what difficulties students have, it would be possible for the teacher to convert these information into some meaningful classroom exercises and activities.

PART TWO: FIELD STUDY

<u>CHAPTER IV</u>: ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRES

Introduction

To investigate the role of introducing phonetics in developing the learners' aural-oral skills, we thought of the necessity to involve first year students and teachers of phonetics module in this study by including their view points concerning the subject under investigation. Learners and teachers opinions were gathered in a form of questionnaire administered to them in order to determine students learning barriers in listening and speaking, and the teachers' methods to deal with them. A already stated in our general introduction, this part will serve us a s yard-stick like against which the theory will be measured.

The questionnaires used in this study are divided into two types: students and teachers' questionnaire. They aimed at collecting the different opinions about the subject under investigation. Both questionnaires probe nearly the same issues that have been discussed in the theoretical part of the theme. We attempted to introduce both perceptions to make sure that the subject matter is viewed from different perspectives and studied from both dimensions.

IV.1 STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

The students' questionnaire was supposed to be administered to the whole population of first year English classes at Batna University (about 729 students). It was not possible to include them all in the study and therefore, a sample was needed.

Students' questionnaire includes both open and close-ended questions. Its primary objective is to give our students an opportunity to express their opinions and attitudes towards learning and teaching the four skills and aural-oral skills in particular. It helps us also to highlight the difficulties and problems they encounter in oral expression module both in classroom and language laboratory. We also provided them with a free space for their personal evaluation and suggestion concerning the use of language laboratory in the teaching of phonetics and the aural-oral skills and its effectiveness in developing listening and speaking abilities.

IV.2 TEACHER'S QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire was administered to eight teachers, who were in charge phonetics module in different years of study, at the department of English in the University of Batna, it includes both open-ended and close-ended questions. The main objective of this questionnaire is to survey the teachers' methods and techniques they follow in teaching phonetics and how they think the language laboratory assists them in performing their task. It also seeks the teachers' attitudes towards learners' difficulties in learning the oral skills especially listening and speaking, and the way each teacher deals with his/her students' learning barriers. Yet the primary concern of teachers'

questionnaire is to probe teachers' opinions about the role of language laboratory in developing students' aural-oral skills.

IV-1-1. ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRES

SECTION ONE: background information

<u>**ITEM ONE:**</u>

Response	Male	Female
Participants	13	77
Percentage	14.44%	85.56%

Table 01: students' sex distribution

This high number of females enrolled in the department of English at the University of Batna proves the common belief that females have more tendency towards studying foreign languages and English in particular. It is a means to get a profession as language teachers or interpreters which are commonly considered as feminine jobs in this country, as compared to males who generally tend to prefer scientific and technical streams.

<u>**ITEM TWO:**</u> **Type of high school streaming**

Table 02: students' type of baccalaureate

Response	Literary	scientific	technical	Others	N.A
Participants	120	46	4	8	1
Percentage	67 %	24.56%	2.22%	4.44%	1.11%

We have included this item to trace back the type of secondary schooling and the type of baccalaureate our students hold. We still believe that previous exposure to the foreign language our subjects had would affect in a better way their actual performances.

Statistically, the majority of students 120 came from literary classes. 46 participants that is (25.56%) hold scientific baccalaureate and only four subjects (2.22%) came from technical branches. The eight students in the box (others) hold both scientific and literary baccalaureate. Cases like these are generally students enrolled in other departments, and because of many factors(failure, wish to change the domain of study- English in particular-), they passed another exam for the sake of holding a literary baccalaureate to have an easy access to English language studies as a second diploma. In fact, the results above revealed different educational backgrounds of first year English students.This is what creates mixed abilities classes which is in our view another challenge to the teachers of phonetics mainly.The challenge requires the teachers to find the adequate teaching technique which takes into account the variety of learners' competences and needs.Again,we keep convinced that introducing laboratory teaching gives these diverse students the same and equal chances to aquire.

ITEM THREE: Reasons of studying English.

In this question, we wanted to know whether the choice of students to study English was free or imposed. The questionnaire resulted in the following responses:

Table 03: students' choice of English

Responses	Personal	Imposed
Participants	140	15
Percentage		

The great majority of participants reported that they chose freely to study English, and only fifteen subjects said that studying English was imposed either by their parents or by the administration. The great rate of students whose decision to study English was personal reveals their great motivation and interest to study this language. This factor is really important for us in having an easy access to introduce the experimental materials to our students. The personal choice to study English gets them prepared and ready to receive any material which attempts to develop and improve their language level especially productive and receptive skills.As they reported,their decision to study English has many reasons, and targets different objectives To the 140 students who reported that they have freely chosen to study English, the following points can summarize their choice. Among their responses ,we can read :

- It became one of the most important job requirements, as English is an international language (language of science, media, and technology).
- It makes *us* members of the international community (to be able to speak English, understand its native speakers and be understood).
- Knowing more about English language and the culture of its people.
- It is a very useful language to study other branches like computing, electronics…etc.
- Studying English was a childhood dream.

- Speaking English allows *us* to travel abroad- England and USA in particular.
- Studying English was for the sake of professional reasons especially teaching (I want to be a teacher of English in the future).
- It is a very 'sweet' and musical language, *we* enjoy learning it.

ITEM FOUR: the classification of skills according to their importance .

The question seeks the students' opinions of which aspect of phonetics is given much importance and attention by their teachers. Here are the results:

Table 4 classification of skills

Response	fluency	transcription	pronunciation	Listening
Participants	66	40	13	12
Percentage				

The first remark the table shows pronunciation and listening are given less importance in a course aiming mainly to develop phonetics .). The table also shows that fluency takes the lion-share of the teachers' instructional attention (); transcription receives a very considerable share ()These results do clearly support our hypothesis that the actual way of introducing phonetics at the beginning of students curriculum lacks the basic rudiments to give them a good start.The majority of the teachers stress fluency, while students need first to listen a lot than to speak well.

What makes speaking and writing classified as very important skills is the fact that English language studies curriculum contains "written expression" and "oral expression" as two basic modules where writing and speaking skills are carefully taught and formally tested.

ITEM Five : the ranking of four skills in terms of difficulty

We got only 90 responses to this item. When asked to order the four skills according to their level of difficulty, students gave the following ranking:

Table 05: skills according to their degree of difficulty

Rank	First	second	third	Fourth
Skill	*speaking*	*listening*	*writing*	*Reading*
Participants	37	28	17	10
percentage	41.11%	31.11%	18.89%	11.11%

The table above indicate that 37 participants (41.11%) reported that speaking is the most difficult skill, listening comes in the second rank with 31.11% of the total responses. These two difficult skills are the main components of the oral expression course which is undoubtedly a basic module in the program of first year students.

In spite of the special attention given to listening and speaking in the instructional program, they still do not help much students to achieve language mastery. Speaking in particular is often seen by EFL learners as a far reaching goal simply because it requires not only knowledge of specific points of language such as grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation (linguistic competence), but also how, when, why and what settings to produce language (sociolinguistic competence). Yet the aural-oral skills' difficulty is seemingly a result pf students' lack of practice.

In fact, the real reasons stand behind students' difficulties in learning the four skills is what the following question seeks to find out.

ITEM Six: students' difficulties in learning the oral/aural skills

In this item, students were asked to cite their main barriers in learning all the four skills (reading, speaking, writing and listening).

Table 06: students' listening difficulties

Difficulties in listening comprehension.	participants	Percentage
Inability to understand or guess the meaning of the discourse	45	
Native speaker' s speech rapidity	23	
Unfamiliarity with native speakers' pronunciation	18	
Hearing problems (concentration, distinguishing sounds…)	09	
Informal language difficulty (dialect for instance)	2	
Unavailability of taped materials and lack of practice	2	
N.A	6	

The items listed in this table are the main comprehension barriers 1st year students' encounter when they listen to native speakers or even to their teachers.

The table demonstrates that understanding the meaning of the discourse represents the big challenge for learners. Out of 140, 45 respondents argued that they are unable to pick up the meaning of the discourse they hear. Unlike listening in their first language, EFL learners don't focus on the meaning of the discourse but on the specific points of language (vocabulary, pronunciation…). Thus, they perceive speech as segmented units (phoneme

by phoneme or word by word) and attempt to get the speaker's meaning from the interpretation of each separated unite. The non-spontaneous use of their schematic knowledge and language properties comes up against their attempt to reach a successful and efficient comprehension.

The second major barrier in listening comprehension that our students stressed on is the difficulty arising from the speech rate. 23participants claimed that they can not understand the fast and spontaneous speech produced by native speakers or even by the teachers. It is because they are used to listen to non-native speakers of English. Thus when listening to native speakers' language, they meet considerable difficulty in understanding what is being said. When listening to recorded tapes the situation becomes even wores Lack of exposure to authentic materials produces another listening comprehension problem which is basically related to native speakers' pronunciation, and this is what raises our claim that familiarizing learners earlier with the language laboratory in courses like phonetics and oral expression sessions saves part of the problem

18 students maintained that they are unable to understand the listening discourse because of the unfamiliar pronunciation. This problem is a result of students' educational background where phonetics was not given much importance. So, notions like: stress, weak forms, intonation, elision…are either unknown or new to them. In addition to that, most of learners know the written form of the word (dictionary transcription) but they are unable to guess its meaning when it is pronounced.

Nine subjects claimed that they suffer from hearing problems which affect their ability in comprehending any listening discourse. Problems of attention and concentration are among the major barriers of learners which affect their auditory perception and discrimination abilities. Therefore, they are unable to recall what has been heard or recall the correct sequence of utterances.

As far as availability of taped materials (cassettes) is concerned, two participants claimed that the lack of such learning aids (audio tapes) prevents them improving their listening skills. They believe that extensive and intensive listening practice is the solution to develop their comprehension skills and overcome their listening problems.

ITEM seven : Are your speaking Difficulties due to:

Speaking difficulties	participants	Percentage
Pronunciation difficulties	36	
Limited range of vocabulary and structures	25	
Grammatical and structural mistakes (accuracy)	23	
Lack of self confidence and fear of criticism	11	
Lack of outside classroom -practice	4	
Mother tongue interference	6	

Table 07: students' speaking difficulties

- Pronunciation difficulties:

When asked to determine their speaking difficulties, 36 participants () reported that pronunciation problem is their major barrier in oral skills. Again, the problem is a result of learners' educational background in which pronunciation practice was almost absent. Such phonetic terms as stress and intonation are really new learning items for first year students. Therefore, producing a well-pronounced utterance is really something difficult, added to this is the difference between oral and written form of the word (pronunciation Vs transcription). Most of the participants, who maintained that pronunciation is their major barrier in achieving a good speaking performance, argued that they can manage to produce well-built structures but they are unable to apply phonetics rules like: stress, intonation and weak forms.

- Limited range of vocabulary and structures:

Out of 140 subjects (25) argued that their range of vocabulary and structures is their main speaking problem. This is a result of the lack of knowledge of the language features (syntax, semantics in particular). In fact, such deficiency related to vocabulary, grammar and discourse structure of the language creates a major obstacle preventing learners from approaching the desired speaking level.

- **Grammatical and structural mistakes (accuracy problem):**

The problem of accuracy stands in the third rank of the speaking difficulties' list. Out of 140, 23 subjects () reported that their barriers in speaking related to their frequent basic grammatical and structural inaccuracy which prevents them from the effective communication in the target language.

- **Lack of self confidence and fear of criticism:**

Lack of self-confidence and fear of criticism represent another handicap against learners' oral proficiency. Four students claimed that they encounter such a problem which is very possibly related to the factor of inhibition. The later results from students' shyness and fear of making mistakes which are in turn due to the ill-development of communicative skills and feeling of linguistic inferiority. Facing the audience makes the learner aware and often afraid of criticism which may reveal his weak points and signs of his ignorance. Thus, all the above factors lead to the lack of self-confidence which does certainly hinder the learner from developing his oral/aoural skills.

Lack of outside classroom –practice:

A proportion of students even though low (4.44%) mentioned the point of lack of outside classroom-practice which is basically related to the status of English as a foreign language in the society. English in Algeria tends to be the third language or even the fourth language spoken in the community, therefore, the time devoted to the outside classroom practice is really very limited (only with classmates). Some learners think that the target language is confined only to the academic and formal use (during lectures' period), and their communication needs are fulfilled in the time of mother tongue or second language use.

- **Mother tongue interference:**

This item is the last stated speaking problem with a very low proportion (2.22%). In fact, what distinguishes speaking from other language skills is the oral exposure to the target language which is said to be a very hard and uncomfortable experience for many learners. Hence, when being unable to

verbalize their messages in the target language because of the linguistic repertoire' shortage, most learners refuge to their mother tongue either consciously or unconsciously to fill their communicative gap.

For unknown reasons, 31 participants didn't didn't answer this item.

Students' difficulties in reading and writing are summed up in the following tables:

ITEM eight : using teaching aids in the course of phonetics.

No one can deny the importance of teaching aids in teaching/learning language skills. Hence, this item n seeks to know the learners' points of view of using teaching aids mainly in the course of phonetics.The aim is to see whether or not language lab appears among subjects responses.

Table 8 frequency of using teaching aids in the classroom

Response	Very often	sometimes	rarely	never	N.A
Participants	06	10	98	5	11
Percentage					

In spite of the necessity and importance of T.As in the classroom, the table above shows that only six the total responses argued that teachers very often use teaching aids in classroom. Some teachers never use them. The great majority of participants reported that their teachers use T.As but rarely: either

their teachers do not have accessibility and availability of teaching aids, or they do not give much importance to these instructional tools. Ten respondents (08.%) claimed that their teachers sometimes use them. Generally speaking, the results show the undervaluation of the significance of teaching aids in the classroom.

ITEM Nine : kinds of teaching aids used in the classroom

After asking them about the frequency of using T.As in the classroom, participants now are asked to determine the type of the used aids. Three types are the proposed options (audio, visuals, and audio-visuals). The responses of the participants are highlighted in the following table.

Table 09: types of teaching aids used by teachers

esponses	Audio aids	Audio-visuals	N.A
Participant	38	00	7
Percentage.			

It comes as no surprise for us to see no student ticked in the box-audiovisual-Simply,because as suggested in the current curriculum, laboratory teaching of phonetics starts at the third year . At that level , we believe that its too late to repair pronunciation mechanisms that learners have already acquired during the first and second years.According to 38 subjects, audio

aids seem to be the common and the only used teaching aid in the course of phonetics.

ITEM Ten: the necessity of language laboratory teaching .

This item attempts to investigate whether our students see any necessity to use teaching aids in teaching/learning language kills.

Table 10:attitudes towards the teaching aids

Response	Yes	No
Participants	117	03
Percentage		

Again, we were not surprised to see among the 120 students who answered this item, gave a positive attitude towards using language labs.. Only 03 participants, for unknown reasons gave negative responses. The reason behind 91.37% of positive responses is the learners' awareness of the language lab. importance in facilitating learning process, creating motivation, and making the course easy to be understood. Yet the real motives that stand behind claiming the necessity and effectiveness of T.As are what the following question attempts to find out.

ITEM Eleven: learners' points of view towards the effectiveness of teaching aids

The question tries to find out the students' points of view concerning the necessity and effectiveness of T.As in the classroom. Their opinions are classified in the following points

a-<u>Raise students motivation and interest</u>**:**

Out of the 117 participants who gave the positive attitude towards the use of teaching aids), 28 subjects declare that T.As help them learn effectively. They do believe that these instructional tools break the boring learning atmosphere; they create a sort of motivation that pushes them to learn effectively and be more involved and interested in the material being presented.

b-<u>help learners improve and enrich their language repertoire</u>:

Eighteen other   subjects   claimed that T.As help them improve and augment their language level. Because of their deficiency in linguistic knowledge, teaching aids-according to these subjects- improve their syntactic level, enrich their vocabulary bank and ameliorate their pronunciation through the audio and visual cues they provide.

c-<u>facilitate learning:</u>

A proportion of respondents (6.89%) argued that T.As facilitate learning and make them understand the instructional material better and faster. As most learners encounter difficulties in learning the four skills- as it is noted in the second section of the questionnaire- teaching aids tend to help them overcome these problems by making learning process much easier.

d-<u>bring the foreign language cultural context into the classroom:</u>

Transporting   native   speakers'   environment   (language,   culture, lifestyle…) to the class is another advantage of using T.As in the language classroom. Six participants said that teaching aids- audio and audiovisual in

particular- are the best ways to learn the natural speech of natives with its appropriate accent and intonation, they offer an opportunity for students to discover their lifestyle, cultural setting (civilization and literature) and social behavior.

e-give an opportunity for students to practice and test their language level:

Five subjects argued that teaching aids give them a chance to practice and test their language level. Here they mainly refer to 'the language laboratory' where they can practice drills, repetition or imitation and then try to produce their own performance on the basis of what they listened to. Testing can be done in language laboratory by doing voice recording and making comparison with the model, hence discovering where the weak points are.

f-aid teachers to help their students:

A proportion of students (only three) reported that T.As are helpful not only to learners but to teachers as well. Teachers can use these instructional equipments as a source of motivation for their students so that they can help them learn better.

ITEM Twelve: courses taught in language laboratory

This question aims at determining the aural/oral courses conducted in laboratory- based language teaching.

Response	Oral- exp	phonetics
Participants	00	00
Percentage	00	00

Theoretically there are at least two courses which need language laboratory as a teaching technique.Practically, however, none of these courses is taught via language lab.Partly the phenomenon can be related to the fact that the actual site of the English department in batna University is a newly built infrastructure and some of the equipments, among the language laboratories, are still to come.This is what delays the use of this type of teaching aids, but it does not fully answer the question.Our experience as a former student in that department , supported by other colleagues declarations, asserts that Phonetics is not taught at laboratories until the third year.When consulted for this issue, the administration expressed its deep regret of the fact, but says that there is no solution at hand. The –old-department contained three laboratories dating to the eighties, two of which were not functional.All the students had to share one laboratory of 24 sites, knowing that the groups exceeded 50 pupils, and this poses another technical problem.

<u>ITEM Thirteen :</u> the difference between learning in the L.L and a normal classroom

This question investigates the issue whether there is a difference between learning in a typical language classroom and a language laboratory. The responses are organized in the following table.

Table 11:The difference in learning settings

Response	Quite different	Little bit different	No difference	N.A
Participants	51	27	6	6
Percentage	56.66%	30%	6.67%	6.67%

Among the ninety responses we got to this item ,a proportion of 'quite different' indicates that half of students (56.66%) found L.L as a very different place to learn. 27 respondents (30%) claimed that there is a little bit difference between L.L and classroom. Only 6 subjects (6.67%) said that the two setting are almost the same. For unknown reasons, 6 participants (6.67%) did not give any response.

After asking them if they find a difference between L.L and classroom, now it is obvious to ask them about the features that distinguish L.L from the typical classroom. Here are the obtained responses.
 - availability of listening equipments and taped materials
 - the existence of motivating, helpful atmosphere to EFL and its culture
 - freedom of expression and ability of concentration
 - opportunity for more oral practice
 - more communication between teacher-students and student-student
 - enjoying the study in sub-groups

ITEM FOURTEEN : **students' attitudes towards language laboratory**

By asking this question, we wanted to know our learners' attitudes towards L.L. Three options were given: "I like it", "neutral", "I hate it". The responses are shown in the following table.

Table 12 attitudes twoards L.L

Response	I like it	Neutral	I hate it
Participants	89	27	4
Percentage			

The table reveals that nearly two thirds of respondents claimed that they wish to study in the language laboratory i.e. they enjoy and favor being and learning in this instructional medium. 18subjects (20%) have a neutral attitude towards L.L (they are not interested). Only four participants said that they hate this teaching medium and did not say why. Twenty participants gave no attitude.

ITEM FIFTEEN : **students' favorite module**

The English language studies' curriculum stresses both sides of language: written and oral because of the interrelation existing between them. Yet learners tend to prefer one more than the other, hence they show better outcomes in the side they favor. Therefore, the first question of this section attempts to discover which module is the most preferred to our students: oral expression (O.E) or written expression.

The results reveal the supremacy of oral expression over written expression; out of 140, 87 students argued that they prefer O.E module, whereas 55 students favor written expression.

ITEM SIXTEEN : **the reasons of preferring the oral expression module**

Now, those who favored O.E module were asked to give their reasons of doing so. Students' reasons and motives are generally summed up in five main points.

Table 13 Students favorite module

Response and reasons	Participants	Percentage
- it is an opportunity to express freely the ideas, practice and test their level of language	22	41.50%
	12	27.80%
- it develops and improves students' communicative skills	7	13.20
- for many students, it is an active, enjoyable and motivating course	6	11.32
- it helps students to break up their shyness and encourage self-confidence	3	4.67%
- it is very useful and helpful for professional/ teaching career		

a-it is an opportunity to express freely the ideas

Unlike the other modules in English language studies' program, O.E is the only one which is intended to be 'student-centered course' i.e. the lion-share of T.T (talking time) is given to students (STT) which is basically

stressed in this course. So, oral expression is really an outlet for students' emotions and ideas to be conveyed. He can talk about his life experiences, personal attitudes and express freely his private opinions and beliefs. It is the only provided free space to say all what he thinks using the target language. He can also practice and test his language level via peer's evaluation and teacher's feedback.

- it develops and improves students' communicative skills:

The powerful, efficient and successful way of face-to-face communication between the student and his teacher or peer is the practice of oral language. By carrying out various frequent conversations and interviews with his peers or teacher, the student can gradually learn "the art of talking" which in turn allows them to build up their communicative skills. Oral expression class is a small community where each student is a communicating member who gives opinions, defend his decisions and make critical judgments.

- it is an active, enjoyable and motivating course

To make any course active, enjoyable and motivating means giving each learner the opportunity to feel that he/she is not outside the group. It is up to the teacher to create the atmosphere where each of his students practices and learns the language . Moreover, it is the act of being innovating each time which produces activity, joy and motivation; the teacher who repeats himself all over the time -through his repeated course activities and tasks- will undoubtedly be no more active and creative teacher. Hence, the participants, who reported that the course of O.E carries such features, language laboratory and the typical classroom.

- <u>it helps students to break up their shyness and encourage self-confidence</u>

Among the major problems of our students are: shyness and lack of self-confidence which are due to their lack of participation and being in the margin most of the time. Most English language modules are 'teacher-centered courses' where students are usually passive listeners. So any attempt to participate makes him/ her feel that he/ she is in focus which means-according to them- more mistakes, hesitation, embarrassment and further peer's criticism. As the course of O.E encourages the idea of being in focus the students' feelings of shyness and lack of self-confidence will be less because of the frequent exposure to such situations. Thus, more and more training to participate will certainly rebuild self-confidence and reduce the feeling of shyness.

- <u>it is very useful and helpful for professional/ teaching career</u>

In fact, teaching requires not only the knowledge and the skill of the subject but also the ability to teach confidently. Thus the proportion of students who reported this reason-even though low- discovers this feature when doing oral presentations of research papers which give them a feeling of being 'the teacher'.

What remains worth to say is that if no student said that phonetics is his favourit module, it means that really the problem that we have stated is worth investigating.

ITEM SEVENTEEN: pre- university special courses devoted to aural-oral skills development

By asking this question, we wished to see our learners' previous exposure to oral language i.e. the pre-university level's experience, and their familiarity with native speakers' language. The question was: how often did your pre-university teachers give you special courses to improve your aural-oral skills. The responses are shown in the table below.

Table 14 students previous level of oral/aural skills.

Response	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	N.A
Participants	6	21	30	30	3
Percentage	6.67%	23.33%	33.33%	33.33%	3.33%

The table reveals that "rarely" and "never" responses received the highest rates (33.33%each). Only 6 students (6.67%) reported that they were often training to improve their aural-oral skills.

Although the Algerian educational system stresses the balance of skills in all the secondary school's course books, teachers put much emphasis on some aspects of language like vocabulary and grammar in an attempt to improve students' level of proficiency. As a result, our first year university students are still unable to understand authentic English, and their oral productions are stiil very weak.

ITEM EITEEN: students speaking ability

As it is previously mentioned, speaking is the skill by which learners are often judged; we wanted to have learners' self evaluation of their speaking ability level. The given levels are: good, average, bad and very bad.

Table 15 students' speaking abilities

Response	Good	Average	Bad	Very bad
Participants	14	66	11	9
Percentage	3	66%	10%	09%

Out of 100 who responded to this item, 66respondents (66%) claimed to have an average speaking ability level. 19 subjects reported that they have a poor/ very poor level in speaking. Only 14 students argued that they possess a good speaking ability. The reasons stand behind the bad/ very bad speaking level of the learners can be summarized in the following points :

Having poor/ very poor level in speaking skill indicates that there are serious problems preventing students from reaching the desired level. The 11 students who reported that they have bad/very bad speaking level gave the following reasons:

- lack of outside classroom' practice
- shyness, lack of participation and fear of criticism
- insufficient time allotted to the course of O.E
- Lack of teaching aids (taped materials, video, computer …)
- Limited range of vocabulary and poor mastery of grammar
- The state of being uncomfortable when speaking because of the audience

ITEM NINETEEN : students listening ability

The same degrees of options are given to subjects to make a self evaluation of aural ability level. The results are organized as follows:

Table 16 Students'evaluation of their listening abilities

Response	Good	Average	Bad	Very bad
Participants	17	59	10	2
Percentage	18.89%	65.56%	11.11%	2.22%

Again, the majority of respondents who answered (65.56%) claimed that they have an average listening ability. 12 subjects (13.33%) have bad/ very bad level. The proportion of "good" in listening is better than the one in speaking i.e. 17 students (18.89%) said that they have a good listening ability. Two (02) respondents (2.22%) did not give any possible response.

ITEM TWENTY : students' explanations of their bad listening ability

The item investigates the main reasons causing the poor level in listening comprehension. The 12 students (13.33%), who maintained that they really suffer from their bad level in listening, gave the following reasons:

- limited opportunities of listening to native speakers
- unfamiliarity with teacher/ native speakers' pronunciation
- heavy dependence on writing and dictation rather than listening and comprehension
- there is no methodology to teach and learn listening
- unfamiliarity with new vocabularies

- absence of communication between students and teachers or students and native speakers

ITEM TENTY ONE : **teaching listening comprehension in language laboratory as part of the course of phonetics.**

Table17: students' points of view towards teaching listening comprehension in L.L

Response	Effective	Motivating.	Boring	I don't know	N.A
Participants	65	34	4	13	4
Percentage.					

Out of 120 who replied to this item, 65 students reported that L.L is effective teaching aid.In deed, the laboratory characteristics and functions offer certain facilities (especially retracing and self pacing) that allow students to listen effectively. The 34 students who argued that L.L is a motivating instructional tool indicates the dynamic nature of working in L.L that can not be found in the normal classroom (working all the time, listening with your own material, receiving individual attention from the teacher and self evaluation of *your* performance). These features may push the learner to comprehend much better and get better outcomes. A considerable proportion of students who could not evaluate teaching listening in L.L, resulted from their neutral attitudes

towards this instruction tool. Four subjects felt that teaching/ learning listening in language laboratory is a boring task.

ITEM TWENTY TWO: laboratory listening comprehension activities

In fact, phonetics teachers can design different and various laboratory listening activities to cover all the aspects of oral language practice. However, these activities don't receive the same valuation and appreciation from students' i.e. They may favor one than another. Hence, the present item seeks to discover the most favored laboratory listening activities. The results are demonstrated below:

- activities dealing with conversations, dialogues and interviews
- activities dealing with songs
- retelling taped stories
- pronunciation practice (drills and minimal pairs)
- listen and record activities

ITEM TWENTY THREE : What are the benefits of teaching speaking skill in language laboratory

By asking this question, we wished to know whether students are aware of the advantages of learning speaking in L.L since it was previously argued that it is suitable instructional tool to teach oral kills.

It seems that learners themselves realized the importance of language laboratory in learning the speaking skill that is why they often mention their wish to benefit from **such a valuable tool..**

The majority of learners reported that the use the L.L is the best way to practice speaking.

ITEM TWETY FOUR **students' suggestions for teachers of speaking as module**

At the end of the questionnaire, we wished to give our students a free space to suggest what they think is better for them to improve their level in listening and speaking skills part of the phonetics module . The suggestions are basically given to their teachers of phonetics and concern also O.E course. Here are the obtained suggestions:

- First of all, there should be trained teachers in charge of the oral expression and phonetics modules
- The primary objective of the phonetics teacher is not only to give lectures (tasks and activities) improving students' aural/ oral skills but also to cope with their psychological problems (shyness, embarrassment, lack of self confidence…)
- The teacher of O.E also should establish a sort of trust between him and his students to make them feel that they are close to their teacher, hence the communication will be easier
- Teachers should have a clear, well-built and suitable methodology to teach pronunciation as a skill.
- Creating motivation is required to activate students, push them to participate and make them really involved
- Designing pronunciation activities should be a cooperative work by giving students a considerable freedom to choose and propose activities that meet their needs

- Teachers should give more importance to the level of tasks: "they mut take into account that the course and activities are deigned for 'us' not for him or for other teachers

- Students need more speaking practice, pronunciation exercises and vocabulary activities

- Varying activities each session make students active and interested. They should range from simple conversations, interviews, story telling to role-play and oral reports

- The use of variety of teaching aids (audio aids, visuals, audiovisuals) is also stressed

- Adding modern instructional media to the language laboratory (computer, video…)

- Dividing the crowded classes into sub-groups to make learning more effective

- What is distinguishable in learning suggestions is the one who proposes the possibility of bringing native speaker into the classroom to have a chance to speak with a native speaker and see the language as it is

- Varying taped materials (documentaries, T.V and radio news, plays, situational conversations, historical and social topics…)

- The time allotted to Phonetics is not sufficient, thus making extensive and intensive laboratory hours is also suggested

IV-2-1.ANALYSIS OF TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

teachers' qualifications

Response	License	Magister	Doctorate
Participants	4	4	0
Percentage	50%	50%	0%

The table reveals that there are four (04) teachers (50%) hold a "license" degree, the same number holds "Magister", but no teacher holds "doctorate" degree. Theses different educational backgrounds will provide us different opinions and attitudes towards the issues under investigation.

ITEM: TWO: how long have you been teaching phonetics at the English department ?

Our participants' teaching experience ranges from three (01) years to thirty two (19) years with the supremacy of teachers experienced three (03) years of teaching. In fact, the four teachers, who reported that they have been teaching English at the university level for three (03) years, have recently obtained their "License" degree and they are preparing for" Magiter"; they

were summoned to be in charge of certain modules to cover the lack of teachers in the department of English at Batna university.

ITEM Three: Next to phonetics what other courses have you been in charge of?

Most of our teachers responses can be summarized in the following table

Teachers	Courses
5	grammar oral expression, general culture,
2	oral expression, written expression, grammar
1	oral expression

The table shows that our teachers have experienced teaching different and various English modules, both written and spoken ones.This is what raises our claim that they are aware of their learners difficulties in the two aspects of the foreign languae and this can help them diagnosis the difficiencies of teaching phonetics theoretically to first year students.

ITEM FOUR : is teaching Phonetics personal or imposed?

In this question, we wanted to know whether teaching phonetics was freely chosen or imposed by the administration.

Response	Personal choice	Administrative
Participants	3	5
Percentage	37.5%	62.5%

Out of 8, 5 teachers (62.5%) claimed that teaching Phonetics is an administrative choice and the other three teachers (37.5%) chose freely to teach this module. It seems that the need to develop learner' aural-oral skills obliged the administration to call the experienced teachers to do the job and to train the new 'fresh' teachers to be in charge of the module. Those who chose freely to teach phonetics seem to have great interest and motivation to do so (they believe that they can give a hand to the learners who are really in need of their experience).

ITEM FIVE   : how often do you use teaching aids in your courses?

frequency	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Teachers	0	3	4	1	0

Teaching language skills usually requires using teaching aids to facilitate learning and create motivation. What is worth noting is that no teacher said that he always uses the teaching aids whether audio or visual .Most recent language teaching methods stress the fact that a foreign language is better presented first through aids. These tools facilitate a quick and direct conceptualization of matters related to the foreign language and its culture Out of 8 teachers, 4 said that they use teaching aids from time to time, three often use them; and only one teacher said that she rarely uses them. What can we deduce from these results is either our teachers haven't appreciated yet the great role of teaching aids or the availability and accessibility of teaching aids in the department of English is not enough.

The types of teaching aids that teachers frequently use are what the following question tries to find out.

ITEM SIX : what kind of aids do you often use?

       This question attempts to identify the different kinds of teaching aids our teachers usually use: (visuals, audio or audiovisuals). Here are the results.

Response	visual	audio	audiovisual
Participants	2	5	1
Percentage	25%	62.5%	12.5%

       Teachers' responses to this item reveals that (62.5%) of them claimed that audio aids are their most used teaching tools, while only a small minority (2) teachers (25%) said that they tend to use visuals and only one teacher (12.5%) reported that he frequently use audiovisual aids. The supremacy of ' audio aids' response is explained by the availability and accessibility of this type; Batna department of English provides six multimedia language laboratories, but unfortunately still not functioning. Most of our respondents responses throughout this questionnaire are make reference to the old department where two conventional language laboratories were at work; and where each teacher has the right to teach with his own audio taped materials. In the horizons, the department will offer a large   audiovisual room, but still students have to learn in course classes for a long time before pursuing such pleasant and luxurious teaching tools . Again, and under the present conditions, it is up to the teacher to select what suits him and meets his learners' needs.

ITEM SEVEN : **do you think that teaching aids are necessary in teaching the four language skills?**

A great majority of our respondents agree that teaching aids and educational technology in general are very helpful and necessary in teaching/ learning EFL. Only one teacher holds a different opinion and shows a negative response. These teachers' opinions added to our personal belief makes necessary substance to check the assumption that teaching aids and educational technology in general are necessary and helpful in teaching/ learning process.

ITEM EIGHT : **have you experienced L.L in your EFL teaching?**

Language laboratory is one of the most used teaching aids in EFL classes, and almost all teachers experienced it in their teaching. The present question aims at confirming this fact.

Pesponse	Yes	No
Participants	7	1
Percentage	99%	0 %

The table reveals that almost all teachers have experienced L.L as a teaching aid in EFL classes. our teacher attitudes, experience and opinions concerning this educational tool will certainly help us discuss the remaining items concerning teaching in language laboratory .

ITEM NINE **in which courses do you often use it?**

This question aims to cite the different courses relied on laboratory-based language teaching. The participants gave the following responses.

participants	courses
6	Oral expression
01	Phonetics (3rd year)

Out of the whole population of teachers, six that is 75% reported that O.E is the most suited course for the laboratory practice. In fact, oral expression module is the most known instructional space to practice listening activities (dialogues, conversations, interviews, stories, songs…) As it was expected, only one teacher mentioned phonetics, but asserts that he deals with third year classes .The fact that first year students do not receive instructions in phonetics in laboratories indicates that the problem still exists and needs to be solved.

ITEM TEN: what do you think the role of the L.L in teaching phonetics to 1st year students

To this item, the teachers' personal evaluations of language laboratory's role are varied and various: Half of the participants reported that language laboratory is an interesting teaching aid; three teachers (37.5%) claimed that language laboratory is an effective educational tool and one teacher (12.5%) argued that it is simply a boring aid. No one said that it is needless in teaching phonetics, but none of them, too, said it is indispensable. The total agreement that L.L is an effective, interesting and motivating teaching aid indicates its

….

importance and vital role in the development of learners' receptive and productive skills through the facilities and functions the L.L provides.

ITEM ELEVEN: do you manipulate all the lab functions, or you rather need assistance ?

	Yes	No
Participants	4	4
Percentage	50%	50%

Practically, the L.L is an educational technology equipment which contains a range of switches and controls. Hence, any user needs to know how it works and operates. The present question seeks the teachers' knowledge of the lab functions.

The table above reveals that half of the participants (4 teachers) reported that they know all the lab functions and what each switch stands for, while the other four teachers (50%) gave a negative response to the question. To them, working in the lab demands first a basic knowledge of the instructional tool and all its devices. This alone requires spare time to be trained for it s functioning before training students in it .The administration, according to this teachers, does not do much to overcome this difficulty and teachers find it a double effort

If the teacher of Phonetics does not know all the functions and switches of the console, he will no longer profit and exploit all the facilities it offers and this will affect the whole process of teaching/ learning.Such a& deficiency affects negatively not only learners assimilation of the courses but also teachers psychological readiness to work in it.There is no doubt that these factors which might seem minor have in reality a noticeable impact on both teaching and learning.

ITEM TWELVE : Do you favor teaching pronunciation drills in the L.L?

It was not surprising to see that that almost all the teachers support the idea of teaching pronunciation in the L.L. only one (01) teacher presented a negative response. The reasons for which they prefer this way of teaching can be classified in the following table:

Nbr.of teachers	Responses
1	Use language by repeating words, know and retain vocabulary items
1	Mainly for differentiating forms of speech
1	To facilitate the acquisition of native accents and expressions and use them spontaneously
1	For more development of students' speaking and listening abilities
1	Know how to pronounce correctly, know different forms of natives' speech

1	Recognize different supra segmentals
1	For the overall language training.

ITEM THIRTEEN :To what extent   do lab. drills in phonetics   help students speak fluently and accurately?

Response	Very much	little	No at all
Participants	7	1	0
Percentage	87.5%	12.5%	0%

Theoretically, language labs come in the second position next to the native society in training foreigners acquire the basic rudiments of the foreign language specificities. Responses to this item show that our respondents are aware of this and highly support the idea that pattern drills form the heart of lab exercises. The latter is supposed to train students practice speaking to ultimately achieve the desired accuracy and fluency. Therefore, 7 teachers (87.5%) claimed that L.L.drills are very helpful to EFL learners to improve their fluency and accuracy.

ITEM FOURTEEN   : how many groups you teach in the phonetics courses, and what do you think of the group size ?

By coming back to ask this question, we wished to know whether   the teachers are aware of the influence of the group size on assimilation , and how do they react to such a variable.

Responses to this item show that the number of groups ranges from one (01) group to five (05) groups. In fact, exceeding two (02) groups is really a burden for a teacher who has not received any special training to lecture at the university, especially when we know that half of our population are new comers to the field and hold a B.A.Among their answers, we deduce that that two groups per teacher is an ideal number for it is possible to control, monitor and evaluate. In their opinions, the perfect size for each group would be from 15 to 20 learners. Although this number concords with the universal norms and standards in teaching foreign languages, but these teachers assert themselves that this is not possible to reach given the actual conditions.

The scope of students' number per group ranges from 30 to 36 which really reveals how overcrowded the groups are. Such great numbers of students hinder the work of the teacher in terms of supervising, monitoring, individual evaluation and harden the effort of students to obtain good results. Embedded groups create a hard teaching atmosphere particularly in a course which requires sub-groups.

ITEM FIFTEEN : What do you think of the time allotted to the teaching of phonetics

The respondents say that the allotted time ranges from one hour and a half (1h 30) to three hours (3h). In fact, English language studies' program devotes two sessions (1h 30 each) for first year and second year, whereas third year receives only one session per week. The overall teachers' evaluation of the teaching length is not sufficient .The spoken form of the

language is as important as the written one whereas the directives suggest nearly one third of the whole teaching time for the oral form of the language. We are aware that phonetics courses are both written and oral but we still believe that learners are given less chances to manipulate and manifest their competences in the spoken English they are learning.

The proportion of (87.5%) which indicates the negative response elicits the teachers' dissatisfaction with the time allotted to Phonetics, and their desire to have more time for oral practice

.

ITEM SIXTEEN : do you stick to the classical technique in teaching the course of phonetics?

Teaching any module requires a very organized instructional plan including program design which highlights the teacher's methodology of teaching. The teaching technique can be personal or 'borrowed' from a colleague or even mixture of both, yet the aim is always the same (achieving set of goals).

Among our eight respondents, six (6) teachers argued that they follow a classical teaching technique in teaching this module and the other two teachers (25%) said that they do apply personal ones which they try to innovate and ameliorate. This indicates that our teachers have realized the necessity of the instructional plan; for

it makes the teaching/ learning process systematic and organized. However, if only a minority of teachers struggle to better their teaching qualities, this leads us to assert that having a backward glance to the present way of teaching phonetics is necessary. Again, we find it worth to assert here that introducing the L.L.as teaching technique would save the situation far better**.**

ITEM SEVENTEEN : In your course , do you give much attention to the teaching of listening or speaking? Explain.

The present question investigates the skill which receives much attention than the other (listening or speaking) and the teachers' reasons of doing so. The common teachers responses to this item are classified as follows

Ps	Response	Reasons
4	Listening.	-Without listening, students can not speak and keep only the receptive knowledge. Speaking without listening creates lack of linguistic inputs -Students are supposed to know first how to articulate, then they can speak -Learning a language passes through the stage of listening and then imitation (speaking) -It is the first step to learn the language; a good listener

		produces a good speaker
2	Speaking.	It develops language fluency It is the skill that it is devoted to express themselves freely using the target language
2	Both	The two skills are essential to a good command of the language They are tightly related

The table above shows that our teachers realize the importance of listening comprehension in enhancing students' oral abilities which paves the way towards further language input. In deed, before they are able to pronounce correctly English sounds they need to be so much exposed to native speech. Whether through imitation or by developing some personal ways of pronunciation these learners will become familiar to the foreign language phonological system.

Half of the respondents argued that they should give much attention and importance to the of listening aspect, despite the fact that it is not indicated in the official program. Simply because it provides the basic linguistic inputs which can help learners develop their language outputs (oral performance). It also provides the exposure to the spoken language which does certainly reinforce their speaking skill. What these teachers regret is the fact that this can not be done now in language laboratories. Not only because the department labs are not yet functional, but because the syllabus itself does not mention this. Facing this unbearable situation, these teachers say that there is not much to do now.

Two participants (25%) claimed that they give much attention to speaking practice. They argued that this skill is the learners' outlet to express themselves using the target language, and it is the skill devoted to develop their fluency. The two remaining teachers stressed the importance of both skills for their interdependence.

ITEM EIGHTEEN : In your opinion what are the main difficulties your students encounter in understanding native English?

Participants	Response
1	- pronunciation problems (unfamiliarity with native speakers' accents)
1	- lack of aural training - lack of perception and quick decoding - unfamiliarity with speakers' accent
1	- Inability to understand the listening discourse
1	- Students are not sufficiently exposed to spoken En1glish
1	- Lack of sound discrimination (phoneme, intonation, stress…)
1	- Unfamiliarity with the new vocabulary items

1	- Lack of practice produces all the listening problems
1	- Inability to understand native speakers' language (speed, regressive, progressive, assimilation…)

Inspired by their different teaching experiences teachers cited above their students' listening comprehension problems. Generally speaking, it seems that the factor of being insufficiently exposed to the spoken English let the opportunity for all the mentioned problems to surge and come up against learners' attempt to approach the process of comprehension. We do agree with the teachers emphasizing the listening comprehension, as we believe that it is the necessary access to the speaking ability. Again, this achievement can be better assured through instructing in the language lab.

ITEM NINETEEN where do you prefer teaching phonetics

The question seeks the suitable educational medium to teach phonetics (L.L or classroom).

Response	**In classroom**	**In language laboratory**
Participants	0	8
Percentage	0%	100%

All of the respondents claimed that their preferable instructional medium to teach Phonetics is the L.L for the facilities and options it offers which can not be found in a typical classroom. We do not think it is worth to comment this response, except to say that what is normally obvious becomes now a wish!

ITEM TWENTY: what activities would the L.L. enables you to use to help your students improve their aural/oral skills?

Effective phonetics requires appropriate activities and tasks which meet students' needs and aim at enhancing their aural abilities. In addition to the direct points designed in the official program, other activities can help students better their mastery of the spoken aspect of the language. Only six teachers answered this item; and here are their views of the different types of activities which they think enhance and better students' aural skills:

participants	Type of activities
1	- Discussions, dialogues - Using taped materials. - Work in small groups
1	- Listening to authentic recordings for many times
1	- Listening to authentic materials
1	- Minimal pair exercises to improve pronunciation. - Dialogues to improve their intonation
1	- group discussions - individual reports

1	- songs with gap filling
	- authentic dialogues
	- watching short movies and answering set of questions to check comprehension

What can be deduced from the above responses is that most of the activities depend on the authentic taped materials; yet it is up to the teacher to design the activities according to the aims he wants to achieve.

ITEM TWENTY ONE   Do your students request the use of audiovisuals in your courses?

Inappropriate teaching techniques and tools of the listening activities create dissatisfaction and complaining among students. When we asked this question, we wanted to know through teachers' views whether and to what extent their students are aware of the necessity of introducing the audiovisuals in the course of phonetics. Teachers gave the following answers.

Response	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Participants	0	4	4	0
Percentage	0%	5%	50%	0%

We can notice from the given results that students sometimes or rarely complain about the designed activities. This assumption demonstrates that our

teachers follow certain procedures when exposing students to listening skills part of the general course of phonetics. The frequency of learners' requests suggests that the situation is alarming and a reconsideration of the present way of doing things is indispensable. When teachers confess that their students know and need audiovisuals to help them in phonetics, we become convinced that our hypothesis is already confirmed. In deed, using audiovisuals even at the first year level is in an attempt to meet both teachers and students needs and interests. Of course, difficulties arise from the ill-choice of activities and their inappropriateness to students' level.

ITEM TWENTY TWO: As far as the speaking skill is concerned; do your students face difficulties to express themselves orally? And how do deal with them?

Out of eight teachers, seven that is (87.5%) claimed that their students suffer from the inability to express themselves orally. Only one teacher (12.5%) reported a different opinion. What hinders most students' oral performance and the activities suggested by their teachers to overcome their oral skills' barriers are gathered in the following table:

Students' speaking difficulties	Teacher's suggested activities
- Limited vocabulary rang.	- free self expression

- Lack of grammar' rules application	- listening and discussion - using audiovisual aids
- inability to find the right word in the right moment (vocabulary shortage) - hesitations, pauses	- oral presentation of topics
- real life conversations.	- role-play and interviews - improvisation
- grammar pbs - mother tongue interference - groups size and lack of time	- no suggested activities. –more opportunities for an effective use of the language
- lack of lexical items	Discussions
- grammatical mistakes - structures building	Extensive use of authentic materials: songs, pictures, movies, audio tapes…
- Lack of self-confidence - Shyness and other psychological barriers	- simulation of native speakers

Indeed, each teacher tended to suggest the activities according to his/ her perception of problems and the aims he/ she wish to achieve. As the problems differ, the activities differ too according to the strategy the teacher

follows.What is commonly inferred from these teachers responses is that practice makes progress.

ITEM TWENTY THREE: **have you ever experienced teaching pronunciation skill using L.L?**

Response	Yes	No
Participants	2	6
Percentage	20%	80%

A indicated above, 80 % of our respondents did not experience teaching pronunciation in L.L, while only two teachers had the opportunity to do so. These statistical facts alone show the emergency of drawing responsible attention that the phenomenon of teaching pronunciation ca easily be solved at least partly. Introducing the audiovisuals even in the classrooms, since L.Labs are not yet possible, can simplify most of phonetics difficulties.

ITEM TWENTY FOUR   **what do you think would be different when teaching Phonetics in L.L?**

Teaching phonetics in a typical classroom is certainly different from teaching it in language laboratory even for first year students . The difference between the two settings as viewed by our respondents can be explained by the following points:

> -It contributes in enhancing students capacities mainly listening
> and speaking

-It is really effective mainly in listening? But the problem of
space can hinder students from free movement (the fixed
Laboratory carrels)

-Lab is useful for pronunciation, for it is very good to have a
native speaker as a model

- It motivates students to learn much better

-It gives more attention and concentration
- Opportunity to practice listening and speaking at the same time

-Provides the occasion to students for the simulation   -
(immediate imitation)

Although these aspects of comparison seem simple, but these teachers believe
that this is what is likely to create the difference.

**ITEM TWENTY FIVE Do you recommend the language laboratory as
a well- suited tool for developing students' oral/aural skills?**

As a concluding question we wanted to investigate the teachers'
attitudes towards the suitability of L.L in developing students' oral/aural
skills, which are in our view the essence of the course of phonetics.

Response	Yes	No
Participants	8	0
Percentage	100%	100%

We prefer to make no comment of this item, and let numbers speak of themselves.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of the teachers' questionnaire allowed us to draw up the following points. The questionnaire revealed that teachers of phonetics in the department of English at the University of Batna possess different educational backgrounds, teaching experiences and instructional careers. These diversities resulted in different teaching perceptions in terms of attitudes, viewpoints and evaluations of teaching aural-oral skills.

Almost all teachers claimed that teaching phonetics and its basic speaking and listening elements in the language laboratory and using different audiovisuals becomes an urgent priority to achieve real language proficiency. Yet, we felt through their responses that this target can not be achieved unless decisions are taken to seriously follow an effective strategy to introduce audiovisual aids , though it seems not at hand now and which leaves their students still encountering serious difficulties in learning language skills especially aural-oral ones

Although our teachers have realized how important, necessary and helpful audiovisuals are in teaching / learning language skills, they reported lack of frequency in using them. Language laboratory is claimed to be the most used teaching aid, yet the lack of these tools now hinders teachers from better exploitation of their capacities to make students feel the difference.

The questionnaire also showed that the major problems associated with crowded groups, insufficient time, the absence of an effective teaching technique for aural-oral skills create an obstacle for teachers to improve and develop their students' average ability in listening and speaking. Teachers' efforts to help their students overcome their learning difficulties by designing well-suited activities and variety of tasks are still required to be doubled.

Students' aural-oral difficulties can not be effectively simplified unless our phonetics teachers try to get the utmost benefits of the language laboratory which has been argued to be a suitable medium of instruction.

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GENERAL CONCLUSION

We investigated this issue with an ultimate aim of shedding some light on one of the crucial elements related to the teaching of English as a foreign language; mainly phonetics and pronunciation. We aimed at verifying the hypotheses stated in the introduction to our work and which converged to claim that introducing audiovisuals through laboratory-based teaching can be a real language experience for learners of first year English to develop and reinforce their listening and speaking skills, part of the phonetics course.

Along with the research requirement, we gathered data from both teachers and students on their standpoints and perspectives concerning the items under investigation. We were delighted to see our respondents share to a far extent our own conception of teaching phonetics first year syllabus through up to date and modern technology. Using audiovisuals, these people assert, will be a helpful technique and conducting it a multimedia language laboratory is more than a relaxing teaching / learning atmosphere.

Besides their barriers in dealing with oral language specificities, we realized that both learners and teachers encounter difficulties in teaching / learning aural-oral skills in a classical classroom. The analysis and interpretation of responses allowed us to establish a cause / effect relation between phonetics and oral expressions as two faces of the same coin. Both develop the oral competence of the language and an interdeciplinarity is, in our view, needed. Coordination of teachers in these modules helps learners perform in one course what they have learned in the other.

What learners require in phonetics is not what their teachers can provide now. Teachers themselves say they are aware of the situation but can not do

much. To them., teaching pronunciation is in itself a difficult matter and doing for crowded groups renders their task even harder to evaluate their learners proficiency level s progress in listening and speaking. This is what provided us with adequate evidence to set the ground for pedagogical necessity of using the language laboratory to teach these two language skills part of the course of phonetics starting from the first year of the B.A program.

Other researcher areas allowed us to emphasize some points which resulted from the data analysis. To start with, students' difficulties in understanding and pronouncing English – as their teachers reported in their questionnaire – are due the little practice and the lack of exposure to the language in its natural, spoken form. Teachers' moderate mastery of native English in the absence of the language laboratory inhibits them to make the most of advantage to learners. Obviously, the progress in the student s level came as a natural result of the language exposure he receives during the ordinary teaching session's laboratory treatment.

Therefore, as a research requirement, we suggested the introduction of audiovisuals through the language laboratory as one of the best teaching technique and an important instructural material to develop the aura / oral aspects of the language. What should be mentioned is the importance of listening-speaking interdependence in designing any laboratory task. The integration of audio-visual potentialities of video and computers with the language laboratory can make a suitable teaching aid in the language classroom to effectively improve students aural-oral skills.

For q significant reason, the general opinion held by our subjects seems to convey that what is expected from the administration on this issue is not yet obtained. Teachers and learners do not seem to grasp the idea that a whole newly built infrastructure does no afford such a preliminary teaching

condition. To them, and so we do agree, introducing the oral aspect of English using the Chalk-board is an old fashioned technique in the third millennium, especially that Algeria is seeking access to the international community along with the requirement of globalization.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

Dear students, you are kindly requested to answer this questionnaire which investigate the issue of: Introducing audio-visual aids in teaching phonetics to first year students. The case of first year students of English at Batna University.

-First year students' background:
a- Tick in the appropriate box.

     Female☐   Male☐

b- Your baccalaureate stream:
-Literary☐
-Scientific☐
-Technical☐
-Others☐

c- Your choice to study English was:

     Personal ☐   Imposed☐
-If yours, justify
……………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………….

1- Classify the four skills according to their difficulty:

-Writing☐
-Reading☐
-Listening☐
-Speaking☐

2-Which of the following skills you think is the most important?

-Fluency☐
-Transcription☐
-Pronunciation☐
-Listening☐

3-What is your favourite module?

    Oral expression☐   written expression☐
-explain why……………………………………........................
………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………….

4-How frequent did your pre-university teachers give you special courses to improve your aural-oral skills?

   Often ☐   sometimes   ☐   rarely ☐   never☐

5-In your opinion, which of the following difficulties you may encounter in the learning of listening skill ?

a-Inability to understand or guess the meaning of the discourse.
b-Native speaker s speech rapidity.
c-Unfamiliarity with native speakers pronunciation.
d-Hearing problems (concentration, distinguishing sound…).
e-Informal language difficulty (dialect for instance).
f-Unavailability of taped materials and lack of practice.

6-How do you evaluate your listening ability?

  Good ☐   Average ☐   bad ☐   very bad☐

Justify your answer…………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………

7-According to you, what are your main speaking difficulties?

a-Pronunciation difficulties. ☐
b-Limited range o vocabulary and structures. ☐
c-Grammatical and structural mistakes (accuracy). ☐
d-Lack of self confidence and fear of criticism. ☐
e-Lack of outside classroom-practice. ☐
f-Mother tongue interference. ☐

8-How do you evaluate your speaking ability?

Good ☐   average ☐   bad ☐   very bad☐

Justify……………………………………………………………………………….
………………………………………………………………………………………

9-How often do you learn with the use of teaching aids in the classroom?

Very often ☐   sometimes☐   rarely ☐   never☐

10-What is your attitude towards language laboratory?

I like it ☐   neutral ☐   I hate it☐

11-What type of teaching aids are used in the classroom?

Audio ☐   visual☐   audio-visual☐

12-Do you think it necessary to use teaching aids to learn the oral skills?

   Yes ☐   No☐

-If yes, what are your points of view towards their effectiveness?

a-Raise students motivation and interest☐
b-help learners improve and enrich their language repertoire. ☐
c-facilitate learning☐
d-bring the foreign language cultural context into the classroom. ☐
e-give an opportunity for students to practice and test their language level☐.

13-How do you find the difference between learning in L L and in the classroom?

Quite different   ☐   little/bit different ☐   no difference☐

If there is a difference state it…………………………………………………..
………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………

14-Which of the following courses you learn in L L?

Oral expression   ☐   phonetics☐

3

15-What do you think of teaching listening comprehension in LL as part of the course of phonetics?

Effective ☐   motivating☐   boring ☐   I don t know☐

16-What are your favored laboratory listening activities?
……………………………………………………………………………
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17-In your opinion, what are the benefits of learning the speaking skill in L L ?
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18-What are your suggestions for teachers of speaking as part of the course of phonetics…………………………………………………………………………..
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Thank you for your contribution.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

I investigating the issue of: Introducing audio-visual aids in teaching phonetics to first year English students at Batna University. You are kindly invited to answer the following questions. Your contribution will certainly be of a great help to me, and which will remain anonymous.

1. Your educational level:

    a- License ☐

    b- Magister ☐

    c- Doctorate ☐

 2. How long have you been teaching phonetics at the English department?

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 3. Next to phonetics what other courses have you been in charge of ?

…………………………………………………………………………………………

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 4. Is teaching phonetics personal or imposed ?

Personal ☐   imposed ☐

- justify your answer

…………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………

5. Do you use teaching aids in your courses ?

a- always ☐

b- often ☐

c- sometimes ☐

d- rarely ☐

e- never ☐

6. What kind of aids do you often use ?

a- Visual ☐

b –Audio ☐

c- Audiovisual ☐

7. Do you think that teaching aids are necessary in teaching the four language skills ?

Yes ☐   no ☐

-Explain

…………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………….

8. Have you experienced L.L in your EFL teaching ?

Yes ☐   no ☐

9. In which courses do you often use it ?

a- oral expression ☐

b-phonetics ☐

10. What do you think of the role of the L.L in teaching phonetics to first year students ?

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11. Do you manipulate all the Lab functions, or you rather need assistance ?

Yes ☐   no ☐

12. Do you favour teaching pronunciation drills in the L.L ?

Yes ☐   no ☐

-Explain

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

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……………………………………………………………………

13. To what extent do Lab drills in phonetics help students speak fluently and

accurately ?

a- very much   ☐

b-little   ☐

c- not at all   ☐

-justify

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

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14. How many groups you teach in the phonetics course ? and what do you think

of the group size ?

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15. what do you think of the time allotted to the teaching of ?

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16. Do you stick to the classical technique in teaching the course of phonetics ?

Yes ☐   no ☐

-Explain

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17. In your course, you give much attention to the teaching of :

a- Listening   ☐

b- Speaking   ☐

c- Both   ☐

- Why

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……………………………………………………………………………………

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 18. In your opinion, what are the main difficulties your students encounter in understanding native English ?

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19. where do you prefer teaching phonetics ?

a- In classroom   ☐

b- In language laboratory   ☐

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20. What activities would the language Lab enables you to use to help your students improve their aural / oral skills ?

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21. Do your students request the use of audiovisuals in your course ?

a- always ☐

b- sometimes ☐

c- rarely ☐

d- never ☐

22. As far as the speaking skill is concerned, do your students face difficulties to express themselves orally ?

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23. Have you ever experienced teaching pronunciation skill using L.L ?

Yes ☐   no ☐

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24. What do you think would be different when teaching phonetics in L.L ?

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25. Do you recommend the L.L as a well-suited tool for developing students aural /oral skills ?

Yes ☐   no   ☐

Thank you for your contribution