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STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE INCORPORATION OF AN ORAL TEST IN THE ALGERIAN SCHOOL SYSTEM

Abstract

This study aimed at investigating English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners' attitudes towards the implementation of an oral test in order to improve English language assessment and testing. To address all this issue, a quantitative approach was adopted. In relevance to this research approach, a case study design/ strategy was selected. As for the data collection methods, two tools were employed: A questionnaire and an interview. The population of this study was fourth year pupils at 'Cid Noureddine Middle School' in Tolga in the South East of Algeria. The whole population consisted in 111 pupils. In the present study, only 36 pupils were chosen. This number was the total pupils of one class. They were chosen purposefully based on the study requirements. Hence, a purposive sampling technique was used. In terms of the results, the findings revealed that many pupils had positive attitudes towards the implementation of this oral test. This is mainly because these pupils believed that, based on the improved test, their test scores   are reflecting now their level in English language since such kind of tests assess their speaking abilities besides to assessing the other skills and language components. In terms of their perceptions of the experience of the group format, the majority of the pupils in this study reportedly affirmed that the speaking test provided a comfortable context for speaking assessment. Overall, one can say that the obtained results confirmed the hypotheses that this research set out at the early stages of this investigation.

1. Introduction

Over the last decades, there has been an increasing interest in learning English language all over the world. One main reason behind this is that English language has become the main means of communication in all domains of life. Therefore, many educational programmes have been devised to help learners master this foreign language. However, since the major purpose of learning a foreign language is communication, more attention has been given to teaching and assessing the speaking skill.

In Algeria, several reforms have been introduced to the curriculum to improve the level of middle school pupils in English language, and to enhance their speaking abilities. For instance, teachers are now encouraged to use different interaction patterns in the classroom, such as individual, pair and group work, in order to provide these learners with enough opportunities to speak and practise English language. In addition, this class is completely devoted to group tasks and oral communication activities. Nevertheless, the impact of these changes is hardly noticed. Teachers still focus on teaching vocabulary and grammatical rules. We believe that the root cause of this is that there have been no crucial changes in the assessment system. In other words, the way teachers assess their learners has not changed yet and has remained stuck to the traditional modes of teaching and learning.

Consequently, this research was conducted to investigate EFL learners' attitudes towards the implementation of a newly introduced oral test to enhance English language learning and assessment. Besides, an attempt was carried out to explore these learners' views on group

speaking assessment.

2 Literature Review

What is following is a related review of literature on some fundamental concepts relevant to this research work.

2.1Language Assessment

Language assessment is an integral part of foreign language teaching and learning process. It plays a significant role in the education of English language learners. Gitaski and Coomble (2016) emphasise that whatever the type of language assessment is, it always involves collecting, interpreting and evaluating information about learners' learning. As there is no single technique that can be employed to gather such kind of information, different assessment and evaluation tools are used to identify learners' needs and enhance instruction.

2.2 Evaluation, Measurement and Testing

According to Bachman (1990), the terms evaluation, measurement and test are often used interchangeably. However, this may distract attention from the fact that each concept has its distinctive features and that a clear understanding of the basic differences among them is crucial to the proper development and use of language tests.

2.2.1Evaluation

It can be defined as the judgments teachers make, as well as the actions they take, which are based on the systematic information they collect about their learners, such as decisions related to learners' promotions or retention at the end of the school year. It also refers to the decisions teachers make regularly about the type of test to create when to give it, and what language material or abilities to assess (Casas, 2011).

2.2.2Measurement.

Orlich et al. (2013) emphasise that measurement is a quantitative description of students' performance. In other words, it is the process of assigning numbers to assessment results.

2.2.3 Test

Bachman (1990) illustrates that a test is one type of measurement tools, which is devised to obtain a representative sample of an individual's behaviour. It is a way to assign numbers to the attributes and abilities of learners using an explicit procedure. In other words, tests are created to measure learners' learning and achievement based on specific objectives and material, which are already determined by the teacher (Ryan et al., 2013).

2.3Definition of Speaking

Speaking is an integral part of people's daily lives. Bygate (1987) illustrates that people are often judged by what they say and that through their speech they can make or lose friends. Thus, speaking is the skill that serves as a means of social solidarity, social ranking, professional development and business.

Flucher (2014) argues that defining speaking or identifying its constituents is a question of defining construct. Hence, speaking has to be related to observable 'things' that can be graded. However, Lado (1961) sees that the construct of speaking could not have an operational definition. As a result, he suggests testing linguistic elements to avoid confusions between the construct and variables, such as 'talkativeness' and 'introversion'. This approach is known as the 'Trait Theory' approach to construct validity. Besides, Chapelle (1999) believes that it may be more convenient to consider the contextual factors since they can affect discourse and test score (as cited in Flucher, 2014). In fact, the definition of construct could include many other factors.

In short, there is exists no operational construct definition that can capture all the elements or aspects of human communication. This is due to its complexity. Moreover, no test of

speaking that can measure everything can be found. Consequently, selections are based on test purpose and the interpretations of the scores.

Our knowledge about what is meant by to 'speak' can be used to define constructs that are useful for the different testing purposes. The construct definition should then be judged according to its utility in making inferences from test scores, and its usefulness for establishing a validity argument that creates a link between a test score and its interpretation (Bachman, 1990).

Thus, a construct can be made using research findings about speaking and testing second/foreign language teaching and through a process of 'pick and mix'. That is, there has to be a rationale and empirical evidence to support the 'mix' in terms of test purpose. However, Butler et al., (2000, p. 3) state that 'the available research does not provide a firm foundation for constructing a specific test of speaking as part of second/foreign language academic communication competence' (Butler et al., 2000). This means that there is no true construct definition for second language academic communicative competence and there is still a need for more research.

2.4 Assessing Speaking

Speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving and processing information (Florez 1999) (as cited in Comings et al., 2006, p. 124). Thus, because of its interactive nature, speaking is often tested in live interaction. However, assessing speaking requires special procedures in order to ensure the reliability and validity of the scores. One of the reasons is that the test discourse is completely unpredictable. Although the speakers in a test have to talk about the same topic and have the same roles and aims, it is impossible to find two conversations that are the same. In addition, as the rating process involves human raters, there is some inevitable variability.

3. The Study

3.1 Research Questions

This study investigated the following research questions:
RQ1: What are the pupils' perceptions of a new oral test?
RQ2: What are the pupils' attitudes towards the implementation of an oral test; and what are the factors that contribute to their attitudes?
RQ3: How do pupils perceive their experience of group speaking assessment?

3.2 Research Hypotheses

This research was based on the following hypotheses
RH1: There is a correlation between pupils' perceptions of English language learning and assessment and their attitudes towards the implementation of an oral test.

RH2: There is a positive relationship between the use of group speaking assessment and pupils' attitudes towards the implementation of an oral test.

RH3: There is a positive relationship between the use of group speaking assessment and pupils' speaking performances.

3.3 Research Aims

1. The general aim of the present study was to investigate EFL learners' attitudes towards the implementation of an oral test, as well as to identify the factors that contributed to their attitudes.

2. The specific aims were:

• To explore pupils' perceptions of English language learning and assessment;
• To determine the effectiveness of group speaking assessment; and
• To see how pupils perceive their experience of group format.

3.4 The Reasons for the Choice of Group Assessment Format

We think that group assessment can be more appropriate if oral tests are adopted in the Algerian middle schools. This is because of several reasons. For example, since classes in Algeria are overcrowded, we think that group assessment can be cost and time effective. In addition, it allows interaction between test takers. This can create real contexts, and enables raters to assess test takers' communication skills.

Moreover, the use of rating checklists can be very useful because they can help raters write their comments quickly. They can also provide test takers with information about their weaknesses and strengths. Hence, they can find ways to improve their speaking performances.

Therefore, we chose group format to test the speaking abilities of the participants in this research. Then, we questioned them about its effectiveness, and whether it created a comfortable context for speaking assessment or not.

4. Research Methodology

4.1 Research Approach

The research approach adopted to conduct this study was the qualitative approach because it is thought to be appropriate for such kinds of issues. In other words, it served the nature of our research. The qualitative approach, as asserted by Nunan (1992), uses textual analysis and is very effective in the exploration and interpretation of participants' beliefs, opinions, attitudes and motivation. A similar definition states that "qualitative approach is concerned with subjective assessments of attitudes, opinions and behaviours" (Kothari, 2004, p. 5).

4.2 Research Strategy

When carrying out a study, a researcher has to make many important decisions. One of these crucial decisions is related to the choice of a research strategy. 'A strategy is a plan of action designed to achieve a specific goal' (Descombes, 2014, p. 3).

Thus, in the present study, the strategy that was used was a case study. First, it was used because there was a clear link between the purpose of the research and the chosen strategy. In addition, we believed that it would be successful in achieving the aims of the present research as it would produce appropriate kinds of data. A case study is the strategy that 'provides a unique example of actual people in actual situations, enabling readers to understand ideas more clearly than simply by presenting them with abstract theories or principles' (Cohen et al., 2005, p. 253).

4.3 Population and Research Sample

The population of this study was fourth year pupils at Cid Noureddine public middle school in Tolga, Biskra (Algeria). It consisted of 111 pupils. One class, which included 36 pupils, was chosen to participate in this investigation. Thus, the sampling technique that was selected for the present research is a purposive sample. The characteristics of this method of sampling are as follows:

• It is used by some arbitrary method because it is known to be representative of the total population; or it is well known that it will produce well-matched groups.

• Its main idea is to pick out the sample in relation to some criteria, which are considered important for particular studies.

• This technique is appropriate when the study places special emphasis upon the control of specific variables (Hoadjli, 2016, p. 52).

4.4 Data Collection Methods

Two data collection methods were employed to collect the appropriate data namely, a

questionnaire (preliminary and final in addition to interviews. First, the preliminary questionnaire (See Appendix 1) was used to explore pupils' perceptions of English language learning and assessment. Then, the final questionnaire (See Appendix 2) was employed after the participants took a speaking test (See Appendix 3) in order to investigate their attitudes towards the implementation of a Formal Oral Test. We also conducted semi-structured interviews (See Appendix 4) to elicit more information about the participants' attitudes and opinions.

Table1.

The Order of using data collection methods:

Stage One: Preliminary Study (Diagnosis)Exploring pupils' perceptions of English language learning and assessment Data collection method: A preliminary questionnaire
Stage Two: Test Implementation A speaking test (achievement test)
Stage Three: Final Study Investigating pupils' attitudes towards the implementation of a Formal Oral Test. Data collection methods: A final questionnaire and an interview

4.5Data Collection Procedures

The preliminary questionnaire-items were handed to the respondents in a session of English language. All these respondents responded to the questionnaires in the same session. Then, after taking a speaking test, the participants were given the final questionnaire-items. We followed exactly the same procedures when collecting the data using the final questionnaire.

We conducted interviews to supplement our questionnaire data, nine pupils were randomly chosen from the sample to be interviewed. The participants were informed about the purpose of the interview in advance, and at the beginning of each interview. The interviews were conducted in the target language. However, it is worth mentioning that the interviewer sometimes translated some questions into the participants' native language, so that the interviewed pupils could better understand the questions. Even the interviewees were allowed to speak in Arabic (their L1) whenever they felt unable to express their ideas in English language. All the interviews were audio recorded. The time devoted to each interview was between four to seven minutes. We could not interview the pupils for a longer time because they had other classes to attend. Later, the interviews were transcribed into written versions.

4. 6. Data Analysis

The data analysis procedures for both questionnaires were the same. The collected data were analysed using the descriptive approach. With regard to closed-ended questions, all the percentages were calculated manually, and tables were created in Microsoft® Word. On the other hand, the data obtained from the interview were analysed following the various steps of Content-based approach.

5. Results and Discussion

The findings drawn from the analysis of the data obtained using the three data collection methods are positive in many respects. First, the preliminary questionnaire revealed that many pupils are aware of the importance of all aspects of English language, namely vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. In other words, pupils know that they have to consider all the components of English language, and that the focus should not only be on one or two of them. Surprisingly, the results obtained show that a large number of pupils consider speaking as the most important skill that they have to master. Therefore, many of the pupils reported that what motivated them to learn English language was the desire to be able to communicate with native English speakers. They study English language not only to satisfy school requirements, and to be able to pass the "Brevet Examination du Moyen" (BEM) Examination and go to high school. Many of the pupils also want to improve their communication skills because they

believe that they are so important in their daily lives.

With regard to English language assessment, the results show that the currently used tests mainly assess pupils' degree of comprehension, as well as their mastery of grammatical rules. Additionally, the language skills that are almost neglected in achievement tests are speaking and listening. It is worth mentioning that only two marks are devoted to pronunciation. Hence, the majority of pupils are not satisfied with their test grades. They claimed that written tests did not really assess their progress in general and achievement in English language in particular. Taking into account their age, many pupils believe that they have good speaking abilities, but written tests do not allow these pupils to demonstrate them.

Furthermore, the results showed that the majority of pupils thought that tests covered a great extent of the lessons they dealt with in the classroom. Consequently, it can be concluded that teachers focus mainly on teaching grammar and vocabulary rather than developing pupils' language skills. It can be argued that teachers give no importance to teaching the speaking skill. They do not provide learners with enough opportunities to enhance their communication skills.

Moreover, this study revealed that almost all of pupils agreed that listening and speaking should be given importance priority in English language tests. They were convinced that these two skills were the most essential language skills. Accordingly, half of the respondents to the preliminary questionnaire embraced the idea of implementing a Formal Oral Test for several reasons. First, they claimed that it would contribute to the development of pupils' communication skills. Second, it would build pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem. Finally, the implementation of a Formal Oral Test will make English language assessment and testing more useful.

With reference to the preliminary questionnaire, pupils initially proposed that raters should assess them individually or in groups. Those who preferred individual assessment explained that they were shy, and they would be unable to speak in English language in front of other pupils. On the other hand, those who chose group assessment stated that it would be better than individual and paired assessment.

Concerning the speaking test that the participants took in the current study, the results obtained from the final questionnaire and interview showed that more than half of the pupils agreed that it was doable. They reported that the questions and tasks were clear and familiar. Overall, it was a new and interesting experience for the pupils. Besides, many pupils reported that the speaking test was the most important test to encourage them to use English language. It allowed them to communicate with each other, and to share their experiences, ideas, and opinions. As a result, the pupils have become more convinced that speaking tests are necessary to assess and improve their level of English language since these tests would enable them to discover their strengths and weaknesses. Moreover, they also reported that speaking tests could play an important role in the development of their personalities.

In addition, the data collected through this research indicated that most of the pupils were a little bit stressed during the speaking test because they were taking a speaking test for the first time in their lives, the pupils were anxious, especially at the beginning of the test. However, many of them stated that they started to feel comfortable and more confident after a few minutes. Some of the pupils claimed that they were happy and excited as they were speaking to each other in English. Generally, it seemed that the pupils enjoyed this new speaking text experience.

Furthermore, this study revealed the main problems that middle school pupils face when speaking. Primarily, it can be said that the shortage or lack of vocabulary is a major problem among pupils. Indeed, this leads, in turn, to their inability to form correct sentences. Consequently, they cannot express their ideas. Besides, they have some pronunciation problems. In other words, they are unable to pronounce some English sounds, and they have problems with word stress and intonation. Thus, some pupils have poor communication skills,

and they cannot effectively interact with other people in English.

In terms of their perceptions of the experience of the group assessment, the majority of the pupils indicated that group format provided a comfortable context for speaking assessment. They think that it can reduce stress levels and test pressure. Furthermore, it can motivate pupils to speak and share their ideas and opinions. On the contrary, a few pupils still believe that group assessment can cause stress and test anxiety. In addition, they reported that they would feel embarrassed if they make any mistakes. In general, these pupils cited some factors that would hinder their speaking performances.

Finally, with regard to learners' attitudes towards the implementation of a Formal Oral Test, the results obtained from the final questionnaire and interview show that many of the pupils approved of the implementation of a Formal Oral Test. That is, they agreed on the idea of arranging speaking tests in formal context for grades because of many reasons. First, they think that a Formal Oral Test will contribute to the improvement of pupils' speaking abilities. Second, it will develop pupils' self-confidence and self- esteem. Third, it will raise pupils' tests scores since many of them have good speaking abilities. Finally, the implementation of a Formal Oral Test will also enhance English language assessment and testing.

On the other hand, some pupils are against the idea of arranging speaking tests in formal context for grades because they believe that speaking tests were not necessary. They believe that pupils must focus only on reading and writing skills in order to succeed in their studies. In addition, they claimed that stress, test anxiety, increased pressure, and lack of confidence might negatively affect their speaking performances. Moreover, they argue that those pupils who do not speak English language well will get bad grades. Hence, the implementation of a Formal Oral Test will not be useful for them.

To reiterate, the present study aimed at exploring pupils' perceptions of English language learning and assessment. The results show that pupils are conscious of the fact that learning English requires mastering all the four language skills. In other words, they are aware of the importance of each aspect of English language learning. They also are aware that they have to develop the four language skills. However, they believe that speaking is the most crucial skill to be mastered due to its significance in daily life. Thus, since written tests do not assess their speaking abilities, they think that their test scores do not really reflect their levels in English language.

Moreover, we attempted to investigate learners' attitudes towards the implementation of a Formal Oral Test, and to identify the factors that contribute to their attitudes. The findings drawn from the preliminary questionnaires in the first phase of the study indicate that the pupils hesitated at the beginning. That is, they were not certain whether they had to agree with the idea of implementing a Formal Oral Test or not. However, the results obtained in the last phase of the study show that many of them think that it is a good strategy to develop their speaking skill.

In terms of the factors associated with their positive attitudes, we believe that the pupils formed their opinions based on their perceptions of English language learning and assessment. Besides, one of the factors that guided them to their opinions is the speaking test that they took in the second phase of this research. Many of them used words such as 'interesting', 'fun', 'happy', and 'excited' when describing the test. They also expressed their desire to take the speaking test again. Furthermore, there were other reasons that led to their positive attitudes towards the implementation of a Formal Oral Test. For instance, their beliefs that speaking tests will develop pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem, and it will improve pupils' test scores.

Moreover, this study sought to determine how learners perceive their experience of group speaking assessment. Similarly, when we compared the results of the first stage to those of the second stage, we noticed that more pupils now consider group assessment as the best method to assess pupils' speaking skills. This is mainly because they recognised its advantages when

they took the speaking test. For example, group format encourages pupils to interact with each other. It can also provide them with a comfortable context for speaking assessment and this will, in turn, reduces stress levels and test pressure.

With reference to the present study findings, it can be argued that group assessment had positive effects on the pupils' speaking performances, as well as their attitudes towards the incorporation of a Formal Oral Test. Therefore, we can say that all these results confirm the hypotheses on which the current research was based.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

To recapitulate, this study was based on the problem that the currently used English language tests in Algerian middle/intermediate schools do not assess pupils' speaking abilities. Hence, they do not reflect a reliable picture of pupils' achievement and progress. In an attempt to sensitise policy makers, test developers, and teachers to the necessity for speaking tests, the present study aimed at investigating pupils' attitudes towards the implementation of Formal Oral Test. Additionally, we sought to examine the usefulness of group speaking assessment. The findings of this research revealed that middle school pupils had positive attitudes towards the implementation of Formal Oral Test. Moreover, they showed interest in-group format as it provided a comfortable context for speaking assessment.

- **Recommendations**

Some recommendations can be drawn from this study. These are as follows:
- **For teachers**
- Teachers should give more attention to teaching the speaking skills.
- During all the classes, teachers are required to use different interaction patterns to develop pupils' speaking abilities.
- Teachers should provide pupils with more opportunities to practise oral communication skills.
- Teachers should use authentic materials.
- Finally, teachers are required to be creative in order to provide motivating, and challenging learning environment.
- **For pupils**
- Pupils are advised to practise speaking out of the classroom context in order to enhance their speaking abilities.
- Pupils are required to take advantage of opportunities offered in the classroom to practise their communication skills.
- It is important to be exposed to authentic language in order to develop vocabulary and acquire fluency.
- **For school administration**
- The administration should supply teachers with the necessary materials that can support teachers' efforts to develop pupils' speaking skills, such as computers, laptops and data show projectors.
- **For researchers**
- Future researchers are recommended to conduct other studies in the language-testing field. They are encouraged to consider speaking assessment in middle and high schools. Besides, they can carry out other studies to examine the effectiveness of the different speaking assessment formats, such as paired and group format.
- **For policy makers and test developers**
- They are recommended to consider the implementation of a Formal Oral Test in order to develop pupils' speaking skills, as well as to improve English language learning and assessment. Additionally, they are recommended to consider the use of group speaking assessment format for all the reasons discussed before.

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Appendix 1

The Preliminary Questionnaire for Pupils

Dear pupils,
This research is conducted to explore fourth year pupils' perceptions of language learning and assessment in "Cid Noureddine" Middle School, Tolga (Algeria). We would like to ask you for your opinions on this subject. Thank you for the time you are taking to complete this questionnaire. All answers will be held in the strictest confidentiality.

1.Why do you study English language?
- To satisfy school requirements. ☐
- To be able to pass the "Brevet" exam. ☐
- To be able to read and write in English language. ☐
- To be able to communicate with foreigners. ☐
- Other reasons. ☐

2.In you view, what aspects of English language is the most important?
- Vocabulary ☐
- Grammar ☐
- Pronunciation ☐
- All the above ☐

3. Please rank the following language skills in order of importance from 1 to 4 where 1 is the most important to you and 4 is the least important.
- Listening ☐
- Speaking ☐
- Reading ☐
- Writing ☐

4. Do achievement tests cover the content of what you have learnt?
- To a great extent ☐
- To some extent ☐
☐
☐

- To a very little extent
- No correspondence between the two

5. How are the testing methods used in these tests?

- The same in every test. ☐
- Vary slightly from one test to another. ☐
- Vary completely from one test to another. ☐

6. What do you think the currently used tests assess?

- Your degree of comprehension. ☐
- The amount of vocabulary you know. ☐
- Your mastery of grammatical structures. ☐
- Your ability to communicate. ☐
- All the above. ☐

7. How is the distribution of test-items among the test parts?

- Equal ☐
- Not equal ☐
- It depends from one test to another. ☐

8. Which language skills are almost neglected in the currently used tests?

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

9. Do you think the contents of these tests correspond with your interests?

- Yes. ☐
- No. ☐
- Somehow. ☐

How?………………………………………………………………………………………
……

10. Do your marks in tests usually reflect your progress and achievement in English language?

- Yes. ☐
- No. ☐
- To some extent. ☐

11. To what extent you are able to express yourself through writing?

- To a great extent. ☐
- To some extent. ☐
- To a very little extent. ☐

How?

……………………………………………………………………………………………

12. To what extent you are able to express yourself through speaking?

- To a great extent. ☐
- To some extent. ☐
- To a very little extent. ☐

How?

……………………………………………………………………………………………

13. In your opinion, should listening and speaking skills be given more importance in English language tests?

- Yes. ☐
- No. ☐

Why?……………………………………………………………………………………

14. Do you think that the implementation of a Formal Oral Test will be a good idea to improve English language assessment?

- Yes. ☐
- No. ☐

Why?……………………………………………………………………………………

15. How would you like your speaking performance to be assessed?
- Individually.   ☐
- In pairs.   ☐
- In groups.   ☐
Why?…………………………………………………………………………………

Appendix 2
The Final Questionnaire for Pupils

> **Dear pupils,**
>   *This research is conducted to explore fourth year pupils' perceptions of English language learning and assessment, and their attitudes towards the implementation of a Formal Oral Test. We would like to ask you for your opinions on this subject. Thank you for the time you are taking to complete this questionnaire. All answers will be held in the strictest confidentiality.*

1. How was the speaking test?
 - Very easy   - Easy   - Neutral   - Difficult   - Very difficult
2. Were the questions/tasks the ones you had never encountered or expected so far?
- Yes.   - No.   - Somehow.
3. Were the questions/tasks in the speaking test explicit and clear?
- Yes.   - No.   - Somehow.
4. How did you feel during the speaking test?
……………………………………………………………………………………………
5. Did the assessor encourage and motivate you during the speaking test?
- Yes.   - No.   - Somehow.
6. What were the difficulties that you faced during the test?
……………………………………………………………………………………………
7. What did the speaking test allow you to do?
……………………………………………………………………………………………
8. In your view, does group format provide an effective and a comfortable context for speaking assessment?
- Yes.   - No.   - Somehow.
How?
……………………………………………………………………………………………
9. Please rank the following language skills in order of importance from 1 to 4 where 1 is the most important to you and 4 is the least important to you.
- Listening   - Speaking   - Reading   - Writing
10. In your view, what aspect of English language is the most important one?
- Vocabulary   - Grammar   - Pronunciation   - All the above
11. Now, do you think that your marks in currently used tests usually reflect your progress and achievement in English language?
- Yes.   - No.   -To some extent.
Why?
……………………………………………………………………………………………
12. Do you think that the speaking test should be administered in a formal context for grades?
- Yes.   - No.
Why?
……………………………………………………………………………………………

Thank you very much for your help

English Speaking Test
Good morning. How are you today?

Part 01
First, I would like to know something about you.
Q1: Who do you spend time with after school?
Q2: Do enjoy reading books? Why?
Q3: Do you enjoy using the Internet in your free time?
Q4: Where would you like to go for your next holiday?

Part 02

In this part of the test, I am going to give each one of you a photograph. I would like you to talk about your photographs on your own for about a minute.
Here are the photographs. They show people spending time together in different situations.
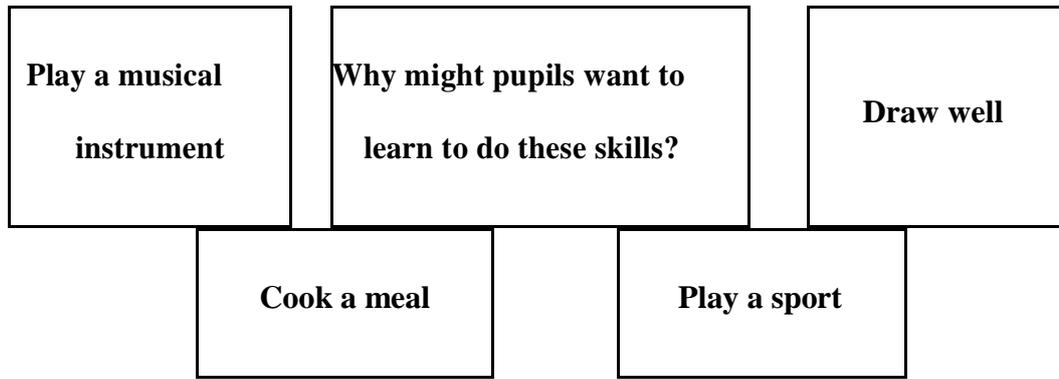
The Questions

- What are the people enjoying about spending time in these situations?
- Which one of these would you prefer to do? Why?

Part 03
Now, I would like you to talk about something together for about two minutes.
I would like you to imagine that the school is going to start some after school classes to encourage the pupils to learn new skills. Here are some ideas for the classes and a question for you to discuss. First, you have some time to look at the tasks.

Speak another foreign language

Play a musical instrument	Why might pupils want to learn to do these skills?		Draw well
	Cook a meal	Play a sport	

Now, talk to each other about why pupils might want to learn these skills.

The Questions

- Do you think classes like these would be popular with pupils? Why?
- How important do you think it is for people to try new activities?

Thank you. This is the end of the test.

Appendix 4
Interview for Pupils
The Questions

Q1: How long have you been studying English language?

Q2: Do you like English language? Why?

Q3: There are four language skills, which are listening, speaking, reading and writing. In your opinion, which language skill is the most important for you? Why?

Q4: You sat for an English language speaking Test a couple of days ago. Is that right? How was that test? How can you describe that speaking Test?

Q5: How did you feel during the speaking Test?

Q6: What were the difficulties that you faced during the Test?

Q7: What did the speaking Test allow you to do?

Q8: In your opinion, has group format provided you with an effective and a comfortable context for speaking assessment? How is that?

Q9: Do you think that a speaking Test should be administered in a formal context for grades? Why?

-End of Interview-
Thank you for your collaboration