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**Exploring Out-of-class Learning Strategies Used by EFL Learners to Develop Their
Oral Proficiency: The Case of Third-year EFL Classes at the University of Mohamed
Seddik Ben Yahia, Jijel**

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Declaration

We hereby declare that the substance of this dissertation is entirely the result of my investigation and that due reference or acknowledgement is made, whenever necessary, to the work of other researchers.

We are duly informed that any person practicing plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary sanctions issued by university authorities under the rules and regulations in force.

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Dedication

Karim's dedication:

I dedicate this work to:

My best friend whom I consider a brother, and to whom, I am forever grateful for being by my side, every step of the way. My family, especially my mother who is the reason I am where I am today. I dedicate this work to my teachers, who have supported me throughout the five years that I have spent in the University of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia. This work is generally dedicated to all students of English, and to anyone who has helped me one way or another.

Yousef's dedication:

I dedicate this work to:

My beloved mother, who raised me, supported me, and encouraged throughout all my years in school. I dedicate this work to my younger brothers, and sister, to my grandmother and grandfather, to all my friends, who were there for me and to all my teachers and classmates.

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Abstract

Regarding the importance of developing speaking and listening skills when learning and mastering English, this work attempts to explore the use of out-of-class learning strategies by Algerian university EFL learners, and to determine how effective those strategies are concerning the development of speaking and listening skills. This work is divided into two main chapters. The first chapter focuses on a review of the related literature that identifies some commonly used out-of-class learning strategies by EFL learners from different parts of the world, while the second chapter is more focused, and it is concerned with exploring out-of-class strategies that are used by EFL learners in an Algerian university to develop oral proficiency. In order to investigate this research topic, a questionnaire and a semi-structured follow-up interview were designed and implemented with third-year EFL learners at Mohamed Saddik Ben Yahia University, Jijel. Fifty participants answered the questionnaire and twenty more participated in the interviews. The findings show that the most frequently used out-of-class strategies to develop oral proficiency are listening to music, watching films, reading various types of materials, using the internet, using smartphones, using Facebook and playing online video games. However, some of them are not as frequently used as others, specifically, playing online games which are noticed to be rarely used by Algerian university EFL learners as an out-of-class strategy to develop their oral proficiency. The results also show that most of these strategies are effective and have helped some of the participants to enhance to a certain degree their oral proficiency. Based on the findings of the study, it can be deducted that some very useful out-of-class learning strategies are neglected by EFL learners and are rarely used. It is highly recommended that, EFL learners who try to enhance their oral fluency and proficiency in English use various strategies to address their weaknesses and use t

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List of Abbreviations

CALL: Computer-Assisted Language Learning

CC: Communicative Competence

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ICC: Intercultural Communicative Competence

IH: Interaction Theory

NA: The Natural Approach

OCLLS: Out-of-class Language Learning Strategies

PLE: A Personal Learning Environment

SCT: Socio-cultural Theory

SNS: Social Networking Sites

Introduction

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Introduction

1. Overview

Language learning can be a challenging and exciting task, especially for those who learn a language that is different from their mother tongue in terms of syntax and morphology. Education is not something to keep in a box, even when the box is classroom-shaped. In the past, the focus was mainly on the written form of the language, oral skills were somewhat neglected. This does not mean that these skills are completely ignored by teachers in the classroom; in fact, they always try to develop them implicitly in their lessons. They use different techniques to try and improve their learners' vocabulary, pronunciation, and accents. However, classroom oral activities may not be enough which is why using out-of-class strategies are very important for every EFL learner.

Teachers try to urge their learners to use the language outside the classroom in order to improve their oral skills by themselves since the world outside the classroom is very enriching. Learning a foreign language can take place practically anywhere thanks to multimedia which plays an important role in their life like movies, social media, online news, the use of smartphones etc... If the learners only focus on classroom activities, they may not be able to think outside the box which in this case is the classroom.

Learners may face some difficulties when they try to speak English both inside, and outside the classroom. When the teacher is present, they can assist them, however, on their own, some factors prevent them from working hard on their skills when they find themselves using English outside a formal setting i.e. the classroom.

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Out-of-class learning is innovative and goes beyond the traditional teacher-centered learning. It also provides a useful way to combine out-of-class learning activities and in-class teaching and learning. According to Xiao & Luo (2009), out-of-class learning activities aim to provide learners with a more natural and genuine linguistic environment in which they can practice what they have learned in class. Out-of-class English learning activities also provide more opportunities for learners to develop their autonomous learning abilities and become dependent on their selves and take charge of their own learning i.e. shifting the focus from teacher-centred to learner-centred language learning (Xiao & Luo, 2009). Once students take charge of their own learning, make appropriate learning plans, and begin to learn actively, additional opportunities to improve language learning will arise and their language ability will significantly improve.

In Algeria, even though English is not the official language of the country nor is it the second language, more and more people are intrigued to acquire it for its popularity as the language of science, and for the fact that it plays the role of a lingua franca to an extent. English is a subject that is taught in Algerian schools for seven years and can be pursued as a field of study in higher education, but it is not clear to what extent do Algerian EFL learners speak English outside the classroom, or what techniques they use.

As a result, this research is being conducted to try and investigate how oral skills are developed outside the classroom without the help of a language teacher, what are the common strategies used by third-year EFL learners in an Algerian university and how effective those strategies are.

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2. Background of the Problem

Many studies were conducted concerning out-of-class strategies used by EFL learners to improve their oral proficiency and nearly all of these studies agree on the fact that it is highly important for EFL learners to seek these strategies especially since the outside world offers countless opportunities and an unlimited number of resources and materials.

Some researchers tried to define the notion of out-of-class activities or language learning such as Benson (2001) who defined, out-of-class learning, as “any kind of learning that takes place outside the classroom” and classified out-of-class learning into three categories: (a) self-instruction (i.e., students’ locating resources to help them improve the target language), (b) naturalistic language learning (i.e., students’ learning to communicate and interact with the target language group unintentionally), and (c) self-directed naturalistic language learning (i.e., students’ creating or searching out a language learning situation).

When exploring out-of-class activities of EFL learners, Pickard (1996) concluded that students mostly chose and tended to use listening and reading activities involving receptive skills and neglected productive skills.

Others attempted to study the influence of out-of-class strategies on EFL learning thus, a research was undertaken by Knight (2007) with 41 of college ESL program showed that out-of-class language learning influences language proficiency as he found a significant correlation between using the language out of class and learner proficiency in English.

Moreover, other researchers tried to identify the common strategies that the majority of EFL learners used outside the classroom to improve their English and precisely their oral proficiency like Brooks (1992) and Suh, Wasanasomsithi, Short, and Majid (1999), who

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observed that watching television, going to the cinema, listening to music and interacting with native speakers are the major out-of-class strategies students use.

In other studies, conducted by some researchers, there are many opportunities and strategies that can be used or created by EFL learners to develop their basic language skills outside of the classroom:

Spratt, Humphreys, and Chan (2002) discovered that 8 out-of-class activities adult learners engaged in are related to communication and entertainment, such as watching movies and television that is English-spoken and using the internet. Furthermore, online learning environments, such as blogs and Wikis (Kern, 2006), watching television (Brooks, 1992), reading newspapers (Hyland, 2004) although this strategy would be more beneficial to develop the learner's vocabulary, listening to music (Jourdain, 1998). Also, the media plays an important role in the improvement of EFL learners skills outside the classroom due to the constant exposure to different and various materials on a daily basis. According to Livingstone (2001), professor of social psychology, in a study she carried out titled "*Young people and new media*", "the media today operate as pervasive, yet often imperceptible, elements in the everyday cultures of children and young people" (p. 286). In the same study, she suggests that media does have a positive effect on students who study English as a second language, due to the fact that several media genres are primarily in English (p.192).

On the basis of what has been discussed above, this current study will further explore the most common strategies used by EFL learners, how effective these out-of-class strategies are for EFL learners, more specifically EFL learners who are not novice and have an intermediate level who would use these strategies as a way to mend the weaknesses they encounter inside the classroom concerning their oral proficiency.

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3. Statement of the Problem

Based on what has been stated in the background above, this study will attempt to find out if Algerian university EFL learners use some of these strategies and to explore the common strategies that are used by third-year Algerian EFL learners to improve their oral proficiency outside the classroom. It will also investigate the effectiveness of these strategies mainly because little attention has been given to out-of-class English learning precisely in Algeria and the focus of most studies has been on the best ways to teach EFL learners English for academic purposes and more precisely how to write with little interest in the spoken form of the language, marginalizing it despite its significance in language use.

4. Research Questions

It has been wrongly believed that teachers should generate most of the classroom content and present it to the learners. It has also been wrongly believed that the teacher is the centre of the language learning process and that classrooms are the only setting a foreign language like English can be learned. It is neglected that the outside world is so much richer and can provide the learners with such a significant content that they can improve their language on their own. To present the problem, the following questions are posed:

1- Do the third-year Algerian Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia university EFL learners use learning strategies outside the classroom to develop their oral proficiency?

2-What are the most common out-of-class learning strategies used by third-year Algerian Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia university EFL learners to enhance their oral proficiency?

3- To what extent are out-of-class learning strategies effective in enhancing third-year Algerian Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia EFL learners' oral proficiency?

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5. Hypothesis

The current research study is primarily based on the following assumption:

If the classroom limits language learning and development processes for third-year university Algerian EFL learners, they will seek out-of-class learning strategies to develop their oral proficiency.

6. Significance of the Study

Based on the previous research it can be deducted that learners of a foreign language and particularly English use some out-of-class learning strategies but most of these studies were conducted in countries where English is their second language and therefore It is expected that this study will at least provide two contributions to the area of oral proficiency development:

This study will identify common out-of-class learning strategies that can be helpful for EFL learners in the future. And more importantly, this study will investigate the use of out-of-class strategies by Algerian EFL learners who study English as a foreign language and at the same time it will show the importance of out-of-class language learning.

7. Research Methodology and Procedure

In order to come to a good grasp of the topic under investigation and to answer the previously asked research questions, two data collection instruments will be employed to identify the strategies used by the learners outside the classroom. Fifty questionnaires will be distributed to third-year classes. The questionnaires will include an introductory paragraph about the chosen topic, followed by general question about the participants' gender. After that, well-structured questions that are mainly closed-ended questions will be presented to the participants. These

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questions will be specific and will tackle main points on this topic and although closed-ended, some of them gives the liberty to the participants to further explain.

The second instrument used will be follow-up interviews where 20 participants will be chosen from third-year classes. These interviews will include some questions that can help clarify some points that are vaguely explained in the questionnaires.

8. Organization of the Study

The current thesis will open up with a general introduction, which will draw the way for the topic, then, two chapters will follow. The first chapter will cover two theoretical sections. The first section will take a broader look at developing oral proficiency without the help of the teacher which will include notions that are related to the topic of out-of-class language learning and will discuss major theories that focused on the relationship between society and language acquisition. The second will narrow down the lens to the commonly used strategies based on review of the related literature by EFL learners, in general, to develop their oral proficiency on their own without being in an educational setting or guided by an educator.

The second chapter will be divided into three sections: The first section will be devoted to the presentation and defence of the methodology that is to be implemented to investigate the topic at hand.

The second section, on the other hand, will present and analyse the data that are to be produced from the execution of the research design set up in the previous section, and the third and final section will attempt to interpret the major findings.

Finally, a general conclusion will sum up the major key points in the whole research process and briefly present the most significant outcomes of the study.

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9.Aims of the Study

This work aims to:

- 1.Determine whether third-year Algerian university EFL learners use some out-of-class learning strategies to develop their oral proficiency.
- 2.What are the learning strategies used by third-year Algerian university EFL learners.
- 3.How effective are these strategies in developing third-year Algerian university EFL learners' oral proficiency.

Chapter One

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Chapter One: Out-of-class Learning Strategies and Development of Oral Proficiency

Introduction

One of the major language aspects that EFL learners need to work on is oral proficiency. It is mainly concerned with the spoken form of the language and it can be defined as having the linguistic and communicative competencies to interact with other people using English via speech. When learning a foreign language, it is highly important that the learner can at least make themselves understood by others when communicating so that the message intended can be delivered smoothly.

Many studies were carried out concerning the issue of how to develop speaking skills as well as appropriate behaviours when interacting with native speakers of a foreign language.

Although language forms are mainly written and spoken, the latter is known to be older than the written form, and it should be regarded as a priority when learning the language. Since a language is a means of communication, being able to speak fluently is the key to a better communication.

English is a language of choice for many people who seek to acquire a foreign language. It has become easier to acquire it, evidently, many methods have been developed and has continued to improve constantly. It is known that in Algeria, the spoken form of the language is marginalized when teaching English and the focus is usually on grammar and vocabulary, however not completely ignored. In fact, many teachers nowadays, especially after the implementation of the competency-based method, tend to motivate their students to be proficient in English. And while they try to provide diverse materials inside the classroom, it is not enough

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for learners to be proficient; therefore, they encourage their learners to seek out-of-class strategies to enhance their oral proficiency.

Another key element in the development of oral proficiency is culture as it is known to have a huge impact on the learners' language acquisition process. When studying a foreign language, it is very necessary for learners to study the target culture as well. The societies where English is spoken are considered rich environments for EFL learners. What supports this claim is the fact that many researchers worked on theories related the acquisition of a foreign language, and social and cultural influences on language development.

Therefore, given that the present research seeks to investigate the various out-of-class strategies used by EFL learners to enhance their oral proficiency independently as well as their effectiveness. The first section is devoted to defining major concepts related to the development of oral proficiency regarding its centrality in the present study as well as generally reviewing some major approaches that support the claim that out-of-class oral proficiency development is possible using some strategies.

The first section also focuses in a way on the concept of learner autonomy since it is an influential and critical factor in this study. Additionally, it directs attention to some issues that EFL learners may face when working on their oral proficiency on their own.

The second section, however, will be concerned with the common strategies that most EFL learners use to improve their speaking outside the classroom and will review each strategy separately.

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1.1 Overview of Major Concepts Related to Out-of-class Learning Strategies

The first section of this chapter is dedicated to defining some key elements related to this topic and it is going to focus on some language acquisition approaches that support this topic. It also emphasizes an important aspect of language proficiency development which is learner's autonomy. In addition, it lists some difficulties that EFL learners face when facing the challenge of working on their English without the interference of the teacher. Finally, this section concludes with the role that EFL teachers play inside the classroom in developing their learners' ability to learn the language independently.

1.1.1 Major Notions in Out-of-class Language Learning

It is important to define and clarify some notions related to this topic so that it is easier to comprehend terms that reoccur frequently throughout the study.

1.1.1.1 A Personal Learning Environment (PLE)

It is a learner-controlled environment for language learning. More specifically, it is a combination of tools (usually digital) and resources chosen by the learner to support different aspects of the learning process. It also includes setting goals by the learner and selecting content. The importance of PLEs for teachers lies in their ability to help students develop autonomy and prepare them for lifelong learning. New technologies are making the creation of PLEs easier and their use more effective.

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1.1.1.2 Language Learning Strategy

It is a plan of action or a technique used by someone to carry out a specific task. In the field of language acquisition, it can be defined as an umbrella that oversees different techniques and initiatives used by a learner themselves to develop language proficiency.

Language Learning strategies are specific behaviours or processes that students use to enhance their own L2 learning. The word strategy comes from the ancient Greek word strategia, which means steps or actions taken for the purpose of winning a war. The warlike meaning of strategia has fortunately fallen away, but the control and goal directedness remain in the modern version of the word (Oxford, 1990).

1.1.1.3 Speaking Skill

It is a very important skill in any given language and it is the key to communicate effectively and directly. People have always depended on speaking as a medium to convey specific messages and to establish relationships and to carry out everyday tasks and it is safe to say that without speaking the world would be much different from what it is today.

It can be defined as being capable of producing speech, expressing or exchanging thoughts through the use of language. For language learners, developing appropriate speaking skills is a priority. Eckard & Kearny (1981), Florez (1999) and Howarth (2001) define speaking as a two-way process involving a true communication of ideas, information or feelings.

Attempting to elaborate more on the interactive nature of speaking, Burns and Joyce (1997) and Luoma (2004) define speaking as an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving and processing information.

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1.1.1.4 Listening Skill

Listening is a major skill in any language, and it is the ability to receive spoken messages, to listen to the target language materials and be able to understand and interpret them, and this particular skill completes speaking and facilitates the process of developing the speaking skill for EFL learners. The more the learners listen to the target language, the more they can develop their speaking. It is a term daily used without giving it much thought. Yet, listening is a vital mental capacity one of the principal ways through which we understand and take part in the world around us (Rost, 1994).

1.1.1.5 Out-of-class Learning Strategies

It refers to a group of techniques used by the learners on their own without the teacher's help outside the classroom in order to enhance and develop their language both writing and oral skills. They vary because each student has a level of creativity that allows them to come up with innovative strategies. The out-of-class learning, activity, practice, language use and learning strategy discuss similar techniques such as watching movies, reading newspapers, surfing the net, talking to friends or native speakers, listening to radio, and the list goes on. Thus, the notion of OCLLSs denotes language activities that are done outside of formal classroom. In discussing OCLLSs, a lot of studies cite research done by Pickard (1996).

1.1.1.6 Media

With the term media, we mean various forms of communication and forums such as television, digital video discs, music, the internet, magazines, and newspapers. Media is all around us every day, it has brought people closer. Media also plays a very important role in language learning and development both inside and outside the classroom. More and more

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educators are finally recognizing the importance of media in the teaching process. Vision and hearing are the two dominant senses that media technology can provide to the students and present greater opportunities for learning linguistic inputs (Linfors, 1987).

1.1.1.7 Oral proficiency

Oral proficiency is a student's ability to speak a language in real-life settings, outside of the classroom.

1.1.2 Implicit Inclusion of out-of-class Learning Strategies in Language Learning Theories

Many acclaimed researchers worked for decades to bring updates to language teaching methods to try and escape traditional and unsatisfying limitations of language teaching. Thus, teaching methods developed. Second language acquisition theories and approaches do not directly refer to out-of-class language learning strategies however, they are included implicitly in a way and they serve as a support to the claim of this study.

1.1.2.1 The Natural Approach

The Natural Approach is based on Terrell and Krashen's theories about the naturalistic principles existing in the process of teaching-learning a second language. It mainly depicts the importance of non - formal settings where learners acquire the first and second language, not paying attention to all grammatical and formal language structures. A successful classroom regarding the Natural Approach is the one that has its focus on comprehension and meaningful communication, in addition to the correct comprehensible input, making students pay attention and listen for a long period before they start producing the language. "Its greatest claim to originality lies not in the techniques it employs but in their use in a method that emphasizes

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comprehensible and meaningful practice activities, rather than the production of grammatically perfect utterance sentences" (Richards and Rodgers, 2001, p. 201).

1.1.2.1.1 The Monitor Hypothesis

The monitor hypothesis claims that when we produce utterances in a second language, the utterance is "initiated" by the acquired system (Krashen & Terrell ,1983). The idea is that with the learned knowledge that a learner already has and based on rules and structures of a given language, the learner is constantly "monitoring" their language output, providing less spontaneous and more fluent conversation. Therefore, acquired knowledge is essential for students" communicative skills".

1.1.2.1.2 The Input Hypothesis

It is evident that learners need input to learn a language. Exposure to a language, in one form or another, is necessary to learn that specific language. Krashen's Input Hypothesis expanded on this notion further; by stating that we develop language by receiving comprehensible input i.e. the input that a learner gets helps them enhance their language in different ways.

This input hypothesis states simply that we acquire (not learn) language by understanding input that is a little beyond our current level of (acquired) competence" (Krashen & Terrell, 1983, p.32). Thereby, if the input is "x", acquisition can be described as "x+1". Krashen and Terrell are keen to point out that the knowledge not yet acquired in a second language does not necessarily follow a natural order and that acquisition is not limited to a "level" immediately

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above the current level of competence. Thus, knowledge of certain areas of language can theoretically be acquired through any exposure to any L2 source.

Many forms of input are available in the language classroom and this may be enough to learn a language. However, the availability of input can be great for the EFL learner outside of the classroom. One can see this with an example of an EFL student studying in the United States and taking an hour-long English class every day. The English input they are receiving in the classroom is one hour per day, whereas, they have 23 hours per day outside of the classroom to receive English input from native speakers they interact with as well as input in the form of books, movies, TV, the Internet, and countless other forms. The input may surround the learner outside of the classroom, but input that is challenging yet comprehensible is necessary in order for the learner to use it for language acquisition.

1.1.2.2 Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory

The socio-cultural theory (SCT) is a major concept in this study. It is appropriate for this study because it supports in a way the strategies employed by EFL learners in an out-of-class environment which includes society as a medium between learners and the development of their language. This concept is a cornerstone of Vygotsky's theory (Lantolf, 2001). Thus, in light of language learning, learning is also seen as socially mediated, that is to say, it depends on face-to-face interaction between the speaker and the recipient and shared processes, such as joint problem solving and discussion, according to (Mitchell & Myles, 2004). The notion of socially mediated denotes the interaction between the learner and the teachers, peers, and members of the society that assist language development for the learner. Like any other theory, the socio-cultural

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theory was criticized but it was also applauded by many because it introduced two major concepts that support the claim that language acquisition is not only a process that is based on biological privileges that humans have or possess, but in fact it is a process that needs social and cultural aspects to be complete and to have reach its aim which is language acquisition.

1.1.2.2.1 Scaffolding

Another concept in SCT is scaffolding. It refers to the support given to the learner who is novice by a more capable individual (expert) in the society. The support in social interaction is seen in terms of speech, collaborative talk and by providing a helpful environment for language learning. More specifically, the learners are guided in doing activities and tasks that require them to use and practice the language.

Moreover, it is worthy to note that the concept of scaffolding in SCT does not stop there, instead, it aims for the novice learner to achieve autonomous learning and become independent which means the skill or knowledge of the language is transferred to the novice making them capable of performing similar activities or tasks on their own, overcoming the need for an educator in a way. The novice is supposed to be able to “appropriate” or take over the skill and knowledge and to be responsible for their own learning (Mamour, 2008), (Mitchell & Myles, 2004).

Mediation also covers physical or abstract artefacts/tools. It can be numbers, arithmetic systems, music, art, language, even pen, pencil, paper and calculator (Lantolf, 2000). This is again very appropriate as in being in the out-of-class environment, language learners encounter a lot of materials that might assist or hinder their English language learning.

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To sum up, socio-cultural theory succeeded in providing an explanation to how society and culture influence language acquisition and also in a way it fills the gaps that previous theories were unable to fulfil.

1.1.2.3 The Interaction Hypothesis

It is a theory of second-language acquisition which states that the development of language proficiency is promoted through face-to-face interaction and communication. The idea existed in the 1980s but it is usually credited to “*Michael Long*” for his 1996 paper “*the role of the linguistic environment in second language acquisition*”. Similar to Krashen’s input hypothesis, the interaction hypothesis claims that comprehensible input is important and extremely vital for language learning.

In addition, it claims that the effectiveness of comprehensible input is greatly increased and has more effect when learners have to negotiate for meaning. For instance, one of the participants in a conversation will say something that the other does not understand, the participants will then use various communicative strategies to help the interaction progress i.e. the one who cannot understand will insist and try to find a way to comprehend. The strategies used when negotiating meaning may include slowing down speech, speaking more deliberately, requests for clarification or repair of speech, or paraphrasing. Also, when learners say something that the individuals who are more knowledgeable do not understand, after negotiation, the speakers may model the correct language form. In doing this, learners can receive feedback on their production and on their grammar that they have not yet mastered. The process of interaction may also result in learners receiving more input from their discussers than they would not receive otherwise. Furthermore, if learners stop to clarify things that they do not understand, they

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may have more time to process the input they receive and memorize it unconsciously to be used in the future. This can lead to better understanding and possibly the acquisition of new language forms.

1.1.2.4 Communicative Competence

Studies of interaction have focused on how learners negotiate language meaning and language structure (grammar). Yet, language learning extends beyond just acquiring the structure of a language which is a fact that has been defended for years by many linguists. To effectively communicate in a second language, learners must also understand how members of a speech community use the language to accomplish communication goals. In other words, learners must learn the grammar of a language, but also how to use it appropriately when interacting. “Hymes” called this ability “communicative competence”.

Another concept that supports this study is “intercultural communicative competence”. Intercultural communicative competence (ICC) is seen as one of the key competencies in the 21st century, so one of the ultimate goals in English language syllabuses is to educate learners to become intercultural speakers who can deal with linguistic and cultural complicated situations and take part in multicultural situations without fear or hesitation. It is defined as being able to communicate with people from different cultures in an understanding and tolerant way.

Brown (2007) in his book “*Principles of language learning and teaching*” defined culture as “the ideas, customs, skills, arts, and tools that characterize a given group of people in a given period of time” (p. 380). A more comprehensive definition of culture was developed by Díaz-Rico and Weed (2006), who viewed the term as the explicit and implicit ways of living, the dynamic system of commonly agreed upon symbols and meanings, knowledge, beliefs, art,

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morals, laws, customs, behaviours, traditions, and/or habits that are shared and make up the total way of life of people, as negotiated by individuals in the process of constructing a personal identity that is appropriate for them and that makes them unique and should be respected by other people. This definition highlights the fact that culture is a dynamic, instead of static process and is neither something to be memorized but rather practiced and acquired in the environment a person lives in ,nor a program that can be encoded to dictate behaviour (Diaz Rico & Weed, 2006).

A recent cross-cultural study using 112 graduate Taiwanese students by Dao, Lee, and Chang (2007), revealed a strong relationship between language proficiency and the target culture. This study is consistent with the findings of Jiang (2009) who found that greater degrees of immersion in American society leads to higher proficiency in the English language.

1.1.3 Learner Autonomy

There has been a paradigm shift in the language teaching, which has seen a shift from a teacher-centred teaching style to a learner-centred one. Teachers have started to put the students' needs as priorities and started to respect the different learning styles and strategies of the students. This shift is meant to get the students involved in the learning process and be active rather than being passive recipients. With this shift, the development of learner autonomy has come to the forefront as it encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning and be more involved.

Learner autonomy was first defined as “the ability to take charge of one’s learning” (Holec, 1981, cited by Hui, 2010). According to Dam (1995), autonomous learners choose their own goals, time, materials, methods, and tasks, implement their choices, and then evaluate their

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actions. In an examination of the concept, Little (2007) revealed that, the term derives from learner-centred theories within constructivist epistemologies; it is also referred to as “independent learning.” He further specified (2009) that autonomous learners take the initiative in carrying out actions. As a result, they feel more competent in the things they do. Furthermore, this form of learning enhances learner maturity because it develops critical reflection, decision making, and independent action preparing the learners especially younger ones for adulthood.

According to Kocak (2003) autonomy in language learning has three rationales, which are in terms of the psychological, the practical and lastly, the philosophical. In terms of psychological rationale, it is said that people learn better when they are in charge of their own learning. Learners who are able to make their own decisions and choices are more likely to feel motivated in their learning, hence become successful learners. In terms of practicality, learners should be able to obtain their own learning needs either individually or cooperatively because as explained by Kocak (2003), a teacher may not be able to assist the students one by one due to a large number of learners in a classroom which is a problem that many teachers around the globe face. Thus, learners need to be able to learn on their own whenever they have their free time and the opportunities allow them to. The last rationale, which is the philosophical rationale, is that learners will have the freedom to make their own choices not only in language learning but in other areas as well.

As mentioned by Knowles (1975), it is important to prepare learners for a swiftly changing future, where independence learning will be indispensable for effective functioning in society. By being independent, learners will expand their life choices in a way becoming mature quickly.

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Also, Archana (2010) stated that autonomous learners are self-motivated and reflective which makes their learning more efficient and effective. She added that learners are more likely to feel secure in their learning when they are involved in making choices and decisions about the aspects of the learning programmes. Moreover, learners become more active and efficient in their language learning. As teachers may not always be available to guide and instruct the learners, it is important for them to be self-motivated and self-independent in finding sources as well as in problem-solving.

Autonomy takes many different forms since different learners shows their autonomy in different ways, which allows for a variety of the kinds of autonomy that should be aimed at in particular contexts (Benson, 2001). The contexts that relate to this study is learner autonomy beyond the classroom. As Benson (2007) stated, modes of practicing autonomy beyond the classroom include self-access, CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) and distance learning.

In addition to that, Benson (2007) claimed that the relationship between learning beyond the classroom and autonomy is complicated. On one hand, the above-listed modes of learning involve autonomous learning; while, on the other hand, these modes also demand a capacity for autonomy (Benson, 2007). That is to say, when some learners are less capable of becoming autonomous learners, they may have difficulties during their learning process. In this case, teachers may provide assistance for them to solve problems. For example, teachers could provide instructions to direct the students in their autonomous learning. In this case, the teacher's roles are as coach, facilitator, or advisor rather than just an information deliverer i.e. being the centre (Guo, 2011).

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1.1.3.1 Motivation

In order to keep up motivation and pleasure when learning a foreign language, noticing and reflecting upon the language can help the learner. Noticing has been researched by Schmidt (1993, 2001) who stated that this is how language learning can happen. Noticing relates to the fact that learners cannot learn structures or meanings in a language if they do not notice them; it is a starting point for language acquisition. Noticing is important and should be encouraged by the teacher in the classroom, but it should also be practiced outside the classroom when learning on an informal basis, when listening to music or watching films and series, for instance. After noticing and being aware of the particularities of form and meaning in a language, learners can reflect upon the language and the language learning process, in order to adjust their learning strategies, by correcting their own mistakes, for instance or by noticing the way native speakers use some expressions and proverbs to refer to certain situations.

Gardner and Lambert (1972) defined motivation as a desire to achieve a goal, combined with the effort to work towards that goal. Students who are motivated have a desire to undertake their study and complete the requirements of their course. Generally speaking, the optimal kind of motivation from within is identified as intrinsic motivation— that is, doing something as an end in itself, for its own self-sustaining pleasurable rewards of enjoyment, interest, challenge, or skill and knowledge development. Intrinsic motivation is contrasted with extrinsic motivation— that is, doing something as a means to some separable outcome, such as gaining a qualification, getting a job, pleasing the teacher, or avoiding punishment (Ryan and Deci, 2000)

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1.1.3.2 Teachers' Role in Developing Their Learners' Autonomy

Helping students to develop autonomous learning capacities should be a priority for every EFL teacher and it can be approached in a number of ways. These approaches are often given under an umbrella term of learner training and may consist of awareness raising, scaffolding, strategy training, increased social interaction, and the encouragement of reflection. Whatever the teacher does in the classroom is inevitably shaped by their unique system of personal constructs: "you are yourself, in some sense, what you teach" (Salmon, 1995, p. 28). Teacher autonomy is grounded in the uniqueness of each individual teacher, but if a dialogue is a reciprocal process, teachers' understanding as teachers must develop in interaction with the development of their learners' understanding. Teachers no less than learners have a "virtual other" to feed.

Three pedagogical principles may be suggested to express the characterization of an autonomous learner in the language classroom (Little, 1991):

1. Learner Empowerment

It entails that teachers bring their learners to accept responsibility for their own learning. A truly dialogic process entails joint exploration: teacher's understanding should grow along with that of their learners. If it does not, that is a sure sign that teachers are standing outside the process, going through the motions rather than engaging with their teaching in the way that they demand their learners should engage with their learning.

2. Reflectivity

It is already implied by the principle of learner empowerment. In the autonomous language classroom, reflection starts as an activity intended to be collaborative in which teacher and learners seek to make explicit their joint understanding of the process they are engaged in.

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Reflection must be pursued as a routine that retains this meaning because the scope of the learners' responsibility is always expanding outwards, which means that the reach of their reflection is always being extended. Reflection on the learning process is another key component of learner autonomy. By reflecting on the learning process, learners become aware of how and why they choose the methods and strategies they use in different projects, and for solving different tasks. Being aware of the learning process helps makes them autonomous (Turloiu and Stefansdottir, 2011)

3. Appropriate Target Language Use

It requires that from the earlier stages, teachers must engage their learners in forms of conversations that enable the teacher to explain, and that require them to use the target language to express their own meanings. They must help students to construct and maintain multiple scaffolding in writing and in speech. The three principles of learner empowerment, reflectivity, and target language use do not refer to three discrete aspects of the language teaching-learning process. Rather, they offer three closely related perspectives on one holistic phenomenon, the web of pedagogical dialogue that is partly in the interaction between the participants in the process and partly in each participant's head. Their consistent and sustained pursuit produces a learning community in which teaching is learning, learning involves teaching, and language learning is inseparable from language use.

1.1.4 Out-of-class Difficulties for EFL Learners

Traditional language teaching used to be teacher-centred, and although it has shifted nowadays, EFL learners inside the classroom still have a guide who can help them select the appropriate content and organize it to meet their needs, motivate them, and diagnose their

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weaknesses. However, when EFL learners seek out-of-class strategies, they may face some difficulties.

One common difficulty that most EFL learners face outside the classroom is fear of speaking in public, mainly because they are using a foreign language. Shyness is a factor that undermines their learning. Many learners have some biological and dialectical properties that negatively influence their accent. For example, Algerians speak Arabic as a mother tongue, and it is known that Arabic is different from English syntactically and semantically. Thus, when speaking English, learners would not sound native-like. Philips (1992) argues that anxious students feel uncomfortable because maybe they have a failure experience which makes them quite silent and discouraged to take the risk and talk again. According to Braden (1969) students who have high self-esteem are competent and are able to cope with the different challenges unlike the ones with low self-esteem who face difficulties not only when acquiring a language but also in their personal lives.

Additionally, some of the learners find it difficult to reach out and connect with native speakers. Either because they lack resources to do so, and they require the assistance of a more knowledgeable other to lead them to the right direction or because they lack intercultural communicative competence. For instance, since EFL learners and native speakers have different cultures, the conversation might result in a misunderstanding or conflict causing the EFL learner to avoid situations where they interact with native speakers again.

Also, some EFL learners lack the access to genuine materials, and if they do find some, they would not relate to it easily because it is culturally different.

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Finally, another major difficulty that EFL learners face is the unavailable resources, including access to modern technology, more specifically, the internet. Recently, Electronic Learning revolutionized the field of language learning, thanks to the wide web. The internet has made the world a small village, for example, an Algerian EFL learner can virtually attend a lecture at an American university. However, if internet access is limited or disturbed, the EFL learner would not get the chance to fully benefit from E-learning.

1.2 Out-of-class Learning Strategies

As mentioned above, the outside world offers an infinite number of opportunities for EFL learners, so many, that modern language teaching approaches have included real-life situations in their syllabuses to prepare the learners for life beyond the classroom. Besides that, it is mentioned earlier the variety of out-of-class strategies and although they are not limited because every learner has creative initiatives. The following are some of the commonly used strategies based on previous studies, including: the use of music, television, digital games, internet, social media, mobile learning, and the integration of reading and writing to develop oral proficiency.

1.2.1 Music

Music is a means of communication. It goes beyond certain barriers such as language, culture, belief systems, age, gender, and nationality. It is an innate part of a person's being. Depending on taste, it soothes and relaxes, inspires and motivates people. If used carefully in a learning situation, it can turn the beat of the learning process around. Given our own experience and that of those around us, we would infer that music is an important part of our society and identity. Listening to music is a way of entertainment and when combined with language

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learning, it can have a huge impact on the development of listening and speaking as it enhances the learner's vocabulary and it enables the learners to become accustomed to the structure of the sentences as well as to the way to pronounce words appropriately.

Various studies confirm that music does contribute to a learner's academic achievement, motivation, and creative development. They conclude that music helps one to learn more, and more effectively. Music contributes to all of education, and especially to language learning. The learner benefits by reaching key developmental goals such as having self-esteem and creativity and confidence and these are key components in being autonomous learners. It could then be assumed that music could and should play a larger part in the English language curriculum. In her book "*Young people and new media*", Livingstone (2001) suggests that "music is a mood creator" to people in general and she proposes that music does play a huge part in everyday life. She mentions that waking up to a sad song on the radio most often affect the way you will feel the rest of that day (p. 283).

In his book, "*Music, the Brain, and Ecstasy*", writer and composer Robert Jourdain (1998) observes highly remarkable relations between music and language learning. Based on his research we can see those communicative systems are lateralized in the two temporal lobes of the brain, thus, communicating through the two separate systems of music and language further increases the ability to learn. Even though they are "separate", they are "complimentary systems of structured communication" where "language is primarily responsible for content and music for evoking emotion" (p. 292). Jourdain suggests that the two different systems representing music and language learning when operating together can be highly valuable to the language learner especially when acquiring new vocabulary. This certainly rings true from our personal experience. This suggestion is backed up by the article: "*Singing in ESL with songs for the*

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grammar class", written by Fawn Whittaker (2004). She implies that singing in the classroom should be seen as a tool for learning how to listen, speak and read a language.

1.2.1.1 Shared Properties of Music and Language

Music and language are examined to have several properties in common. Therefore, there are several reasons why this connection can and should be taken advantage of in the field of foreign language teaching and learning.

According to Fonseca Mora (*Foreign language acquisition and melody singing*, 2000, p.147), sounds are the most dominant basic features of both music and speech. They are both used to deliver messages of some kind, which in case of speech are usually more precise and detailed, whereas music tends to appeal more to emotions. Moreover, language and music share also other essential features such as rhythm, pauses, pitch, tone, and stress, which are all-natural properties of both speech and music. Another significant shared feature supported by Mora (2000) is the nature of learning, which in both cases relies on acquisition and exposure, both oral and written.

1.2.2Television

Television is an important part of almost every person's life. It is an interesting device that has been proved to have various benefits such as entertainments however, its role is not limited to leisure only, and it is a great source for language learning. It enables learners to be exposed to materials such as films and TV shows constantly. Television viewing has been found to support many aspects of language learning, including listening comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, as well as cross-cultural awareness (Danan, 2004; Vanderplank, 1998, 2010).

A common form of content broadcasted on television and that most people usually relate to as it offers both entertainment and knowledge is films.

1.2.2.1 Films

Films are not usually created for English language learners since their primary purpose is to entertain and to enable the audience to escape their reality for a few hours, and they are made for native English speakers. Therefore, the language is exactly how you hear it in real life, it is spoken quickly, with native accents and pronunciation and using many idioms and colloquial expressions. In addition to that, as it is mentioned earlier, English is a universal language and many great and entertaining movies are produced by English-speaking countries most notably the United States of America whose mother tongue is English. Although the language used in those movies is sometimes informal, it has an enriching source of language development for EFL learners as it exposes them to both linguistic and communicative aspects of English.

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Watching films enables EFL learners to listen to English used in its natural way. And despite some parts being spoken too fast, it is a great way for learners to get used to native speakers' way of speaking. And it also helps learners to hear words as they are pronounced which would have a huge effect on their accents. Another benefit of watching movies is the fact that they help learners put their acquired knowledge into appropriate use when interacting.

Watching films is not a strategy that can be used by EFL learners on its own but rather it supports other strategies as it offers original content for learners to benefit from. It can enrich their vocabulary and also it enables them to acquire common proverbs and expression that are used on a daily basis when interacting in English. It can aid the learners to get an accent that they prefer because some learners find the British accent difficult and prefer the American accent FFL learners may face some challenges when watching a movie as they do not comprehend everything that is said, however, some learners turn to subtitles to understand.

1.2.2.1.1 Films Subtitled in L1

When enjoying a movie, EFL learners' first concern is to improve their English and although watching movies that are subtitled in L1 is usually a technique used by beginners to acquire as many words and expression as possible, EFL learners with a more advanced level use it as well, particularly, to compare the structures of L1 and L2 as well as to get the meaning of words they are not familiar with precisely specific terms that are specific to certain fields and not generally used in everyday speech. For EFL earners to gain as much knowledge as possible from these movies subtitled in L1, they need to select subtitles that contain translations that are accurate.

1.2.2.1.2 Films Subtitled in L2

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When EFL learners watch movies that are subtitled in L2, they can read along as they watch and so they are able to identify the words used even if they are unable to understand every single word when they listen. Moreover, movies that are subtitled in L2 can greatly improve EFL learners spelling especially when they write words that contain silent letters. In addition to that, subtitled movies in L2 can facilitate the process for EFL learner who uses dictionaries to seek the meaning of words.

1.2.3 Digital Games

Most young people as well as many adults, play digital games and these offer possibilities both for entertainment as well as language learning. The in-built game messaging system enabled players to communicate with other players thorough the internet.

Chik (2014) describes how digital game playing can contribute to second language learning, particularly in developing learners' interests and vocabulary that may not be included in a regular language course.

Chik followed a learner who wanted to move beyond the language of academic discourse (the focus of his university English programme) in order to become familiar with the vocabulary and expressions needed to talk about topics such as sport; a topic that he wanted to be able to talk about in casual conversation.

Chik comments: "Taking my advice from a gaming friend, Edmund started playing digital basketball games on his Personal Computer. He enjoyed the in-game audio commentaries and jokes and read all the instructions dutifully when he played as the manager of his fantasy team". (p.76)

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Transferring the learning strategies acquired from school, Edmond used an electronic dictionary and kept a vocabulary book. Even though the audio commentaries and on-screen texts were repetitive, he worked hard to memorize the terminology. He also thought the repetition helped him to acquire the basketball vocabulary and names of basketball players which indicates that playing video games online helps EFL learners broaden their vocabulary lists and acquire new terminology that is not related to the language that is taught inside the classroom, terminology that relates more to the interests of the learners themselves.

At the same time, he searched for gaming strategies from online discussion forums. He found a number of Chinese and English forums and blogs discussing different sports games, but the more popular Chinese forums specialized in football game series. As Edmond combed through online communities, he connected with other gamers using sports games to learn English to better enjoy live sports TV programs. After playing digital basketball games for more than six months, Edmond found it a lot easier to understand the conversation with his international team players (Chik, 2014).

1.2.4 Internet

Learning English on the Internet can be a great way to explore the language beyond the classroom as it provides access to thousands of original materials. More and more people start to pay attention to it and study how to make a full use of it. English learning needs an English environment, but we cannot always communicate with the native speakers of English directly, and thus comes the role of the internet.

Internet use has become dominant in recent years due to its popularity and availability among all age groups. The Internet is the core of E-learning since it paves the way for

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communication and interaction worldwide whenever and wherever one chooses to. Also, the internet is considered a rich library for all sorts of information. EFL learners benefit greatly from browsing the internet. Through the internet, EFL learners can communicate with native speakers at any given time or place. Moreover, the internet provides access to an unlimited list of vocabulary and language rules, as well as spoken materials for EFL learners to listen to.

Moreover, one might suggest that the use of the World Wide Web and the exposure to the informal language, inside as well as outside of the ESL classroom will function as a tool for practicing the skill of interaction and understanding instruction in the English language. Lightbown and Spada (2003) delineate in their book "*How Languages Are Learned*", the informal language setting as; A setting in which the second language is not taught, but rather, is learned naturally, i.e. on the job" or in the streets", through informal conversations and interactions with native speakers of the language being learned. (p.178). It correlates with the natural approach in a way.

The internet is one of the best sources that EFL learners can get benefit from, as it contains a variety of content to select according to their needs and interests. For instance, instant messaging has been quite popular for some time and the rate of usage around the world is increasing as more people, especially in developing countries, are able to connect and be present online. Other forms of communication over the Internet include discussion boards, interactive blogs, and online forums.

In addition, many English students are downloading English music, movies, and TV shows that allow them to be exposed to different accents and expressions from around the world and not only limited to the American or British accents. Other virtual environments can be used

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to develop language skills while also morphing the task of learning into an enjoyable hobby. For example, the software “second life” enables EFL learners to create and design their own virtual environment allowing them to have a different reality which can help them develop their communicative competence since they can interact with nearly 12 million subscribers with different backgrounds, cultures, religions and opinions.

The internet also facilitates connections between people worldwide and it is very helpful, especially for EFL learners from developing countries who can interact with native speakers of English through the use of some software like SKYPE provided that they have an internet connection. If internet connection is available, EFL learners will get the chance to be a part of a virtual world that can provide for them information and content as well as guidance and help from many volunteers globally who are fluent in English.

Another major advantage for EFL learner who sees the internet as a strategy to develop their oral proficiency is the availability of podcasts to download onto their personal devices to listen to anywhere and anytime. These podcasts are genuine and offers EFL learners access to spoken language in its natural setting which in turn helps them practice their pronunciation as well as accent.

As we all know, the content and knowledge in class are limited and are impractical and mostly theoretical. The application of Internet technology has greatly broken the limitations of space and time in class. Autonomy English learning on the Internet can spread the knowledge from in class to out of class. Of course, websites cannot take the place of a library, but it has its own special functions while the library has not, such as speed of search, immediate information. Some sites provide a large amount of English language learning and information, such as

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listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar, testing, and background knowledge. That information, including some audio and visual information, can be downloaded. The websites also provide hose information about origin of words which facilitates the memorization of these words.

1.2.4.1 English Learning Discussion Group by E-mail

Since the invention of Electronic mail, people from around the world became closer since they could have long conversations with each other instantly. However, the e-mail has more benefits than simply communicating. It is proved to be an encouraging strategy that can be used by EFL learners to improve their English. Hundreds of chat groups exist on the internet and more specifically, there are many English learning discussion groups on the Internet, such as the intensive English forum, science, and technology English forum, the English Writing forum, and teaching discussion forum. These forums enable learners to work on their writing skill, but more importantly, they enable them to speak and listen to people from different parts of the world. EFL learners can discuss freely and privately all sorts of topics and at the same time, they develop their proficiency and their ability to communicate appropriately with people from different cultures thanks to the feature of video-calling.

Many people take oral development classes to work on their proficiency but they eventually give up because they do not benefit from them. However, with English chat rooms, EFL learners can invite foreign teachers to their home and talk with native speakers anywhere and anytime. That makes the best use of the communication function of the Internet and breaks limitation of time and space. English chatting needs quick reflection. So, it's a very good

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promotion to virtual communication. By chatting on the Internet, learners can the mentality and perspectives of foreigners. Meanwhile, it can stimulate the interest in oral language and improve the level step by step.

At bottom, the internet has become such a useful tool that almost no one can live without, and it is the same for EFL learners who seek to develop their English beyond the classroom as it facilitates and combines in a way all learning strategies and it can be considered the richest tool a learner can possess.

1.2.5 Social Media

The modern world we live in has witnessed so many developments, and probably one particular change that everyone may notice after the invention of the internet is the introduction, and the surprising popularity of social media such as Facebook or Twitter. Social networking sites (SNS) can be defined as a web-based platform that allows users to create a profile of their own in a protected system, along with other users that share a centralized connection. The profile of registered users can be viewed within the same system. The privacy policy can differ from site-to-site but they all protect the information of the users.

The primary role of social media is to bring families and friends as well as people from different countries and cultures closer, by allowing them to converse and share their day-to-day activities. However, these platforms have made language learning opportunities available through the diverse features they provide.

Facebook particularly enables its users to share content with millions of users worldwide. EFL learners have access to unlimited amount of information provided that they have an

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account. The content shared on Facebook helps learners develop their vocabulary and spelling. But, they also have the chance to communicate with native speakers and even teachers from different institutions around the world thanks to the inbuilt feature of video calling, in addition to the recently presented features of “live videos” which enables EFL learners to attend and watch teachers and English speakers converse any time free of charge.

Most of these platforms have a large number of users and it is such an interesting social interaction medium that it is considered a library as it offers thousands of articles and listening content for EFL learners.

1.2.5.1 Facebook

Facebook, the most popular SNS in the world was established in 2004 and served as a bridge to meet new people and stay connected with the people you already know. Besides social interaction barriers, Facebook has become a useful tool in almost every aspect of life including language proficiency development. When users use Facebook as a tool for educational purpose by exploring the site using English language, great opportunities arise for users to learn the English language with millions of users at the same time (Educause Learning Initiative, 2006).

Also, Students are able to gain unlearned knowledge after various interactions with other users on Facebook. When students receive direct or indirect advice on Facebook, it can be used for language enhancement purposes. Moreover, when students are having discussions on Facebook, their real identities are not compulsory, providing a more relaxed environment where learners do not feel the pressure to be correct and to be ashamed of making mistakes when speaking, but rather use the language however they can, this can be very helpful because it would allow the other people in the conversation to correct their mistakes. Given its ongoing popularity,

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Facebook could become a very effective tool and medium for backing the traditional learning and for self-learning English vocabulary as well as to develop communicative competence.

1.2.8 Mobile learning

The mobility of technology focuses on examining the possibility of using portable and wireless devices such as mobile phones, laptops, and tablets for educational purposes. The focus of mobility on learning is on the extensive use of mobile devices for learning outside the classroom.

Mobile learning is a type of learning that takes place with the help of mobile devices (Kukulska-Hulme & Shield, 2008) and simply means learning anywhere and at any time. Although in the beginning, mobile learning focused on the role of mobile technologies and devices in education, in the recent years, mobile learning is characterized with the mobility of the user and the informal learning that happens out of the classroom (Sharples, 2006). Research shows that mobile phones can be used to leverage instruction (Roschelle, 2002), empower place-based learning (Squire, Jan, & Mathews, 2007), and amplify learning (Squire & Dikkers, 2012).

Among the devices that can be used for mobile learning, mobile phones which have gained more attention due to their fast spread among the youth at schools and universities, and their applications in education. The swift development of mobile phones in the last decade from simple phones to smart-phones, which can serve as minicomputers, telephones, or cameras, and

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transfer data as well as video and audio files, has made mobile phones efficient learning tools that can combine the enthusiasm for learning with fun.

Among mobile apps, using dictionaries is highly regarded by students because using mobile dictionaries allows learners to check the phonetic transcription of any given word so that they can pronounce it correctly. Mobile dictionaries also provide a variety of other features including a background of words and the different pronunciations of an English word. Mobile dictionaries are time efficient and help language learners acquire vocabulary and check verb conjugations (Steel, 2012). The affordances that are included in mobile dictionaries such as visual media (images, graphics), audio media (pronunciation), multimedia, and searching can also be the reason of better learning when students use mobile dictionaries (Joseph & Uther, 2009). EFL learners also use some applications that are free and available in the electronic stores of the operating systems of the smartphones. These applications differ in content, some provide information about spelling, and some about grammar and many of them offer information about the pronunciation of words and therefore serve as an efficient oral proficiency development tool.

1.2.9 Integration of Reading and Writing to Develop Oral Proficiency

Nowadays more and more teachers are trying to integrate other skills of language to make developing their learners' oral proficiency as easy and as fulfilling as possible. Likewise, learners outside the classroom try their best to learn as many words as possible and they find it easier to rely on other skills like reading and writing to memorize words. Communication without vocabulary will break down. One of the most useful ways to improve their communication skills is extensive reading for spoken English and the best reading materials are dramas, plays, and dialogues.

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Learners have the opportunity to find sentences and phrases used in daily conversations in dramas, plays, and dialogues because they are all based on one person talking to another. Also, reading extensively will enhance their comprehension. Learners will easily comprehend in the foreign language if they advance their ability to guess the meanings of words from context which will promote their speaking performance. Furthermore, integrating speaking and reading skills deepens students' understanding of the reading material, reveals any problem they have understanding a text, and, most importantly, allows them to apply the information they have read into authentic speaking practice that improves their fluency (Zhang, 2009, p.34).

Chapter Two

OUT-OF-CLASS STRATEGIES USED TO DEVELOP ORAL PROFICIENCY

Chapter two: Methodology and data analysis and discussion

Introduction

In the previous chapter, an overview of the major concepts related to out-of-class oral proficiency development strategies is stated, as well as a listing of some common strategies used by EFL learners' outside the classroom to develop their oral proficiency. This chapter includes three major sections. The first section will be devoted to the presentation and defence of the methodology that is to be implemented to investigate the topic presented. The second section, on the other hand, will present and analyse the data that are to be formed from the execution of the research design set up in the previous section, and the third and final section will attempt to interpret the major findings.

2.1 Research Methodology

The research methodology section is proposed to present and defend the research plan employed to deal with the research problem. First, it opens up by a justification of the research paradigms employed, namely quantitative and qualitative research methods; next, the participants who answered the questions in the study (i.e. learners) are presented, then, the choice of research tools used for data collection is justified. After that, the process through which the study advanced is carefully explained; and finally, the research limitations relative to the research context and design are highlighted.

2.1.1. Research Paradigm

Since it is very important to be accurate, the present research, takes advantage of both quantitative and qualitative research methods resulting in the adoption of a mixed approach.

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Quantitative data is stemmed primarily from questionnaires and after that, it is supported by follow-up interviews which are qualitative in nature even though they are only semi-structured.

The data gained in this research is vital to answer the research problem posed. First, the data collected from the questionnaires helps us identify the common strategies used by Algerian university EFL learners outside the classroom to work on their oral proficiency. Additionally, the follow-up interviews with a number of students further support the data obtained from the questionnaires and clarify some points that the questionnaires were unable to appropriately answer.

2.1.2. Conceptual Design

The current headline is intended to present the core design of the current research. It mainly addresses the setting and participants chosen to be a part of the study, the research instruments implemented the procedure through which the study was carried out, as well as its limitations.

2.1.2.1. Setting and Participants

The present research was conducted within the Algerian EFL context, more particularly at the University of Mohammed Saddik Ben Yahia, Jijel. It addresses third-year EFL learners in the department of English. The participants have been studying English since middle school, and they are currently completing their degree in English to get their diploma that enables them to continue further studies.

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• Students

Since this study's main goal is to investigate the strategies used by EFL learners to develop their oral proficiency, it is obvious that the participants are EFL students whose current level is intermediate. The choice of the third-year grade can be justified by the fact that these students normally have more experience and fluidity, and therefore, they are expected to comprehend and answer all the questions as honestly as possible.

If it were possible to carry out this study choosing a higher level, it would be the case. However, Master1 students have evidently an advanced level and neither normally care for nor find interest in developing their oral proficiency outside the classroom since they are already proficient to a certain degree.

50 students were chosen to respond to the questionnaires distributed in an attempt to investigate the problem under study. And 20 more students were selected to participate in the follow-up interviews.

Most of the participants are females, mostly because more females are studying English at the mentioned university. Also because, males are generally less interested in, answering questionnaires or participating in interviews.

2.1.3 Research Instruments

The current research combines two research instruments. It uses questionnaires and follow-up interviews. Although, the questionnaire was the first chosen instrument because it serves the purpose of the study and it is more appropriate, since the theme discussed in the current research is concerned with language development outside the classroom and thus, it is

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not possible to use another instrument to investigate such as classroom observation. However, due to some blurry answers in the questionnaires, a follow-up interview is needed.

2.1.3.1 Questionnaires (Appendix A)

Questionnaires are very popular research tools and are usually chosen by researchers to investigate a phenomenon. They can be used to investigate a limited number of research items by a relatively large number of subjects (Nunan, 1992). As the current study seeks to identify and investigate the use of out-of-class strategies to develop oral proficiency, the questionnaire seems the most relevant research tool. A set of out-of-class strategies revealed from both preliminary and the review of literature were submitted to 50 students to find out the most common out-of-class strategies used by third-year Algerian EFL learners, as well as to try and estimate their effectiveness.

Besides, questionnaires can generate accurate data that are open to statistical calculations and easy for analysis. This feature makes it easier for the researchers -as first-time researchers- to collect precise data and analyse it without major difficulties.

The questionnaires implemented in this study combine mainly close-ended questions and only a limited number of necessary open-ended questions.

The questionnaires are primarily addressed to third-year License EFL students (50 students), at the Department of English language, University of Jijel. Fourteen questions are included in the questionnaires. The questions serve as a unit to investigate the topic.

The items used in the questionnaires are, for the most part, closed items. The use of closed questions is due to the fact that respondents presumably show preference to these types of questions over open questions. Also, employing a large number of open questions would not

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allow us to investigate the common out-of-class strategies used appropriately and fully. Consequently, each of the questionnaires includes few open questions. Also, some closed items require respondents to first tick the box corresponding to the appropriate answer in addition to a blank space left for any potential further suggestions. Such option allowed gathering further information regarding the topic.

2.1.3.2 Follow-up Interviews (appendix B)

Another technique for collecting data is conducting interviews, which are primarily qualitative in nature. They are very crucial in research so long as they allow for the investigation of unobservable phenomena (Mackey & Gass, 2005). However, since the current study is mainly descriptive, a semi-structured interview seems to serve better the research aim at hand, because the study seeks to investigate pre-specified issues arising from questionnaires.

According to Mackey and Gass (2005), semi-structured interviews are basically surveys through which the researchers prepares a set of questions in advance, which will be asked to all respondents alike, and which will enable for the comparison between the various responses obtained. However, during the course of the interview, the researchers are allowed to diverge from these questions to seek further information.

The current research makes use of a semi-structured interview implemented with third-year EFL learners.; that is to say, a set of questions was pre-specified and asked with possibility to ask further questions when answers are not clear. The interviews are conducted with 20 third-year EFL learners.

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2.1.4 Data Collection

This phase is the most important one in the entire work because it is concerned with the collection of data that appropriately serves the study.

The distribution and collection of the whole number of learners' questionnaire was completed in two days. Two third-year EFL classes were asked to respond to the questionnaires. Twenty-five questionnaires were distributed to one class on the first day and Twenty-five more were distributed to the second class on the second day. The questionnaires were not distributed on the same day due to the schedule of the students.

Students had to fill out the questionnaires in class and the researchers were present to paraphrase and explain things for the participants if any difficulties were encountered. This resulted in a high level of openness and honesty.

As a final step in data collection, a follow-up interview was conducted with twenty third-year EFL learners. After the analysis of the findings from the questionnaires, it seemed that certain things needed further explanations and thus, follow-up interviews were required.

To sum up, data collection depended mainly on two major research tools, the questionnaires and follow-up interviews due to their appropriateness for this theme which is concerned with exploring the use of out-of-class strategies to develop oral proficiency.

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2.1.5 Data Analysis

After data have been collected thanks to the questionnaires and the follow-up interviews, it was necessary to come up with ways in which results could be analysed and presented.

Summary sheets were prepared in advance to record returns from both questionnaires and interviews. Once the summary sheets had been completed, it appeared that it was more appropriate to present data in simple tables followed by some comments in the form of notes, highlighting important answers that relate with the topic and ignoring insignificant data. Then, summaries of data from the research tools were visually presented in pie charts in a further attempt to examine meaningful data. The answers to the open-ended questions are counted and noted in a frequency table and the further explanation provided by the learners in the questionnaires helped us compare between the answers and write down the frequently mentioned benefits of using-out-of-class strategies regarding the development of oral proficiency. Useful text responses also served as quotations to illustrate certain points in the discussions. So, nearly all the data obtained from the questionnaires were interpreted quantitatively.

The follow-up interviews helped to further emphasize the points that the questionnaires failed to fully clarify and they are considered a back-up to what has been gathered from the questionnaires.

2.1.6 Limitations of the Study

A good research is one that tries to come up with answers to a proposed problem and in order to do so, a well-structured study is needed. However, every researcher encounters some problems that limit their study. The current study is not an exception.

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First of all, some limitations are related to the context of the research itself. For instance, the participants are clearly novice and not familiar with the process of responding to questionnaires. They seemed hesitant to answer and although the classes had over 30 students, it was difficult to find 25 students who were willing to participate in the study from each class. The ones that answered seemed in a hurry to finish the questionnaires and unfortunately this led to some vague answers. The researchers repeatedly explained the importance of honesty and clarity when answering the questionnaires.

Also, it was to an extent difficult to find a class to answer the questionnaires because many other Master 2 students were already distributing their questionnaires. Also, due to the fact that the students were preparing for their exams and so they were not enthusiastic to answer.

The follow-up interviews took place in an informal setting with 20 students. The informality of the setting allowed them to be more comfortable and to answer as honestly as possible. However, it took time to find participants for the interviews since most of them were shy and admitted to not being used to interviews. The interviews were not recorded because most of the participants were females and they preferred not to be recorded.

Another limitation is the fact that the learners' answers were not satisfying considering their level. Third-year EFL learners were chosen to participate in answering the questionnaires because we were under the impression that they would answer the questions fully and clearly with no troubles regarding spelling, grammar or information but the results were not as expected. Furthermore, the participants in the interviews could not form well-structured sentences to answer. Sometimes they had to provide answers in Arabic to make their intended meaning clear.

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Despite these limitations, the fifty distributed questionnaires were answered and given back and we were able to interview twenty students who tried and answered all our questions even though some of them were more comfortable using Arabic. Regardless, we are thankful for them.

To sum up, the first section of this chapter was devoted to an account of the methodology followed in the current research. It presented the research paradigms used in this study, the setting and the research population, and described instrumentation employed in the study. Finally, it indicated the limitations of the research.

The next section is to describe and analyse the data gathered from the main research devices (i.e., the questionnaires and the follow-up interviews)

2.2. Data Analyses

The present section is concerned with the presentation of the data collected by virtue of the two research instruments employed to investigate the topic under study which is the out-of-class strategies used by EFL Learners to develop their oral proficiency. These research tools represent learners' questionnaires, along with follow-up interviews.

2.2.1. Analysis of Questionnaire

The first instrument that was used to conduct this research is the questionnaire which aims to explore the common strategies that EFL learners use on their own to develop their oral proficiency.

Students' questionnaire is aimed to identify out-of-class strategies that third-year EFL learners use to enhance their speaking and listening skills.

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Students answer to Q 1(Gender?)

Table 01

Gender

Male	Female
8%	92%

The above table clearly indicates that the great majority of the sampled population (50) are females and only a very small number of participants are males as it is mentioned earlier, the reason why males are reluctant to participate is because they are not interested as well as the fact that the majority of the learners are females. Despite this, the results are not influenced by the imbalance in gender.

Students answer to Q 2(How often do you speak English inside the classroom?)

Table 02

Frequency of Speaking English Inside the Classroom

Always	Often	Rarely	Never
44%	50%	4%	2%

In table 2 above, students' answers to Q2 show that 44% of the participants always take part in the interaction process inside the classroom, while 50% often speak English inside the classroom. While 4% rarely speak English inside the classroom and only 2 % never speak English inside the classroom. So, it can be deducted that students generally speak English inside

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the classroom which does not necessarily mean they are proficient and as a result, they may seek out-of-class learning strategies.

Students answer to Q 3 (Do you think you get enough opportunities to speak inside the classroom?)

Table 03

Speaking Opportunities Inside the Classroom

Yes	No
38%	62%

Table 03 represents the speaking opportunities that are given to the learners inside the classroom. 38 % answer that they think they get enough opportunities to speak English inside the classroom. 62% however, think they do not get enough opportunities to interact inside the classroom using English. Not getting enough speaking opportunities in the EFL classroom may encourage EFL learners to speak beyond the classroom.

Students answer to Q 4(Do you speak English outside the classroom?)

Table 04

EFL Learners Speaking Outside the Classroom

YES	NO
72%	28%

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In table 04, 72% say that they speak English outside the classroom while only 32% say that they do not. As expected, EFL learners try to get more speaking opportunities outside the classroom. They try to broaden their sources of language content. However, some learners may prefer limiting their speaking to a classroom environment due to various reasons including, shyness and anxiety when speaking in front of crowds.

Students' answer to Qs 5- 6-and 7

Table 05

The use of Music, Movies and Online Games by EFL Learners Outside the Classroom

	Yes	No
Do you listen to music in English?	92%	8%
Do you watch English-speaking films for educational purposes?	82%	18%
Do you play Online games to communicate with foreigners?	6%	94%

Table 05 represents the answers provided by the participants to three important out-of-class strategies in this research.

The first question is about whether or not EFL learners listen to music that contains English lyrics i.e. songs that are sung in English. 92% say “Yes” while 8% answer “No”. Those

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participants who answer “Yes” were asked to provide further explanation about the role that music plays in improving their speaking and listening skills. Of the 92 % who answer “Yes” only 68 % provide further information. 42% say that music improves their vocabulary and helps them acquire new terms, expressions and idioms. 18% say that music helps them develop their pronunciation. They claim that by listening to the way native speakers sing, they can produce sounds more accurately. 22% say that music helps them develop their communicative competence and 4% say that it helps them improve their accent.

The second question is concerned with watching films for educational purposes. 82% say “Yes” while only 18 % say “No”. The participants who answered “yes” were asked to answer if the films they watch are subtitled in Arabic (mother tongue), in English or not subtitled at all. Only 6% say that the films they watch are not subtitled at all.20 % say that the films they watch are usually subtitled in English while 56 % say that the films they watch are subtitled in Arabic. As it can be noticed, very few learners watch English-speaking films that are not subtitled in any of the two languages they are presumably good at, and those learners say that they prefer it because it helps them focus on the pronunciation better. The participants who say they watch the films subtitled in English say that it helps them improve the spelling of words and encourages them to look for the definition of new words in the dictionary.

The other participants who say they watch films subtitled in Arabic say that they cannot watch a full film without subtitles because they would not understand the message of the film. They also added that it helped them acquire new words and their meanings in Arabic.

The third question that is represented in the table above is about playing online games and its effects on EFL learners’ oral proficiency when interacting with foreigners since playing videos games has proved to be a useful out-of-class strategy as it is stated in the previous study

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mentioned above. 94 % say they do not play online games at all, which is not surprising considering the fact that the majority of the participants are females. 6% answer “Yes” to playing video games. Those who say “yes” are males, but when asked to provide further information on their role in developing their oral proficiency they say that they do not use the games to communicate with foreigners but rather as a way to have fun.

Students' answer to QCs 8 and 9

Table 06

The Use of the Internet and Social Media as Means to Develop Oral Proficiency Outside the Classroom

	Yes	No
Do you use the internet to develop your oral proficiency?	66%	44%
Do you use Facebook to improve your speaking and listening skills?	26%	74%

Table 06 represents the answers that were provided by the participants in the questionnaires concerning the use of the internet and social media as out-of-class strategies.

66% say that they do use the internet to enhance their oral proficiency while 44 % say that they do not. Of those 44 %, only 20% provide further explanation when asked to state how the internet helps their oral proficiency. The majority of them mention SKYPE as a tool of

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communication with native speakers although some of them acknowledge the importance of “SKYPE” without actually using it. Some of them mention YouTube and how it trains their ears to get used to the way native speakers interact. One participant says:” I often download English spoken conversations of native speakers, especially, British English”. Another participant says that they use the internet to focus on the accents: “I analyse accents. I admire all the different accents in English”.

The second question represented in table 06 is about social media and precisely Facebook given its popularity in Algeria. Surprisingly, 74% say that they do not use Facebook to improve their oral proficiency and that they use it to develop their writing skills instead. One participant says: “I use Facebook to chat and to comment on different topics. It helps my written English”. Some of them say that they do not have accounts on Facebook at all. The other 26 % say that they sometimes use Facebook to communicate with foreigners and to watch some videos. One participant says: “I use Facebook to watch live videos from America and England”.

Students' answer to Q10 (Do you read materials written in English in your spare time?)

Table 07

The Integration of Other Skills to Develop Oral Proficiency Outside the Classroom

Yes	No
78%	22%

Table 07 represents the answers of the participants regarding the use of other language skills to develop speaking and listening skills. 78% say that they read different materials when

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they have free time and although most of them mention that it helps their writing skill more, many participants believe it helps their oral proficiency as well. Some of them say that by reading they get new words and expressions. Others mention that reading helps them discover the target culture more, and thus enables them to communicate with native speakers without misunderstandings. One participant says: “I read a lot because I want to know more about the American culture because I want to live there one day”. 22% say that they do not read. Most of these participants say that they do not read because they do not have available materials.

Students' answer to Q11 (Do you use your smartphone to develop your English oral proficiency?)

Table 08

Smartphone Use and Oral Proficiency Development

Yes	No
46%	54%

Table 08 represents the participants' answers to the question regarding the use of smartphones to develop oral proficiency. Since smartphones nowadays have become a vital part of our lives it had been expected that the participants would have many things to say about smartphone use in language learning however, 54% say that they do not use smartphones to improve their proficiency in spoken English. Many of them say that they do not use smartphones for educational purposes at all. One participant says: “I can't live without my phone because I enjoy taking pictures and talking”. Some participants mention that they do not even own a smartphone. On the other hand, the 46 % say that they use smartphones to develop oral

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proficiency. In fact, many of them benefit greatly from their smartphones. One participant says that they use many applications that help their oral proficiency. Others say that they use talking dictionary applications that help them get the meaning of words as well as the correct pronunciation. One participant says : “I use the application “English” a lot, I use it every day”, it is a dictionary that provides a lot of information about a word including the definition and the origin of the word, as well as the phonetic transcription, the synonyms and translation to various other languages.

Students' answer to Q12

Table 09

In-class VS Out-of-class learning Strategies

	Yes	No	No answer
Do you think that using out-of-class strategies is efficient in comparison to in-class strategies used by your teacher (in-class strategies such as playing songs inside the classroom, role playing, acting out plays...etc)	40%	44%	16%

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Table 09 represents the answers of the participants concerning their opinion on the effectiveness of out-of-class strategies in developing oral proficiency compared to the strategies used by teachers inside the classroom. 40% say that they think out-of-class strategies are effective in comparison to in-class strategies. One participant says: “I think that using some strategies outside the classroom is of a great importance to practice the four skills of language and to learn and adopt things you did not know”. 46% say that they did not think the out-of-class strategies used to develop oral proficiency are efficient on their own. They think that to be efficient, someone who wants to acquire a new language and develop it, needs to receive some formal education about the rules of language, first, then, use these strategies to improve their language. One participant says: “personally, I think that these strategies complete the strategies that our teacher uses inside the classroom. But both are important”.

Students’ answer to Q13 (Suggest any other strategies that you use outside the classroom to develop your oral proficiency.)

This question has enabled the learners to suggest their own strategies that they use to develop their oral proficiency outside the classroom. Out of the 50 participants, 38% do not answer the question. 26% mention the same strategies that were suggested in the questionnaire i.e. listening to music, watching films, using the internet, using social media, using smartphones and reading. The others who answer the question suggest other new strategies. Two participants mention talking to themselves in front of the mirror to face their shyness. Others mention listening to audio books. Other participants mention talking to native people who speak English regularly including friends and relatives. One participant mentions repeating lyrics when listening to music as a way to enhance pronunciation. Others mention repeatedly, role playing with friends.

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Students answer to Q 14(According to you how effective are the suggested strategies in developing oral proficiency?)

Table 10

The Effectiveness of Out-of-class Strategies in Developing Oral Proficiency

	Effective	Somewhat effective	Not effective
According to you how effective the suggested strategies in developing your oral proficiency?	70%	18%	12%

Table 10 represents the answers of the participants regarding the effectiveness of out-of-class strategies. 70% of them, a percentage that represents more than half, say that they think using out-of-class strategies is effective and can help them develop their oral proficiency. 18% say that they think it is somewhat important, most of them explain that they need to be used as a way to complete what learners get in school but not as independent strategies. 12 % believe that using out-of-class strategies is not effective mainly because they believe that in order to acquire and develop a language; you need to do it with the help of capable teachers. Who are competent and can provide all the necessary information about the language.

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2.2.1.1 Summary of the findings from students' questionnaire

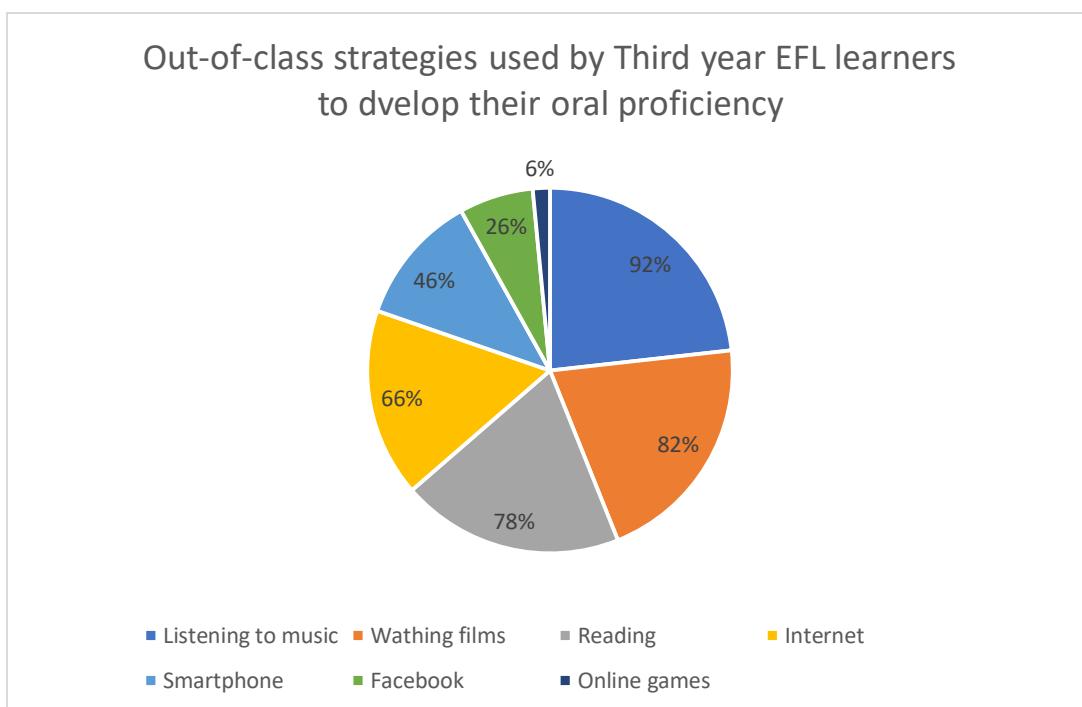
The following is a brief summary of the most significant findings from the student questionnaire. It is divided into two categories based on the two out of three most significant research questions.

•A Sum up of the common out-of-class strategies used by EFL learners to develop their oral proficiency

This summary identifies the common out-of-class strategies used outside the classroom to develop oral proficiency according to the EFL learners' own experience and opinions. The summary also includes a brief comment on the findings.

Figure: 1

The Common Out-of-class Learning Strategies Used by Third-year Algerian EFL Learners



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As it can be seen in the pie chart above, the three top strategies used by EFL learners to develop their oral proficiency outside the classroom are: “listening to music”, “Watching English-speaking films”, and “Reading”. The first two are as expected the most used strategies due to their ability to combine language learning with leisure, and thus, they help learners to create their own motivating personal leaning environments. These top three strategies are followed by the use of the internet due to its broadness and unlimited benefits.

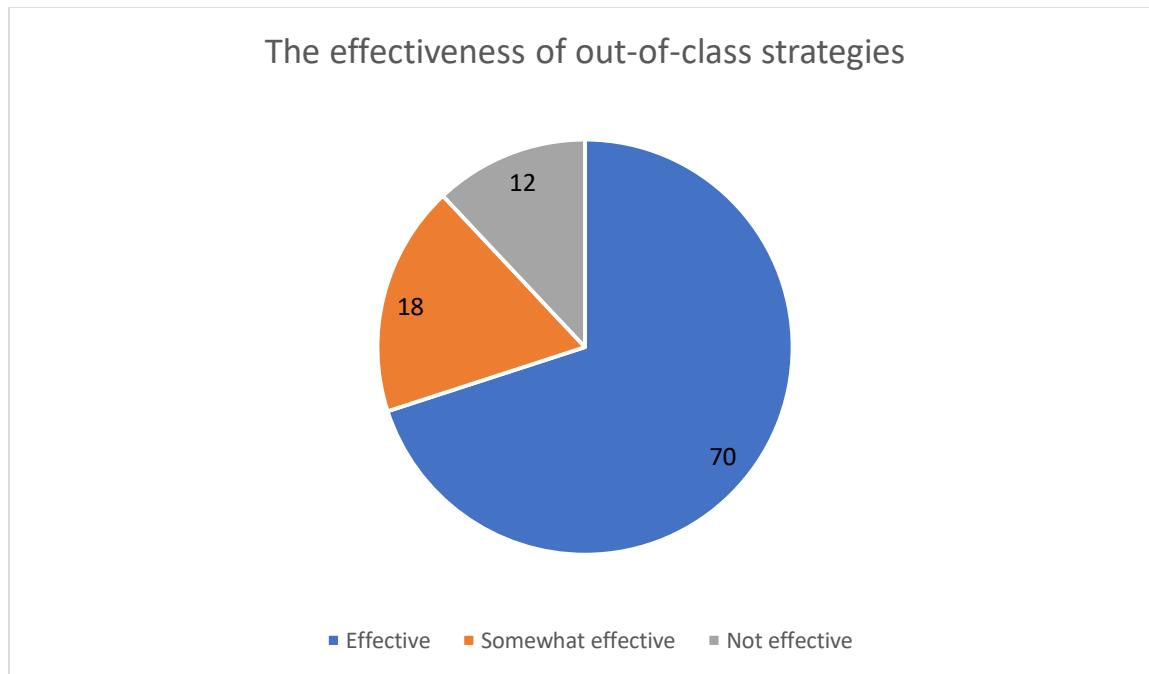
Smartphone use and Facebook follow, and despite their popularity and importance, they are not ranked with the top three strategies.

These findings generally do not contradict the findings presented in the literature review, in fact, what is stated in the literature review above supports these findings, except for playing online games strategy, it is ranked at the bottom, which is different from what is deducted from the findings in the literature review, but it is understandable considering the participants in this research who are Algerian learners and the majority are females who normally tend to enjoy themselves using other ways.

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Figure: 2

The Effectiveness of Out-of-class Learning Strategies



As displayed in figure 2, many EFL learners believe that using out-of-class strategies can help them develop their oral proficiency. These findings along with the participants' further explanations provided in the questionnaires answer an important research question regarding the effectiveness of out-of-class strategies. A great number of the participants said that out-of-class strategies are effective. One participant said: "I personally learned language through these strategies, school did not help me at all". Another participant adds: "I chose to study English because I liked it since I was a child but I am disappointed in school". A small number of these participants say that out-of-class strategies are somewhat effective and continue to explain that these strategies need to be used as a way to amend the weaknesses of the in-class strategies used by the teachers. One participant says: "I think that we should study these out-of-class strategies in the classroom, they are beneficial". 6 %, a small number says that they don't think out-of-class

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strategies are effective at all. One of them says:" I believe that you cannot learn language by yourself, you need the teacher always."

2.2.2 Analysis of the follow-up interview

The second instrument that is used in this research are the follow-up interviews which are qualitative in nature and although these interviews are semi-structured they are necessary to analyse the most important findings that are difficult to interpret since the interviews are a secondary tool that aims to support and explain more thoroughly the findings of the questionnaires.

Since the follow-up interviews used in this research are semi-structured, some questions were prepared before interviewing the students. However, we did not completely depend on these questions but rather we asked further questions when some points were not clear enough. What follows is a summary of the findings of each question asked with some comments on the answers.

Students' answer to Q1 (Do you think that practicing the language beyond the classroom helps you develop your oral proficiency?)

Out of the twenty participants in the interviews, fourteen participants answer "Yes", five say "not always" and one of them says "No". When asked to elaborate, the seventeen participants who say "Yes" argued that they believe the outside world offers many more opportunities for them to use the language and to develop it. Some of them say that they benefit a lot from the use of the language beyond the classroom because they are able to correct their mistakes when communicating with people who possess a more advanced level. One participant says: "I practice English with my cousin who is an English teacher, and I benefited a lot because

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when I make mistakes, she corrects them.” The participant, who says “No”, says that he believes that a learner cannot develop their English without the help of the teacher.

Most of them believe that the use of English beyond the classroom helps them positively to develop their language.

Students’ answer to Q2 (Do you interact with native speakers?)

Twelve of the participants say “No”. Some of them argue that they do not know how to reach out to them while others say that they cannot because they were not comfortable using video-chatting since they are girls. The eight participants who say “yes” argue that they did interact with native speakers regularly, and that they faced some problems in the beginning, because they could not keep up with them. Of these participants, two are boys and six are girls. They add that eventually they were able to understand them and enjoy the conversations.

Students’ answer to Q3 (What are the best ways to develop your oral proficiency on your own?)

Eight participants mention some of the strategies that they were asked about in the questionnaires i.e. listening to music, watching films, using the internet, Facebook, the use of smartphones and reading. Unlike in the questionnaires, one male participant says that he played online video games and interacted with English speakers who were not native. He added that he benefited greatly from the experience and he always seeks friends from different parts of the world who speak English to play with.

Nine participants mention talking to one’s self in the mirror, role playing with friends, listening to native speakers talk, listening to audio books, repeating the lyrics with music, and looking up the phonetic transcription of words in the dictionaries. One participant mentions

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something innovative, she says that she read many medical articles because she wanted to expand her vocabulary beyond the general English she is taught in school. The remaining three participants did not answer the question and it was noticed that these three participants are among some who preferred to answer the questions of the interview in Arabic.

Students' answer to Q4 (How effective are out-of-class learning strategies in the development of oral proficiency?)

Eighteen participants answered the questions while two did not. Five participants say that the out-of-class strategies are very effective and can enhance the oral proficiency of EFL learners, as long as EFL learners use them constantly and get the genuine materials. Seven say that they could be effective to an extent but need to be secondary and should be used to complete what EFL learners get inside the classroom. Four participants say that they personally benefited from them and they think they are effective. One participant says: “talking for one hour with a native speaker is worth more than a year of study here at the university”. Another says that interacting with native speakers and listening to music and watching English-speaking films helped him to develop not only his linguistic competence but his intercultural communicative competence as well; he says: “when I interact with native speakers and watch American movies, it helps me know more about their culture and their lifestyle. I used to consider them odd but now I understand that they are different”.

2.2.2.1 Summary of the findings from students' follow-up interviews

The questions that were asked in the interviews aimed to clarify some topics and to further allow the participants to express their opinions and to tell their own experiences regarding the use of out-of-class strategies to develop oral proficiency.

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The answers of the participants agree with the previous answers that were provided in the questionnaires and they back up the previous findings. Fortunately, they also clarified some previous answers of the questionnaires.

To sum up, the third-year university Algerian EFL learners tend to use out-of-class strategies whether they use them consciously or subconsciously.

The forthcoming section attempts to discuss and make sense of the data, relate important findings to the literature review, and ultimately answer the research questions set up in the conceptual research plan.

2.3 Data discussion

The research instruments chosen for the present study were implemented as an attempt to answer three research questions. The first question relates to whether or not third-year university Algerian EFL learners use out-of-class strategies to further improve their oral proficiency. The second question is concerned with the common strategies that third-year university Algerian EFL learners use outside the classroom to develop their oral proficiency. The last question focuses on the effectiveness of these strategies in developing oral proficiency. After the presentation of the findings from the learners' questionnaires and follow-up interviews, the present section attempts to interpret the results unveiled in the previous section.

2.3.1 The use of out-of-class Learning strategies to develop oral proficiency

The results that the learners 'questionnaires unveiled, supports the claim that university Algerian EFL learners do not entirely rely on the activities and the content that is presented in the classroom and when not satisfied, they take responsibility of their own learning, and seek

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some strategies that they can use outside the classroom to enhance and develop their speaking and listening skills.

The participants that answered the questionnaires seem to favour some strategies that were suggested over others. They particularly seem to prefer listening to music, watching English-speaking films and reading. Although they use other strategies including: the internet, their smartphones and Facebook to help themselves as well.

Although the questionnaires enabled us to discuss and address all the points that are necessary for the study, a follow-up interview seemed just as important, and the results were positive since the aim is of the interview is to further clarify things, which it did, particularly when it helped us grasp the general intended meaning of some of the answers provided by the participants in the questionnaires, and that were somehow unclear.

2.3.1.1 Speaking English outside the classroom

The majority of the participants claimed that they speak English outside the classroom especially since many of them claimed that they do not get enough opportunities to speak inside the classroom. These findings do not contradict what was already mentioned in the literature review precisely the work of Benson (2007) who insisted on the importance of learner autonomy and its relation to the learning process.

2.3.1.2 Listening to music

The answers of the participants support the claim that listening to music is the most favoured out-of-class strategy used by EFL learners and these findings are similar to the findings of the studies stated in the literature review earlier. According to the participants, music helps them build their vocabulary and learn idioms. It helps them improve their listening skill and it

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makes them more open-minded and accepting towards the other cultures particularly the British and American cultures. Moreover, some of the participants believe that music helps them work on their accents. Some participants admitted that Songs that are sung in music and artists whose native language is English were reasons why they choose to pursue studies in the field of English as a foreign language.

When interviewed, the participants admitted to preferring listening to music as a useful strategy to use outside the classroom because it is a combination of an educational tool and a way of having fun and this point was highlighted by Livingstone (2001) who suggested that music creates a unique mood for people and thus can enable them to learn.

Music is an effective way to work on oral proficiency and particularly for English learners because English-speaking countries produce thousands of songs that are helpful despite being aimed for leisure and entertainment. And from a personal experience we can say that music helped us develop our language in many ways and made us more enthusiastic about the language.

2.3.1.3 Watching Films

Another strategy that was presented in the questionnaires and further discussed in the follow-up interviews is watching films. And as expected, many participants use films as an out-of-class strategy because they believe it helps them develop their listening skill as well as train their tongue to be native-like. In addition to the exposure to a different culture that is different from theirs. Some participants said that it was very important for them to be more open towards American and British cultures because they believed that a language without a culture is incomplete and they said that the way to perfect their language was though culture.

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These findings do not contradict what was stated in the literature review earlier. In fact, they support the findings of (Danan, 2004; Vanderplank, 1998, 2010) that television viewing can improve all aspects language learning including cross-cultural awareness.

2.3.1.4 Reading

A strategy that was not expected to be commonly used by EFL learners to enhance their oral proficiency is reading since it relates more to development of writing skills. However, many participants said that they used reading as a rich strategy to work on their speaking and listening skills. They said that it offered them unlimited number of sources of language including novels, articles and short stories that helped them expand their dictionary beyond everyday general English. Although, this specific out-of-class strategy is useful, many researchers insisted on the fact that it helps with enhancing writing skills rather than speaking. On the other hand , according to (Zhang, 2009) the integration of reading with speaking enables the learners to put into practice that they acquire from the reading and allows them enhance their fluency.

2.3.1.5 The Use of the Internet

It is known that the internet changed the world completely and has become a tool that cannot be ignored and for EFL learners, the use of the internet is a resourceful strategy that allows them to explore an infinite world of possibilities and resources to work on their oral proficiency. The participants in study said that they use the internet frequently as it enables them to communicate with more knowledgeable people from different countries around the world including native speakers. The internet allows them to access millions and millions of materials that are not adapted and genuine that enhances their fluency and proficiency. One participant

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says that she believes that internet can replace the teacher, because she feels that the classroom is a waste of time and that she need to practice language in a more natural setting.

The internet also allows the learners to explore different areas of interest that helps them enjoy the language while trying to develop it. Additionally, EFL learners can access internet to learn and develop their language anytime and anywhere.

Some of the participants say that the internet is the best invention in the world and it should be included more often in the education especially in Algeria.

Facebook is another out-of-class strategy that EFL learners use to develop their oral proficiency and it stands side by side with the internet precisely due to its popularity recently.

The participants in the questionnaires surprisingly do not rely to a great extent on Facebook to enhance their oral proficiency, even though they use it constantly. Some participants say they use Facebook as a way to enhance their language but mostly through chatting which affects positively their writing skills. Many of the participants favour Facebook, because it allows them to reach their classmates and exchange knowledge. Some of them mention that Facebook helps them encounter new people worldwide and create new friendships and pen friends who helped them improve their speaking skill.

2.3.1.6 Mobile learning

According to the participants in the questionnaires, the use of smartphone allows them to benefit greatly from the applications available online to enhance their oral proficiency including dictionaries.

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On the other hand, some of them mention that they do not own smartphones, mainly because they cannot afford one or because they are not interested. These findings do not necessarily contradict with what was mentioned in the literature review but it proves that third-year Algerian EFL Learners still favour traditional learning methods and techniques to more modernized learning methods which include technologies.

2.3.1.7 Online games

This particular out-of-class strategy that was considered a commonly used strategy in other countries is found to be ineffective and discarded by university Algerian EFL Learners. Perhaps, it is due to the fact that the majority of the participants are females who do not prefer online games. Or perhaps it is due to the fact that the learners do not know how to access websites that are exclusively for online games. But, even the male participants say that they do not use it as strategy to develop their language but rather as a way to relax.

To sum up, playing online games is not a beneficial strategy that university Algerian EFL learners can use to develop their oral proficiency.

Conclusion

All in all, the content of this second chapter was divided into three sections. The first section focused on the presentation and defence of the research procedure, it presented the research paradigms, the tools and the population. In the second section, a shift was made to the presentation and the description of the findings obtained from the research instruments employed in the study. The results were presented in the form of quantitative figures in tables or visual figures as seemed appropriate. Data analysis section was followed by data discussion section. The latter interpreted the most significant results that were derived from the study including the

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common strategies that are used by third-year Algerian EFL learners who preferred listening to music, watching films and reading and who did not prefer online gaming. Also, the findings derived from this study focused on the effectiveness of out-of-class strategies. All the data obtained aimed to answer the research questions presented above, and the results indeed provide some answers.

Recommendations Based on the Findings

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, here are several recommendations to be considered:

1. Developing oral proficiency is undoubtedly important for EFL learners and should be considered inside as well as outside the classroom.
2. The classroom may sometimes limit the processes of learning and developing oral proficiency, and as a result, various out-of-class strategies should be sought by university EFL learners.
3. Language learning and development depends on the learner's commitment and they should seek oral proficiency development beyond the classroom without constantly needing the help of the teacher.
4. Music is more than simply a way to be entertained; it should be used as a strategy to develop both listening and speaking.
5. English-speaking films are a great source for oral proficiency development, Learners should benefit from them
6. Developing oral proficiency sometimes requires other skills so, learners should integrate other language skills to enhance speaking and listening.

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7. The internet and social media help learners to improve their oral skills, it is recommended that they are used for purposes other than what they are intended for.
8. A Smartphone is more than a communication device, if used thoughtfully, it can enhance oral proficiency.
9. Online games can be a source of both leisure and education; it should be used frequently by EFL learners.
10. EFL teachers ought to encourage learners to work on their oral proficieny beyond the limitations of the classroom.

General Conclusion

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General Conclusion

Given the importance of developing oral proficiency when learning a foreign language, this study was carried out to identify the common out-of-class learning strategies used by EFL learners to develop their oral proficiency. Also, it aims to determine how effective they are.

To investigate the research problem posed, questionnaires and interviews were used with third-year EFL learners, at the University of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia. These research tools aimed to identify learning strategies that are used in an out-of-class context to develop oral proficiency in English.

The data obtained from the research tools indicated that EFL learners use out-of-class strategies to develop their speaking and listening skills and they believe these strategies help them and are effective, although, they do not completely rely on all the strategies that were individually suggested in the questionnaires like: the use of music, films, the internet, reading, mobile learning, online games and social media.

The study also uncovered some strategies that EFL learners use on their own to work on their oral proficiency whenever they can such as: role playing, talking to one's self in the mirror, and recording one's self talking.

Moreover, the study makes some recommendations for EFL to fully exploit out-of-class strategies to develop oral proficiency and for EFL teachers as well, to encourage their learners to seek out-of-class learning strategies as tools to enhance their language.

On the whole, this research points out that although EFL learners use some common out-of-class strategies such as listening to music, watching English-speaking films and reading, they

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do not use all of them equally and they particularly neglect some useful learning strategies such as: online games.

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APPENDICES

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Appendix A

Students' questionnaire

Dear Students,

This questionnaire serves as a data collection instrument for a research project. You are kindly requested to honestly answer the questions below to help us reach the aim behind this study.

Thank you in advance for your collaboration.

Questions: kindly, answer the following questions as honestly as possible and provide further explanation if requested.

1. Gender: Male Female

2. How often do you speak English inside the classroom?

Always Often Rarely Never

3. Do you think you get enough speaking opportunities inside the classroom?

Yes No

4. Do you speak English outside the classroom?

Yes No

5. Do you listen to music in English?

Yes No

6. Do you watch English-speaking films for educational purposes?

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Yes No

If yes, are they subtitled and why?

.....
.....
.....

7. Do you play online games?

Yes No

If yes, do you interact with other players who speak English?

.....
.....
.....

8. Do you use the internet to develop your oral proficiency?

Yes No

9. Do you use Facebook to enhance your speaking and listening skills?

Yes No

10. Do you read materials that are written in English?

Yes No

If yes, where do you get them from? And how do they help you develop your oral proficiency?

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11. Do you use your smartphone to develop your oral proficiency?

Yes No

12. Do you think that using out-of-class strategies is efficient in comparison to in-class strategies used by your teacher? (In-class strategies such as playing songs inside the classroom, role playing, acting out plays...ect)

13. Suggest any other strategies that you use outside the classroom to develop your oral proficiency.

14. According to you how effective the suggested strategies in developing your oral proficiency?

Very Effective Somewhat Effective Not Effective

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Appendix B

Students' follow-up interviews

1. Do you think that practicing the language beyond the classroom helps you develop your oral proficiency?
2. Do you interact with native speakers?
3. What are the best ways to develop your oral proficiency on your own?
4. How effective are out-of-class strategies concerning the development of oral proficiency?

ملخص

فيما يتعلق بأهمية تطوير مهارات التحدث والاستماع عند تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية واتقانها ، بالإضافة إلى حقيقة أن ليس جميع المتعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية يحصلون على فرص كافية لتطوير مستوى إجادتهم للتحدث باللغة الإنجليزية، هي نقاط انطلاق لهذه الدراسة التي تحاول استكشاف ما هي الإستراتيجيات المستخدمة خارج القسم من قبل المتعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية في الجامعة الجزائرية ، وتحديد مدى فعالية تلك الإستراتيجيات المتعلقة بتطوير مهارات التحدث والاستماع. ينقسم هذا العمل إلى فصلين رئисيين. يركز الفصل الأول على مراجعة الدراسات ذات صلة، التي تحدد بعض الإستراتيجيات الشائعة الاستخدام من قبل المتعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية من مختلف أنحاء العالم ، في حين أن الفصل الثاني أكثر دقة، ويركز على استكشاف الإستراتيجيات المستخدمة خارج القسم التي يتم استخدامها من قبل المتعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في إحدى الجامعات الجزائرية لتطوير القدرات النطقية و السمعية. من أجل التحقيق في هذا الموضوع البحثي ، تم تصميم وتنفيذ استبيان و مقابلة شبه منظمة مع المتعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة ثانية في جامعة محمد الصديق بن يحيى ، جيجل. تظهر النتائج أن الإستراتيجيات الأكثر استخداماً في الفصل لتطوير الكفاءة النطقية هي الاستماع إلى الموسيقى ومشاهدة الأفلام وقراءة أنواع مختلفة من الوثائق واستخدام الإنترنت واستخدام الهواتف الذكية واستخدام الفايسبوك ولعب ألعاب الفيديو عبر الإنترنت. ومع ذلك ، فالبعض منها لا يستخدم بشكل متكرر كالآخرين ، خاصةً ، لعب الألعاب عبر الإنترنت التي يلاحظ أن نادراً ما يستخدمها المتعلمو اللغة الإنجليزية في الجامعة الجزائرية كاستراتيجية خارج القسم لتطوير كفاءتهم اللغوية. كما تظهر النتائج أن معظم هذه الإستراتيجيات فعالة وساعدت بعض المشاركين في الدراسة على تحسين قدراتهم الشفهية إلى حد ما وفقاً لإجاباتهم الواردة في الاستبيانات وتم عرضها في هذا العمل ، وكذلك في المقابلات. وبناءً على نتائج الدراسة ، يمكن استنتاج بعض الإستراتيجيات المفيدة للغاية لطلاب الجامعة. يُنصح بشدة أن يقوم المتعلمو اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية الذين يحاولون تحسين طلاقتهم وكفاءتهم باستخدام استراتيجيات مختلفة لإصلاح نقاط ضعفهم لكي يصبحوا ممتازين في اللغة ويجب أن يستفيدوا من هذه الإستراتيجيات لأقصى حد ممكن.

Resumè

Concernant l'importance de développer les compétences orales et d'écoute pour apprendre et maîtriser l'anglais, ce travail tente d'explorer l'utilisation de stratégies d'apprentissage hors classe par les apprenants universitaires algériens de l'EFL et de déterminer leur efficacité sur le développement de la parole et la capacité d'écoute. Ce travail est divisé en deux chapitres principaux. Le premier chapitre se concentre sur une revue de la littérature connexe qui identifie certaines stratégies d'apprentissage hors classe couramment utilisées par les apprenants EFL de différentes parties du monde, tandis que le deuxième chapitre est plus ciblé, et il est préoccupé par l'exploration hors-de - class les stratégies utilisées par les apprenants de l'EFL dans une université algérienne pour développer leurs compétences orales