



REPUBLIQUE DU BENIN

MINISTRE DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPERIEUR ET DE LA
RECHERCHE SCIENTIFIQUE

UNIVERSITE DE PORTO-NOVO

ECOLE NORMALE SUPERIEURE

DOMAINE : SCIENCES DE L'EDUCATION ET DE LA FORMATION

MENTION : Professorat de l'Enseignement Secondaire

SPECIALITE : ANGLAIS

GRADE : BAPES

MEMOIRE DE FIN DE CYCLE

THEME :

**Impacts of Competency Based Approach on
Speaking in EFL beginner's classes a case
study of Lycee Behanzin**

Presenté par :

Salma ASHANTI

Sous la direction de :

Dr. Ibrahim YEKINI

Maître-assistant de Littérature

Anglaise

Année-académique : 2015-2016

DEDICATION

This research work is dedicated to my mother ADJIA Maimounatou ABOUDOU and my late father Idrissou ASHANTI who have taught me patience, courage and perseverance.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- ❖ All my the glory to the almighty God because of all of his good deeds to me
- ❖ I would like to thank Dr Ibrahim YEKINI who accepted to supervise this research work and from who I'm learned a lot.
- ❖ I owe great gratitude to my beloved brother Mr. Mashoudou ASHANTI for his constant moral and financial support throughout my training at “the teachers' training school of Porto- Novo”.
- ❖ My special thanks to all my classmates particularly to KOUYABOU Aminou, BOUKARI Halalou and ABDOULAYE Moustapha for their love, advice help and friendship during my training.
- ❖ I also thank all the authorities and teachers of “ Lycée BEHANZIN, especially DrAdolphe AHONNON for his advice and support.
- ❖ My best thanks to my uncles Mr. ATTA S. Amidou, Mr. ASHANTI Seibou.
- ❖ I thank all my brothers particularly ASHANTI Issifou, ASHANTI Souleymane and ASHANTI Abdou-Djalilou MAMAN Abdou- Karim, ASHANTI Abdou-Djamiou for their helps.
- ❖ My special thanks to my friends, ANAGO Akouavi Arlette, HOUNPKATIN Francisse, and DANGO Moun-Barack for their helps.
- ❖ My thanks to my sisters BOUGNANKA Afsath, BONAGANA A. Samey, ASHANTI Selima,ASHANTI Saoudath,ASHANTI Faridath,ASHANTI Adina,ALABOULA Affoussatou
- ❖ I thanks all my nephews and nieces.
- ❖ May God bless all of us by crowning this work with success.

TABLES OF CONTENTS	Pages
DEDICATION	i
AKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	ii
TABLES OF CONTENTS.....	iii
INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM.....	5
1-1- Statement of the problem.....	5
1-2 Purpose of study	6
1-3- The Significance	6
1-4- The Scope and Limitation.....	7
CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW	8
2-1- Methods of second language acquisition.....	9
2-1-1- Repetition method.....	9
2-1-2 Total Physical Response for newcomers.....	10
2-1-3- Natural method.....	11
2-2- Importance of English language immersion and group work ...	12
2-3 students' involvement in the learning process	14
2-3-1 Interaction in language class	15
2-3-2 Motivation and classroom management	16
2-3-3 Games in language class.....	17
2-3-4 Importance of group work.....	18
CHAPTER THREE METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY	
3-1 Research design	
3-1-1- Research setting.....	22
3-1-2 –Research population.....	23
3-1-3 Research instruments.....	24
CHAPTER FOUR ANALYSIS OF DATA AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS	
4-1- Data analysis.....	
4-1-1- Questionnaire addressed to teachers.....	27
4-1-2- Questionnaire addressed to students	29
4-1-3- The interview.....	31
4-2- Discussion of findings.....	32
CHAPTER FIVE RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS	
5-1-Recommendations	35
5-2-Suggestion to students' parents	37
5-3- Suggestion to EFL teachers	37
Conclusion.....	40
Bibliography.....	42

GENERAL INTRODUCTION.

A language is a vehicle for communicating our ideas, beliefs and needs. We use it to obtain information, support impersonal relationship and monitor our own behaviors and thinking. As such there are many languages in the world .Some of them are regarded as international languages because of their influences on international relations and the number of people speaking them.

In Benin, English comes second after French which is the official language. For long, students started learning English at secondary school level except in some private primary school where English is taught. Reliable facts show that, after seven years of learning English, lot of students are unable to speak it fluently. Facing such shortcomings,I wonder if the way this language is taught in school, is satisfactory .It is focusing one of EFL in secondary schools that have found it necessary to choose as topic for this dissertation “**Impactsof Competency Based Approach on Speaking in EFL beginner’s classes a case study of lycee Behanzin**”.

Through this research work, effort will be made to analyze the ongoing situation of **CBA** teaching techniques and methods in speaking in beginners classes . In order to carry out this work successfully I divided it into five chapters. The first chapter introduces the study, it includes the problems statement the significance of the study and the limitation of the study . The second chapter focuses on the literature review. It deals with concepts and notes related to the topic under study. The objective here is to confront the finding with the views of scholars who have dealt with English as a foreign language EFL and make a decision.

The third chapter refers to the procedure used to collect the relevant data for this work. The methodology used here, has to do with questionnaires , interviews and classroom observations .The fourth chapter indicate the finding of the study it consists in displaying the result of my research work through the

presentation and the analysis of the data collected. The fifth chapter deals with recommendations, suggestions and general conclusion.

CHAPTER ONE:

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY.

This chapter presents the problems statement, the purpose of the study, the significance of the study and scope and limitations.

1.1-Problem statement.

Having seen the importance of English which is used for international exchange, Benin educational system authorities have instituted it as one of the compulsory subjects in secondary schools where it is taught from form one to upper Seven .Most of the time students are encouraged to learn grammar whereas vocabulary and oral practices are scarcely ever taken into account .That is another reason which has urged me to do my research on this topic.

The English teachers' difficulties to manage their beginners' learner classes. The insufficient number of hours allocated to the implementation of English syllabus and the large number of students gathered in a classroom constituted obstacles to the teachers who though willing are incapable of reaching their teaching goal. Considering my own experiences, I didn't like to speak English in class or somewhere else when I was a student. This stress inducing attitude lies in my mind up to now I lack courage and I am afraid of making mistakes, I feel myself inferior to other classmates who seem more daring and fluent. With regard to our students, I think that it may be similar to them. They fear to speak out, they stay in their silence and never want to say anything since their deficiency has not been overcome.

1.2-Purposeofthestudy.

Generally speaking, it is agreed that the speaking skill in English teaching and learning process is the most important and the most difficult of the four language skill to teach especially to learners of English as a foreign language *EFL* .In the context of Benin where English comes second after French ,learners

in general do not escape from these difficulties. Hoping to contribute to solving these difficulties my first aim in this research work is to indicate the English teachers some efficient ways of teaching speaking skill to their beginner learners.

Another purpose of my study is to show how positive reinforcement and competency based approach strategies can encourage student to take an active part in the classroom speaking activities. Here emphasis is put on motivation which involves student discovering a sense of personal effort in their language learning.

Moreover this study intends to make teachers become aware of pre-communicative activities that comprise structural and quasi communicative activities in the beginner's learner's class. In other words focus must not only be put on grammar and lexical English but also on meaning through dialogues and simple interactive activities.

1.3-The Significance.

This research work is highly important in so far as tries to raise awareness on the poor level of speaking English in our secondary schools. Other significance aspect of this topic is to suggest some solutions to remedy the problem. These suggestions and recommendations we hope will mostly help teachers motivate their students and take care of their social being. I have chosen this speaking because human beings need to communicate orally in the life for many purposes.

1.4- The scope and limitation.

To carry out this research work, it is necessary to limit the study in order to make it easier in analyzing the topic. This research work is basically concerned with **the Impact of CBA on Speaking in Beginners classes.** It is

limited to observation made on beginners students of lycèe Behanzin. I have no pretention to cover neither the situation in other schools of our country nor the speaking problems in post beginners' class. Therefore, I used available materials in my environment to scope with the issue. Thus, this work does not cover all the national territory it is rather restricted to 6eme and 5eme .I targeted these beginners classes because they are more sensitive and need more attention in order to get motivation for learning English.

CHAPTER TWO :
LITERATURE REVIEW

The problem confronting learners derives from the way the teacher manages not only to create classroom atmosphere conducive to interaction but also, to provide students with opportunities to gain self-confidence and freedom to communicate with English speakers. The task is difficult. Nevertheless, for the oral communication to be successful at any stage of learning, varieties of oral activities which are likely to help students improve their speaking skills are be implemented.

Of course, in order to make oral communication more functional, some pioneers have tried to write some helpful and useful documents. Those documents can help English teachers to carry out workable oral activities in their class. The report of these reading materials and their analysis will lead us to get more information about some methods of second and foreign language acquisition as well as the importance of linguistic immersion and students' involvement in the learning process.

2-1- methods of second language acquisition

They are many methods that can be used to acquire second and foreign language. But here three among them are going to be explored to show to what extent adapt parts of them to topic under study.

2-1-1 Repetition method

I have started my search by repetition method to show its limits in our country. In fact, the main step of our students' learning English as a foreign language is the repetition. But this repetition method, as pointed out by Gertrude MOSKOWITZ (1976) " poured the content of teaching into the student. Many children find this approach boring as it considers them like containers who primary function and hold subject matters" (P.12).

Students are given English words to memorize instead of using words to interact or to converse in a real situation. Underlining the same idea, MOSKOWITZ (1976) states: “As a consequence of this state of affairs, students become poor English language performers” (p.10)

I share this point of view in the sense that the repetition method is not a top priority in this work. But I suggest it at the second stage of the target language learning. Indeed before an infant starts speaking the mother tongue, he/she may first listen to the persons around him/ her; then reacts to orders and imitates them by repeating what they usually say.

2-1-2- Total Physical Response for newcomers

Total Physical Response (TPR) was developed by James ASHER (1982) his book entitled: learning another language through actions: the complete teachers guidebook. This method was designed primarily for students in early stages of language acquisition. Since orders can be made comprehensible to students with very limited language, ASHER used orders as the basis for TPR. Teacher or a proficient student gives an order, demonstrates the order, and then students respond physically to the order.

This work takes Asher’s method of language acquisition into account. Indeed, as far as our beginner learners are concerned, focus must be on the message and the meaning. When they are submitted to TPR, they will actively be involved and not be expected to repeat the order. Anxiety is low, and students’ focus is on comprehension rather than production. Hence, they demonstrate comprehension before their speaking skills emerge. They will speak only when they feel ready to do it. In the same context, Krashen (1982) reported that Kusudo and De la Torse (1974) had described the method in the following terms:

“The first few months (45hours in this case) would consist of 70% listening comprehension (obeying commands), 20% speaking and 10% reading and writing” (p40).

This method focuses more listening comprehension and speaking (90%) than on reading and writing (10%).

In short, TPR is more concerned with the understanding of what is being said the command that is being given to the learners. It helps the teachers to know whether or not the student understands messages. In the Benin context, the implementation of this method can be convenient for our classroom teaching.

3-1-3 Natural method

The Natural Method late (1970s-early 1980s) was created by Tracy TERREL at University of California at Irvine for foreign language instruction. According to his method, the teacher should only speak the target language. But students may use both their first language and the target language, and their errors should not be corrected as long as they do not seriously impede communication.

I do not neglect the natural method in my work. This method may go through the whole stages of language learning. For this to be achieved English teachers may use, realize pictures and students' previous knowledge to make their speech understandable. However, TPR and natural method cannot effectively enable the students to progress quickly in the target language learning because of their principle of delaying oral practice. In this context, Postovsky VALERIAN (1970) states that it is generally believed that the initial phase of instruction in foreign language should be based on intensive oral practice. For him, the more vocally active the student is from the beginning, the faster it is assumed, and he learns the foreign language. In this work I think, emphasis must also be put on the learners' oral practice while the teacher

devotes himself to speak only the target language. Anyway, a desired linguistic immersion is necessary to prepare students for oral practice.

2-2 Importance of English language immersion

In the words of GATTEGNO (1972): “only when one is really [.....] soaked in the environment of the people using the language can one express oneself in speech or writing as a native would. It is spirit of a language that has to get hold of one’s mind and dictate the expressions that sound right and fully convey the meaning to native listener or readers”(p125). To a large extent, I agree with GATTEGNO’s analysis of the situation. Considering Benin setting, English teachers are the sole environment of the students, except some rare Nigerians and Ghanaians using the language in the environment in which students are soaked. As reported by Blair 1982 , Nida also addresses the issue; he speaks of “passive listening” as the first step in language learning process. In his opinion, people learn a language by, first listening carefully to the “ tone of the voice”, the “strange sounds”, the “similar sounds”, the “words and phrases”, and “grammatical forms”. He refers to this passive listening period as the period during which we make no conscious effort of memorization, drilling.... Etc, to master the language. He states that during this time our brain is not so much passive as expected. It is intensively active “registering” noises, smells and sights, even when we seem to have directed our attention to something else or are sleeping, Nida adds. He thinks it is the way children and many Africans acquire the numerous languages they speak.

In much the same way, Oller (1963) states: “we believe that language on the useful, everyday level is situational and sequential and that the moment a student can react automatically.... To given situation identified with own experience, he ‘ knows” the foreign language used in that situation. The prosper procedure then is to immerse the student in the world in which this

language is used, a world inhabited by people about whom he knows and cares. This sharing of everyday experience with people of foreign tongue creates the climate of sympathy necessary and establishes the sine qua non condition for the teaching of the language, the desire of students to learn to communicate with people of that language'' (p IX).

Clearly, as far as Beninese learners are concerned, I think that the lack of exposure to the target language is source of problems impeding communication to EFL learners at any level of study. Underlining this state of affairs, Kang Shumin (1997) states '' due to minimal exposure to the target language and contact with native speakers, adult EFL learners in general are relatively poor at spoken English especially regarding fluency.'' P.8. Through the above-mentioned, we can understand that in addition to the formal learning in classroom, language students have to be immersed I a flow of speech in an environment where English is the official language used for daily interactions. When such an immersion lacks, learners cannot achieve a perfect oral proficiency. That is the reason why I also put a particular emphasis on the immersion taking into account our country's position in the sub-region. Benin is not far from Nigeria and Ghana both English speaking countries. But this will be possible if our educational authorities are willing to uphold the innovation. Otherwise, the great role comes back to the English teachers who must do their best to immerse their learners in the target language from the very beginning stage of learning.

For Krashen(1986) ''you have to live in the country in order to achieve any real proficiency in a second language and that the informal real world environment is always superior to the classroom, or formal environment. The informal environment is not always willing to supply comprehensible input in the older second language student. As Hacth and her colleagues have pointed out, input in the adult is more complicated grammatically, contains a wider

range of vocabulary, deals with more complex topics, and is generally harder understand''(p.58) . This means that a stay in English speaking countries is necessary in so far as it will give the opportunity to develop their oral skills as well as their receptive competence. On the other hand, Krashen (1986) says that: " our responsibility goes beyond the classroom.... Our task is to provide students with the tools they need to continue without us. We need to provide enough input so that they can gain the linguistic competence necessary to begin to take advantage of the informal environment, the outside world" (p.76). we understand through this statement that teachers' task is to help students practice what they have learnt once they are outside the classroom. They are expected back to testify in the outside world, the importance of what they have been taught. If learners are immersed from time to time in streams of communication in the target language, they will, as Brown (1980) puts it "acquire stylistic adaptability in order to be able to encode and decode the discourse around them correctly" (p 238).

But according to me, as the possibility for immersion is lacking, English teachers have to avoid the use of French in class in order to increase their students' chance to express themselves in English. Hence, as mentioned earlier, it is necessary to use Natural Method from the very beginning stage of English learning. From the start, students are free to use the mother tongue for meaning negotiation. In the end, learners will unconsciously be obliged to give up French the mother tongue to negotiate meaning in English.

2-3- Students' involvement in learning process

For a real communication to take place later, English teachers who are the most important resource of beginner learners, have to manage for interactive participation of the class, to define objective and to motivate learning while improving the techniques of oral communication.

2-3-1 Interactions in language class

River (1987) affirms that the primary function of the interaction is to maintain social relationship. For this author, being able to interact in language is essential. Therefore, language instructors should provide learners with opportunities for meaningful communication behaviours about relevant topics by using learner-learner interactions as the key to teaching for communication purposes, because communication derives from interactions. I share Rivers' point of view, that is, to maintain social relationship as it urges students to work in group. In fact, group work is the best setting for students to interact and share ideas or practice dialogues. But in my research work, interaction will work well only in the second stage of study as far as the beginner learners are concerned.

Littlewoods (1981) presents the communication approach as an approach where students work in pairs or in groups, using available language resources in problem solving tasks. He also claims that language is required through communication. Like some other authors, Littlewoods reject the way language is taught at school, through unrealistic situations where students are not involved in the learning process. In this book entitled Communication language teaching, Littlewoods tries to convince the reader that only the communication approach is worthwhile to make students acquire spoken language. Since language is fundamentally communicative, this work takes into account Littlewood's point of view, that is, language is acquired through communication. According to me during the systematic oral activities, pair work and group work have to be set up to give students the opportunity to use English in private face-to-face interaction and help them to get used to real oral communication.

Underwood (1980) talks about harmonious class organization, the teacher's roles, how to organize group and pair works more effectively in the classroom, and the seats arrangement. This scholar shows that students in a

given disposition are able to learn faster and better than in another one. So some dispositions are favourable for learning. My interest is focus on the conditions for learning to take place well and on the role of the teacher dealing with his/ her class. The students' disposition in back –to-back can help learning to take place, but the face-to-face position or small groups dispositions can favour learning better.

2-3-2 Motivation and classroom management

The signs of positive motivation are numerous and varied, but it is fairly easy to recognize when a group of students is well motivated.

For the psychologist Hebb (1928): “ It is motivation that initiates behavior, directs it and is also responsible for its cessation....” (P, 22). If students are motivated, there is a good chance that they will learn the language they are studying and which we are attempting to teach them. But if students are not motivated, learning and teaching will be an uphill struggle and the result are likely to be disappointing, for our students and for teachers too

In the same way, Feilicien Baloto (1993) states: “If motivation is present, learning can be facilitated, but without it , learning becomes difficult”(P31). This means that motivation is the basis of learning, and this is true with young learners as well as with adult learners. Indeed, motivation pays. It pays in the short term, within the framework of a given course or study programme; it also pay in the long term with respect to the number of people who initiate or pursue language learning. Motivation is, therefore, a concern both practicing language teachers, and also, for many educational and political bodies which are concerned with promoting the learning of a language

According to Oxford (1990) : “ the affective of the learner is probably one of the most important influences on language learning success or failure” (p140). Through this statement, we can understand that affective factors play a key role

in language learning. Those factors have to do with learners' personality and motivation. So, far learning to be effective teachers have to be flexible. They have also to make their class lively and comfortable in order to keep their learners' affective filter low.

In much same way, Cross 1992 urges that, in real life we should not react to errors which do not interfere with the comprehension of message, but we should react to "global" errors, that is, those impede the comprehension of the message, simply because they create gaps in the ongoing conversation. If we are engaged, in activities which aim at developing speaking skill, we must choose not to respond to specific errors at all, or at least immediately. Otherwise, we will cause frustrations and bring students not to react and participate in the activity.

After all, when students go out into the "real" world, they will want to say what they mean. However, talking out the personal investment factors can help students first become more confident in using English. Once this confidence is gained, students especially timid students-will be self-assured when expressing their own point of view. Another way to settle motivation for language learning in the beginner learners' class is through games.

2-3-3 Games in language class

According to Amato (1988), the youth as well as adult learn better when playing games, for they can lower anxiety, thus, make the acquisition of the input easier. He states: "In the easy-related atmosphere which is created by using games, students remember things faster and better" p.35. As far as beginner learners are concerned, games are very important. That is why I put a particular emphasis on them in my work. Amato believes games to be a good way of practicing language; for they provide a model of what learners will use the language for in real life. Games encourage, entertain, teach and promote fluency.

Similarly, Lee Su Kim (1995) argues : “ Games are welcome break from the usual routine of the language class, motivating and challenging; games help students to make and sustain the effort of learning, provide language practice in the various skills –speaking, writing, listening and reading- encourage students to interact and communicate, and create a meaningful context for language use” p. 35. This author’s view about game contribution to the language class can be truly profitable to beginner learners and can be implemented in the English language class to promote fluency later. I think such games will be helpful to all learners in general and beginner learners in particular; for they can incite the poor students. They will motivate learners during the learning process and them to take an active part in classroom activities.

After having gone through some different ideas related to speaking skill developed by some key authors, we carried out an investigation through the research methodology in the next chapter.

2-3-4 Group Works

Group work seems to be an extremely attractive idea for a number of reasons. Just as in pair work ,we can mention increase in the amount of students talking time and we place emphasis on the opportunities it gives students really to use language to communicate with each other. When all the students in a group are working together to produce, for example an advertisement, they will be communicating with each other and more importantly co-operating among themselves. Students will be teaching and learning in the group exhibiting a degree of self-reliance that simply is not possible when the teacher is acting as a controller.

In some ways group work is more dynamic than pair work: there are more people to react with and against in the group and therefore a greater possibility of discussion. There is a greater chance that at least one number of the group

will be able to solve a problem when it arises, and working in group is potentially more relaxing than working in pairs, for the latter puts a greater demand on the student's ability to co-operate closely with only one other person. It is also true to say that group work tasks can often be more exciting and dynamic than some pair works and individual tasks. Of course the worries that apply to pair work (like the use of the students' native language, noise and indiscipline) apply equally to group work: the problems is not insuperable, though, and the solutions will be the same as those fair pair work. Once again the biggest problems are one of selection of group members. Some teachers use what is called a sociogram where, for example, students are asked to write down the name of the student in the class they like to have them if they were stranded on a desert island. This technique certainly tells the teacher who the popular and unpopular students are, but will not help to form groups of equal sizes since popularity is not shared round a class. At the beginning of a course a sociogram will anyway not be appropriate since students will often not know each other. A lot of teachers form group where weak strong students are mixed together. This is often a good thing for the weak students (although there is a danger that they will be overpowered by the strongest ones and will thus not participate) and probably does not hinder the stronger students from getting the maximum benefit from the activity. Sometimes, however, it is probably a good idea to make group of strong students and groups of weaker students.

The teacher can then give the group different tasks to perform. It is worth pointing out here that one of the major possibilities offered by group work is just this fact: that there are students of different levels and interest in the class, different groups can be formed so that not all the students are necessarily working on the same material at the same time. Group size is also slightly problematical: in general it is probably safe to say that seven students tend to be less than totally appropriate since the amount of students participation obviously

falls and the organization of the group itself may start to disintegrate. But this is not always the case and a lot depends on the activity being performed. Where decisions have to be taken as a result of the activity it is probably a good idea to have an odd number in each group since in that way a split decision is impossible. In more general tasks the necessity for odd number in the group is obviously not so great.

A major possibility for group work is idea of flexible group. Here students start in set groups, and as an activity progresses the group split up and re-reform; or they join together until the class is fully re-reformed. Group works offers enormous potential. It can be used for oral work, tasks where decision have to be taken, joint reading tasks, listening tasks, co-operative writing and many other things; it also has the great advantage of allowing different groups of students to do things in the same classroom.

CHAPTER THREE:
METHODOLOGY

This research work is based on both approach: qualitative and quantitative .Most of materials used for this research are from internet .Our method is based on the data collection and data analysis .Sometimes, it happens that we go to some services especially the library of ENS, where we have seen very useful information that helps us for deeper analysis of the different parts of this work. These methods provide an opportunity to analyze the available information in order to look into the various perspectives and to evaluate the impact of Competency Based Approach on speaking in EFL Beginners classes. We have also had the opportunity to discuss with those teachers who have experiences in this domain.

The qualitative approach aims at collecting and analyzing data from internet and libraries on the basis of different interpretation that will help us to generate new result from this analysis. This method which is used in different studies on speaking subjects is an important element of the research,

Besides, many materials ranging from reports reviews, interviews articles, novel and play audio and video tracks are also helpful in carrying out this work.

3-1 Research design.

3-1-1 Research setting

This study has been conducted mainly in Lycee BEHANZIN where I attended my practical training. Most of the investigation involves teachers and students of this school. Lycee BEHANZIN which was called Lycee Victor Ballot is a public secondary school located in the third district of Porto-Novo in Djassin Daho and this secondary school was created in February 1913. This school is led by a headmaster and has 21 agents in the administration. Lycee BEHANZIN has a Junior Secondary School (JSS) and a Senior

Secondary School (SSS). It is one of the largest public secondary schools in Porto-Novo.

3-1-2 Research population

No study can be relevant if it is not carried out with a specific sample of population. Therefore, this investigation has been focused on students and teachers of Lycée BEHANZIN. They have been chosen as the main actors in the process of teaching and learning of English as a foreign language. Students concerned by this study are mainly from the first form to the second form of secondary school.

❖ Learners

Students have been selected in this study mainly because they represent the particular subjects concerned by the issue of the impacts of Competence Based Approach.

50 students have been addressed through questionnaire, in this course research work. However, it has possible to process the data collected from 44 among them.

❖ Teachers

Teachers in the educational system, are important participants who are pointed at as far as most of the time, the responsibility of students' failure or success is concerned. Their study population numbers 35 EFL teachers. Since it has not been possible to find out of this number in Lycée BEHANZIN, this investigation has been conducted in other schools as well. I went to a place where teachers were correcting the papers of BEPC exam to make the questionnaires filled. In total 35 Questionnaires have been distributed and only 26 have been filled.

3-1-3 Research Instruments.

The data collection of this study has been possible through two main types of investigation that is the questionnaires and the interview.

❖ QUESTIONNAIRES

The questionnaire has been an essential way of data collection during this study. As a matter of fact two questionnaires have been used in the procedure of investigation. The first one is composed of (7) questions addressed to teachers. The question focus on their perception of competency based approach in teaching and the improvement of students speaking skills. This question will help us answer the first question which is: how do teachers perceive the teaching of communication skills in classroom?

The second one consists of (3) questions which are addressed to students of junior secondary school particularly those in they focus students' appreciation of English language, their experiences concerning Competency Based Approach methods of work, particularly a group work. They also focus students' perception about the subject and their interest in English language speaking. This will help us answer the second question.

❖ THE INTERVIEW

As the second most important tool of data collection for this study, interviews have allowed the gathering of information from qualified and experienced EFL teachers chosen at random. The interview is composed of 5 open ended questions which focus on the contribution of Competency Based Approach methods in teaching English as a Foreign Language. It particularly focus on the development of students' speaking skills and the realities that teachers can face. This tool helped me to have strong elements to answer

the research question 1.

❖ CLASS OBSERVATION

The class observation has been done in Lycee BEHANZIN in form1 .This observation covered a period of two months during which I followed the teacher carrying out speaking lessons done with the textbook. What have been noticed was that the students hardly understand the speech because of the strategy which has been adopted. The teacher was sometimes tempted to translate the instruction in French. The behavior which has been observed during this experience is that the students were not really interested in the classes, thus the goal which was to make students speak the English language was not reached to some extent. The difficulties encountered by teachers will be described in the analysis of the data collected.

CHAPTER FOUR:

THE FINDINGS OF THERESEARCH

Through questionnaires and interviews we have been able to collect data that allow us to know what is going on in our schools and the opinions of both teachers and students about the Competency Based Approach in teaching speaking. Under this headline we are going to present the data collected and their analyses. Samples of the questionnaires.

4-1- Data presentation and analysis

4-1-1 questionnaires addressed to teachers

Answers have been received from 26 teachers. The first addressed to EFL teachers required them to specify the forms in which they teach in so far as this study is mainly focused in methods of Competency Based Approach in form 1 and form 2. All the teachers who have been questioned follow this criterion.

Question 2: Do your students speak easily English and participate actively during your lessons?

Responses	Respondents	Percentage
Students always participate	0	0%
Students often participate	06	23,07%
Students sometimes participate	20	76,92%
Students never participate	0	0%

Table1:studentsparticipation in English class

From this first table, we can notice that the majority of teachers have stated that their students sometimes participate in English class. The others who have chosen "often" as the frequency of their students' participation represent the minority .None have chosen "always" or "never".

Question 3: do you do group work with your students?

Frequency of group work	Respondents	Percentage
Always do group work	21	80,76%
Often do group work	0	0%
Sometimes do group work	5	19,23%
Never do group work	0	0%

Table 2 frequency of method used by the teachers

The table show that most of teachers used a group work to teach English to the beginner learners (80,76). Just (19, 23) sometimes do.

Question 4: what kind of group do you formed?

Kind of group	Respondents	percentage
Gender group	04	15,38%
Mixed group	22	84,61%
Social group	00	00

Table 3 kind of group formed by the teachers

As mentioned in the preceding table, just 5 of the (26) teachers (19,23%) don't always do group work ,in the present table we notice that (84,61%) of the teachers put student in mixed group

Question 5: group works are important for teaching speaking EFL

Importance of group work	Respondents	Percentage
yes	26	100%
no	0	00%

Table 4: importance of group works on teaching speaking in EFL

Concerning this fifth question all the teachers (100) have considered that group works are important for teaching speaking in EFL.

Question 6: why do you think group work is important?

Reason for importance of group work	Respondents	Percentage
Students feel themselves in family	05	19,23%
Students are not afraid to speak when they are in group	10	38,46%
Students react better in group	11	42,30%

Table 5: reasons for group work

As shown by the table, among the reasons given by teachers to sustain the importance of group work, the teachers at (19,23) think that students feel themselves in family,(38,46) considered that students are not afraid to speak when they are in group and (42,30) state that students react better in the group.

Question 7:what problems can teachers face during speaking activities?

Problems about group work	Respondents	Percentage
Classroom problems	03	11,53
Discipline problems	15	57,69
Insufficiency of time	08	30,76

Table 6 problems about group work.

Taking into account the field problems that teachers can face during speaking class, 11,53 have chosen classroom management problems,57,69 think about discipline problems, while 30,76 allude the insufficiency of time.

Questionnaire addressed to students

44 questionnaires out of 50 have been collected from students

Question1 : do you like the English language?

Students' appreciation of the English language	Respondents	percentage
I like English	44	100%
I dislike	00	00%
Reasons	Because English is one the most spoken language Because I would like to speak many languages Because I would like to study abroad	

Table 7 : students' appreciation of the English language

Among the 44 beginner students investigated, all of them affirm that they like English. The reasons they give for this appreciation for English is that English language is the most spoken in the world; they would like to speak many languages.

Question 2 : do you like when your English teacher put you in group for speaking lessons?

Students interests of group work	Respondents	Percentage
I like my when my teachers put us in group	44	100%
I don't like my teacher put us in group	00	00%
Reasons	The class is interesting We don't be bored We assimilate easily	

Table 8:students interestsin group work by their teachers.

When they are asked if they like when their teachers puts them in the group, all of them say "yes". As for their reason, they have interesting and relaxed class, pleasurable lessons, no boredom and good assimilation.

Question 3 do you speak English somewhere else?

Students speaking English after school	Respondents	percentage
I speak English after classes	05	11,36
I don't speak English after classes	39	88,63
Places	At home, in market, in town	

Table 9: students 'speaking English after school.

When referring to if they speak English somewhere apart from school, it is noticed that the majority of these students are not in this practice. 88,63% of them don't speak .Only 11,63 of them affirm to speak English in the town.

4-1-3 the interview

This research instrument is the second I used in this study. It has been addressed to teachers of English and was made 5 questions which are:

- 1- How do you view the teaching of communication skills in English as a foreign language?
- 2- According to you which skill can be effectively improved through group work and why?

3-What can be the contribution of teachers for the effectively speaking class in English as a foreign language teaching?

4-How can teacher foster students' speaking skill through the use of Competency Based Approach method?

5-Which realities teachers face when they put students in group during speaking activities?

These questions above allowed us to talk openly to teachers in order to have their opinion. I have interviewed 5 teachers and all of them said that it is very important to teach communicative skills to students. But they sustain that focus must be on the motivation in the beginner learners' class. For all of them, motivation must be in the Centre of the whole speaking activities. Then, they have suggested that games and songs are two means of motivation used at the beginning, during and at the end of the speaking. As far as problems that can be faced are concerned they sorted out some difficulties that are: the number of hours allocated to English language learning in secondary schools are insufficient. It is inadequate that teachers, willingly, cannot reach their teaching goals. In fact, this number of hours is not adapted to the effective acquisition of spoken English in our schools. A language cannot really be learnt in four hours per week.

4-2 Discussion of the findings

In the light of these data it is first noticed that most of teachers in English as a foreign language consider the use of Competency Based Approach methods as essential for effective English language teaching. Most particularly, for the improvement of speaking skills, the investigated teachers assure that Competency Based Approach methods are very efficient to reach such goal in EFL classes. Additionally as these methods arouse students' interest in the activities they would become eager to participate and thus increase their speaking habits. Through their frequent participation in speaking activities, students will be developing several skills such as good and appropriate

pronunciation since they would be listening to native speakers' speech; and therefore they would be trying to acquire the right language used. This contact with natives' conversation in real life situations is also a good way to arouse their awareness about the culture of the people whose language they are learning. This actually represents one of essential strategies since these students who are beginners would develop concrete linguistic and background in the target language. The use of these methods is obviously one of the best techniques in teaching English as a foreign language.

CHAPTER FIVE:
RECOMMENDATION, SUGGESTIONS AND
CONCLUSION

After identifying some problems of Competency Based Approach on speaking in EFL beginners classes, I have to seek corrective solutions for proper implementation. Indeed, in order to give our beginner learners an opportunity of success, useful perspectives and attainable prospects are proposed to all partners of education with a view to remedying the issue under consideration. In the way, appeals are made to improve teaching /learning and evaluation process of English as a foreign language in our country, with particular emphasis on linguistic immersion for teachers and learners.

5-1 Recommendations

I would like Beninese students to be acquainted with the basic structure of English language and to practice speaking from the very beginning stage of learning. I make appeals to the government to improve the teachers' working condition by constructing teacher's training schools and laboratories throughout the country, by endowing each school with sufficient and adapted materials, and by organizing excursions for teachers and students to English speaking countries.

5-1-1 Teacher recruitment and training

Having a sufficient number of qualified English teachers is necessary to develop the students speaking skill. But in most of the target secondary schools, I witness, there is a cruel lack of qualified English teachers. To solve this problem, we do not need to go abroad to search for native English speakers. It is possible to find all the necessary teachers in our country; for the majority of the job seekers have studied English at University for three or more years. In this respect, I would like the government to organize a test in order to recruit English teachers in the rank of the above mentioned job-seekers. And to select the

potential teachers, emphasis must be not only on a written test, but also on oral test in English.

5-1-2 classroom within schools' environment

To facilitate English teachers efforts in teaching and help students learn easily English as a foreign language, the government should build English language laboratories. These laboratories must be well equipped with tools so that learners can listen to pre- recorded English cassettes till right pronunciation is acquired. It is true that the language laboratory is not common here in Benin. Nevertheless, its existence can help each English teacher or school administration to be able to afford one tap-recorder for executing EFL courses.

5-1-3 excursions to English speaking countries

Here recommendations are made in direction of parents and government about the excursions organization jointly financed by government and parents. But the contribution of their parents will oblige them and motivate them.

Due to the great number of students in classrooms, it will be groundless to recommend excursions for all. The English teacher can submit the names of some poor students of the case to attend the program. One may argue that not all students have the interest of English at heart. But that opportunity can be used to trigger off their love for English. Part of days they spend during different holidays can be devoted to it.

Besides, there exists between Benin and Nigeria healthy and friendly links sealed by many partnership agreements. Willing to maintain the existing ones, government should activate them a new dimension. A new frame of talks should be initiated with Ghana or any other English speaking country, so

as to serve the same purpose. The aim is to enable students at any stage of English learning and unqualified teachers to experience it at all costs.

5-2 Suggestions

5-2 Suggestions to students' parents

For the success of every child in the field of education, parents have to play an active role. During my investigation, some teachers complain that students do not have the students' book which they should use in class. In this case, parents have to buy the required books for their children.

Parents should help teachers' in following up of their children at home. Parents should pay the school fees in time in order to avoid expelling their children from classes. Also, parents should provide all essential things their children may need for to school.

5-3 To EFL teachers

It is important that teachers know they cannot always wait for the government in order to be trained. They have to learn by themselves and internet is a source of large knowledge that they can apply in order to upgrade their teaching because as I said language is evaluate every day. They also have to include visuals aids in their teaching even if the ones provided in the textbooks are not often clear enough to make students be interested. It is a challenge for the teacher to find and prepare his/her own teaching materials in order to be more efficient. Teachers should also:

- Give the opportunity to students to speak English
- Reduce their talking time during speaking activities
- Avoid over corrections

-Provide a safe environment and make sure all the learners are attending lessons by circulating in the classroom to see whether the learners who are seating behind can correctly see the picture in front.

-Provide the necessary glossary so that students do not get lost while -or hearing a new word.

-Detect students who have difficulties and find a way to help them be at the same level as the other students.

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

Speaking is a very important part of a second language learning. The ability to communicate in a second language clearly and efficiently contributes to the success in the learner's life. Therefore it is essential that language teachers' pay great attention to teaching speaking.

Rather than lead students to pure memorization, providing a rich environment where meaningful communication takes place is desired. With this aim, various speaking activities such as those listed in this document can help teachers of English achieve their goal after bettering their classes planning. These activities make students more active in the learning process and at the same time make their learning more meaningful and fun for them.

Students in their majority attend English class to have good grades to pass in the upper classes. They do not dare practice English regularly because they are in a French country environment; they are ashamed of speaking practice and therefore neglect the language. Those are not the only reason that explains the inability of the oral communicative knowledge of students. Our investigation has revealed that most of the English teachers do not propose to their students the relevant activities which develop students' oral skills.

As for the English teachers, they should master group work techniques by being the most important resources, participants and organizers. They should also be seen as guides and facilitators. In the same way, English teachers need to negotiate with the learners why it is for them good to use English in class and outside the class. It is important to gain their trust and commitment. They need to use English in class and outside the class because they see value in doing so.

Definitely, the different techniques have suggested attempts to overcome, in future, some culture-specific constraints affecting communicative competence

such as teachers and students uncritical acceptance of teachers' lecture content. I believe the techniques of Competence Based Approach create opportunities for beginner learners to communicate using a variety of strategies , motivate them to become gradually responsible for their own learning, and enhance not only their interest in the spoken English, but also their speaking skills.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

I-Books

Amato, R(1985). *Interactions in Second Language Classroom.From theory to practice*. New York: Longman

Brown, H.D. (1980). *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J. Prentise Hall International .

Cross, D. (1992). *A Practical Handbook of Language Teaching*: London Prentice Hall International

Gattegno, C.(1972). *Teaching foreign language in school: The silent way*.In.Hertfordshire : Hall International.

Hebbs,D.(1992)."Classroom connections. In windows of the Classroom".*In English Teaching Forum* 37 (4) 22.

James, A.1982. *Learning Another Language Trough Actions : The complete teachers' guidebook*. Adapted by Jeanette Gordon Gordon. Illinois Resource Center

Krashen, S. D.(2003). *Exploration in Language Acquisition and Use*. Portsmouth : NH : Heinemann

Littlewood, w.(1981). *Communicative Language Teaching*.An instructionCambridge University Press.

Oxford, R. L.(1990) . *Language Learning Strategies : What every teacher should know*. New York: Newbury House Publisher.

Rivers, W.M, (1987). *Interactive Language Teaching* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Shumin , K. (1997). "Factors to consider: Developing adult EFL students speaking abilities"*In English Teaching Forum*.35 (3) 8-13

Underwood, M. (1980).*Effective Class Management : Key to Language Teaching Harlow* Longman

II- Articles

Baloto, F. 1991" *The impact of socio cultural environment in the teaching and learning of English in secondary , in Brazzaville*": English Teaching and Forum. 34(I) : 31

Krashen, S. D.& T. Terrell (1993). *The natural approach in Nunan, D. Language Teaching Methodology*.Hertfordshire: Prentice Hall International

Lee, S.K. (1995) "Creative games for the language class".*In English Teaching Forum* 33() 35-36

APPENDICES

Appendix1 : questionnaire addressed to teachers

Dear colleagues I'm a student at ENS. This is a questionnaire designed to know your perception about teaching communicative skills to students. Please be as truthful as possible. Your identity is not needed so don't disclose it. Your answers will be anonymously exploited. Thanks for your collaboration.

1- In which form do you teach?

6^{ème} 5^{ème} 4^{ème} 3^{ème}

2- Do your students speak easily English and participate actively? during your lessons?

Always Often Sometimes Never

3- Do you do group work with your students?

Always Sometimes Often Never

4- Which kind of group do you formed?

Gender Mixed Social

5- Group works are important for teaching speaking in EFL?

Yes No

6-Why do you think that group work is important?

Give the reasons

7- What problems can teachers face during speaking classes?

.....
.....

Appendix2 : Questionnaire addressed to students

Here are some questions designed for a research in order to improve the acquisition of speaking skills in students. Your identify is not needed; so be confident while answering. Thank you for your participation.

1-. Do you like English language ?Yes No

Justify your answer
.....
.....

Do you speak and participate actively in English class?

Always often Sometimes never

What are your motivations.....
.....
.....

2- Do you like when your English teacher put you in group?

Yes No

Give the reasons ;.....
.....
.....

3-Do you speak English language somewhere else?

Always often sometimes never

Where and in which circumstances do you speak English?
.....
.....
.....

Appendix3 : interview for teachers

Interview

Dear teachers, these question are designed in the framework of the research work entitled “Impacts of Competency Based Approach on speaking in EFL beginners classes the case study of Lycée BEHANZIN’”. Your identity is not needed do feel free to give your opinion. Thanks for your participation.

How do you view the teaching of communication skills in English as a foreign language?

- 1- According to you, which skills can effectively improve group work and why?
- 2- What can be the contribution of teachers for the effective use of Competency Based Approach in English as a foreign language teaching?
- 3- How can the teachers foster students’ speaking skills through the use of the Competency Based Approach methods?
- 4- Which realities can teachers face when they put students in group in our country?