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Speaking English as a Prominent Skill in Business Field

The Case of British Petroleum Company in Hassi Massaoud, Ouargla

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Dedication

*Praise to Allah who guided us to achieve
this goal.*

*We dedicate this work to our dear
parents, brothers and sisters.*

*To our supervisor, all our teachers and
friends.*

Farida/Houria

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Abstract

This piece of research is entitled “Speaking English as a prominent skill in business field”.

It consists of three chapters, the first chapter is speaking skill, the second is labeled speaking and communicating in business English and the third one is a practical part which is designed to measure the necessity and importance of spoken English in business context.

To do so, we have adapted the questionnaire as an appropriate instrument to collect information. Our experiment took place in “British Petroleum” company (bp) in Hassi Massaoud (Ouargla). We have randomly chosen a group of twenty employees to be our sample. The conclusion which is drawn after the data analysis and interpretation is that speaking English is very necessary in business area.

Key Words

Speaking skill, Business English, Business Communication, British Petroleum Company(bp).

List of Abbreviations

BE: Business English

EAP: English for Academic Purposes

EOP: English for Occupational Purposes

ESP: English for Specific Purposes

bp : British Petroleum

List of Figures

Figures	Page
Diagram1: The main branches of ESP.....	21
Diagram2: Definition of BE.....	22

List of Tables

Table	Page
Table 1: Employees' gender.....	31
Table 2: Employees' age.....	31
Table 3: Employees' nationality.....	32
Table 4: Rate of employees who have studied in private school.....	32
Table 5: The main skill to be promoted by employees.....	32
Table 6: The importance of being proficient in spoken English for employees.....	33
Table 7: The importance of speaking skill for employees context.....	33
Table 8: The frequency of using spoken English in (BP) company.....	34
Table 9: Employees' answers about devoting training courses in their company.....	34
Table 10: Classification of employees' current level in spoken English.....	35
Table 11: The approach focused on during the training.....	35
Table 12: Skills those participants rely on to enhance their speaking ability.....	35
Table 13: The skill that seems to serve employees more in and out of work.....	36
Table 14: Employees' views about the necessity of Spoken English in business world, nowadays.....	36
Table 15: the appropriate medium of communication British Petroleum Company.....	37
Table 16: Areas needed in business English.....	37
Table 17: The role daily interaction in the development of spoken ability.....	38
Table 18: Employees' opinion about the difficulties in understanding non native speakers.....	38
Table 19: Solutions required if communication breaks down.....	38
Table 20: Employees' opinions about if they mispronunciation of a phrase or a sentence....	39
Table 21: Listener's reactions toward mispronunciation of some employees.....	39
Table 22: The decision the mistaken employees took on the light of their listener's reaction.....	40

General Introduction

I. General Introduction

1.1. Overview of the Study

Speaking as an act of communication is very important in human life and the ability of speaking offers a lot of functions such as giving an opinion, selling, buying, and interaction with the others. Any one has mother tongue which allows him to communicate within his community though, it is so important to learn another language with which we can interact with foreigners. English is dominant language in the world nowadays. So, it is extended in many fields such as Business, etc. Communicating in business field implies two main tools-Speaking and Writing. Our focus in this research is directed to the spoken medium.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

English language becomes as a Lingua franca over the world. This makes it needed in the business context as a medium of communication. For this reason, we conduct our study to measure the following problem: to what extent speaking English is an important skill in business field?

1.2. Hypothesis

Speaking as a medium of communication is involved in many fields of life. In business contextspeaking English is increased nowadays. So that, we hypothesis that speaking English is very necessary in business context for communicative purposes.

1.4. Aim of the Study

Through the present research, we aim at investigating how important is speaking English in business field. So, our main aim is to see if spoken English can be an effective instrument for bridging the gap between native and non native speakers in business context.

1.3. Structure of the Dissertation

This thesis is divided into three chapters. The first one is designed to give definition of speaking skill, what is involved in speaking English competently in addition to some activities to develop speaking skill, concluding with the importance of it. The second chapter consists of two

subsections. The first one is entitled “Speaking in Business English”, and the second is “Communicating in Business English”. The last chapter labeled “The Importance of Spoken English in Business Context”. It is devoted to the analysis and interpretation of the collected data by means of employees’ questionnaire.

Theoretical Part

Chapter one

Speaking Skill

II. Chapter one

Speaking Skill

2.1. Introduction

Speaking is an innate human being capacity which is developed by time. That is why, it takes a central part in second language teaching and learning. Speaking is a productive macro skill to language that involves an interaction between two or more participants. Also, Speaking is an essential medium of communication in our daily life. Since, English language becomes the language of the world many peoples aim at acquiring it. Moreover, they are interested in learning the spoken English in order to communicate successfully.

This chapter presents the definition of speaking skill, its elements, moving to the integration between speaking and listening skills. Also, it will present the elements involved f in speaking English competently and some activities to develop speaking skills finally, the importance of speaking skill.

2.2. Definition of SpeakingSkill

Speaking is in the heart of communication in both general and business English. Chaney (1998) defines speaking as “*the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, in a variety of contexts.*”(p.13). In other words, speaking is an important skill that deserves more attention whether in first or second language learning and teaching, because it is the way for students to express themselves and cope with each communicative situation.

Also, speaking is a complicated productive skill that involves more than just pronouncing words. As (Brown, 1994; Burns & Joyce, 1997) said “*Speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing and receiving and processing information.*” (p.12). Moreover, learners should be aware of when, why and in what ways to produce language

(sociolinguistic competence) rather than knowing how to produce certain points of language, means linguistic competence (grammar, pronunciation, or vocabulary).

2.3. Elements of Speaking

To speak English accurately and fluently, speakers are normally should be aware of: firstly, language features, and secondly they should be able to process information and language at the moment of interacting with the other interlocutors. Harmer (2001, p.269-271) mentioned elements of language features and mental and social processing as follows:

2.3.1. Language feature

There are a number of devices which are necessary for spoken production.

- **Connected speech**

Speakers should link their utterances and do not use separated phonemes.

These sounds may be modified omitted added or weakened.

- **Expressive devices**

Student should acquire at least some “*suprasegmental features*” such as: body language and changing the pitch because these devices help them to transmit the message clearly “*especially in face-to-face interaction*”.

- **Lexis and grammar**

Learners usually use the same lexical utterances in different functions. In this case, the teacher is asked to provide them with different phrases which convey different functions, so that they can use them in different speaking situations.

- **Negotiation language**

Learners benefit a lot from negotiation of the language that is why the role of the teacher is to give them some phrases which help them to ask for further explanation. Also, speakers discourse should be well structure and formulated to be clear for the listener (p.269).

2.3.2. Mantel / social processing

Knowing the language skills or devices as a part of spoken production is not enough since it is involves immediate processing while interacting with one or more participants.

- **Language processing**

Learners need to be able to process language in their minds. They have to put information in coherent order so that the listener grasps what the speaker intended to say. In addition, speakers should be able to retrieve words and phrases from their memories to use them when they are interacting with others.

- **Interacting with others**

Most speaking situations involve interaction between two or more interlocutors. This indicates that a good speaker should be a good listener as well. So, understanding others feeling and knowing when to take the floor of speech or allowing the others talk is very important.

- **Information processing (on the spot)**

The more we are rapid in processing information the more “*effective we are as instant communicators*” and vice versa. So that speakers should be ready for processing information. And they have to response to the others talk immediately. (p. 271).

2.4. Integration between Listening and Speaking

Speaking and listening are prominent skills in acquiring communicative competence in language learning. These two skills cannot be separated, because speakers are in need of listeners as Redmond and Vrchota (2007) said: “*speakers are at the mercy of listeners.*” (p.12). Besides, the listener is expected to decode and understand the speaker’s message that should be comprehensible.

Tarigan (1990) said that “*speaking is a language skill that is developed in child life, which is preceded by listening skill, and at that period speaking skill is learned.*” (p.3-4). That is to say, there have to be at first a spoken language to listen to, then an interaction and negotiation between a speaker and listener for a verbal communication to occur. So, being a good listener makes a good speaker.

2.5. The Elements involved in speaking English Competently

According to Hedge (2000) there are three elements which contribute in developing speaking ability: Distinguishing types of speaking situation, making oneself understood, and managing interaction (p.263-264-265-266-267-268).

2.5.1. Distinguishing types of speaking situation

Concerning this element, Hedge (2000) focused on “*conversation classes*”. She stated characteristics of conversations according to Cook (as cited in Hedge,2000,) who sees that “*conversation as relatively unstructured and informal as compared with ,say, more formal and sometimes more rehearsed situation for speaking such as meeting, interviews, and seminars*”(p.263-264). Another feature which Hedge mentioned is that “the content sometimes unpredictable and the length of each speaker’s turn is unspecified conversation”. Also Cook categorized conversations under interactional speaking situation (as cited in Hedge, 2000, p.264).

In addition, Hedge (2000) argued that the concept of genre can be a criteria of classifying speaking situation she said “it is possible to identify a predictable shape to some genres for example business presentation of a new product”. She added, “*the study of these genre might facilitate ways of participating them*” (p.265).

2.5.2. Making oneself understood

For Hedge (2000) there are three ways belong to communication strategies in which learners try to make themselves understood while speaking. Faerch and Kasper (as cited in Hedge, 2000) separated between two categories avoidance behavior and achievement behavior. In the first one, the speaker is isolated and not participated in the conversation or change the topic. In the second category the speaker tries to manage with problem for example, using gestures or paraphrasing.

The third way of making oneself understood is to be able to negotiate meaning. Sometimes, the speakers do not catch the meaning very well or the message is vague, so that he/she needs to negotiate it with the other participant to be more clear. Besides, the negotiation of information Hedge(2000) added “*it also involves knowing the language needed for checking whether or not the listener has understood and, as a listener, knowing the language needed for requesting*

clarification or repletion, or indicating comprehension”(p.266). In this case teachers have to provide learners with the appropriate language which help them in negotiation of meaning.

2.5.3. Managing interaction

Conducting a conversation needs specific rules, “*that seem to govern normal interaction*”, to be followed by the speaker. Hedge (2000, p.267-268) mentioned some of them:

2.5.3.1. Opening and closing

For opening a conversation there are opening statements such as “*it is a nice day, isn't it?*”. And always an “opening followed by a response or an answer”. Usually, Conversation needs to be closes smoothly and carefully thus there are pre closing signals such as ‘*I don't want to keepyou ...*’ before the exact closing (p.267).

2.5.3.2. Responding appropriately in fixed routines

Sometimes speaking to your colleague or relatives requires responding information at the same time such us, (enquires about health, invitation, greetings). And sometimes exchanging information demands more than one response. Such responses or ‘*adjacencypairs*’ like Hedge labels needs to be well structured so it is useful for the student to learn and practice the appropriate language. Hedge(2000) added that “*they also need relevant cultural competence to know what is an appropriate response, for example Hello, how are you the expected reply is 'fine thanks' or 'Not too bad, thanks' rather than a catalogue of health problems*” (ibid.).

2.5.3.3. Taking turns

To enter a conversation seems very difficult for many students, since spoken interaction involves “*a rapid sequence*”. There are many devices and indications which facilitate interrering to a conversation or allowing student to contribute in spoken interaction. Hedge(2000) mentioned some of them:“*falling intonation; formulating a turn which fits the flow of the conversation and which picks up what has already been said; and finding the language to express it ; tag endings like 'isn't it' and to a questions like 'what do you think?'*”(p.268)

Also, she noted that students of English face difficulties to interrupt in cultural conversation because it is different from their mother tongue. For this sake they have to learn some acceptable phrases which help them to do so (ibid.).

2.5.3.4. Topic management

Hedge (2000) noted that in contrast with informal conversation where the student can move through several topics in one gone in which “they need a repertoire of topics to participate effectively». Students in the formal conversation need to conduct their topics passing through the following elements: choose the required topic, to give an introduction, and to move from one topic to another smoothly using some expressions like “*That reminds me...*” or “*By the way...*” (p.268).

2.6. Activities to Develop Speaking Skills

Because speaking is very important in our everyday interactions and it is not so easy to be mastered. Davies (2000) and other linguists provided a range of activities in order to promote speaking skills. Below are some of them:

➤ Discussions and debates

Teacher arranges learners in groups of four or five members, and then they select such a topic of their interest ‘internet’ as an example. After given minutes, each group discusses and defends his view agree or disagree. These activities teach students how to express and justify themselves politely while disagreeing with the others (p.86).

➤ Simulation and role play

They differ only in the point that simulation is more elaborate .i.e., students can bring items to the class to create a realistic environment, such as a ‘stethoscope’ for a student while imitating a doctor. Learners also have various social roles in role play, for instance, acting as a chairman in a business meeting. And teacher can even provide them with information about the role. These activities can be considered as training and motivation to students to raise their self-confidence (ibid.).

➤ **Story telling**

It is an interesting activity that encourages learners to speak and develop their creative thinking. Students are supposed to summarize stories or tales they heard from other persons or they create their own stories to present to their classmates in addition to telling jokes.

➤ **Interviews**

Students can have another chance to practice speaking outside the class by interviewing different people in selected topics. After, they organize their own interview questions, for example, to interview an author or a main character of such a story. This experience makes learners more socialized.

➤ **Story completion**

It is too enjoyable; teacher and students sit in a circle. Teacher starts telling a story then he stops and lets each student continues from where the previous one stopped. Till the end, everyone produces from four to ten sentences and each can add new characters, events, etc. In short, it is a collective practice of speaking production.

➤ **Find the differences**

This is a pair work. Each couple of learners is given two different pictures, for instance one picture of pupils in the zoo another one of pupils in the garden. Students in pairs discuss the similarities and/or differences in pictures.

➤ **Picture describing**

It promotes learners' imagination and their public speaking skills. Through giving groups of learners pictures and drawings to describe, then to sequence in a chronological order. Or, to give each group just one picture differs from the one of the other. Every group members describe and discuss their picture together. After that, they choose a spokesperson to describe the picture for the whole class.(Kayi, 2006, ¶.6-7-8-12-13).

2.7. The Importance of Speaking

In the traditional approaches of language teaching and learning, the speaking skill was neglected in many classrooms where the emphasis was mainly on reading and writing. The Grammar Translation method is one example, Richards and Rodgers (2001) mention that reading and writing are the essential skills to be focused on however, little or no attention is paid to the skill of speaking and listening.

In the other hand, communicative approach shifted the attention to all the four skills. Speaking was given more importance since oral communication involves speech where learners are expected to interact verbally with other people. Moreover, the teachers' talk will be reduced; that is to say, learners are supported to talk more in the classroom.

Speaking a foreign language or a second language is beneficial for the student because it is related to the knowledge of that language, and by which student or learner acquires means of communication. So he/she can exchange information. Celce-Murcia (2001) found that *"for most people, the ability to speak a language is synonymous with knowing that language since speech is the most basic means of communication"*(p.103). Therefore, (Sárosdy, Farczàdi Bencze, Poor&Vadnay ,2006) declared that *"Of all the four skills (listening, reading, speaking, writing) speaking seems to be the most important as people who know a language reflected to as speakers of that language, as if speaking included all other kinds of knowing a language"* (p.57).

The ability to speak a foreign language is very beneficial in our life Luoma (2004) saw that: *"our personality, our self image, our knowledge of the world and our ability to reason and express our thoughts are all reflected in our spoken performance in a foreign language"* (p.IX). She added the ability to speak a foreign language become the aim of many learners *'being able to speak to friend, colleagues visitors and even strangers, in their language or in a language which both speakers can understand is surly the goal of very many learners'*(ibid.).

Also, Hedge (2000) said *"for many students, learning to speak competently in English is priority"* (p.261). The skill of speaking might serve a lot of functions for the learner, thus Hedge mentioned students need for this skill. She said *"they may need this skill for variety of reasons, for example to keep up rapport in relationships, influence people, and win or lose negotiations. It is a skill by which they are judged while first impressions are being formed"* (ibid.)

Speaking is useful tool for teaching. Teachers depend a lot on speaking skill to transmit their message of knowledge. It is a means by which a teacher fills of confidence. Children either need to learn this skill for thinking or learning.

The importance of speaking is more revealed with the integration of the other language skills. For instance, speaking can help students to develop their vocabulary and grammar and then improving their writing skill. With speaking, learners can express their personal feeling, opinions or ideas; tell stories; inform or explain; request; converse and discuss, i.e. through speaking, we can display the different functions of language.

Speaking is very important outside the classroom as well. Many companies and organizations look for people who speak English very well for the purpose of communicating with other people. So, speakers of foreign languages have more opportunities to get jobs in such companies. Baker and Westrup (2003) supported that *“a student who can speak English well may have greater chance for further education, of finding employment and gaining promotion.”*(p.5).briefly saying, the functions or the benefits of speaking skill is uncountable.

2.8. Conclusion

In this chapter we have dealt with some theoretical concepts which are related to the speaking skill and how to improve this ability. Starting with the definition of speaking skill as a key tool for communication. So, the learners should be aware of the elements of speaking that are the language features and mantel/ social processing.

Speaking skill cannot be separated from listening since they are closely related as we have seen previously. Moreover, in order to promote the speaking skill we have provided three elements which are: distinguishing types of speaking situation, making oneself understood, and managing interaction. In addition, to some suggested activities.

After that, we have shown the importance of speaking skill, because it is in the heart of everyday interactions. In other words, we can use speaking English in different domains of our daily life, such as medicine, Law, economics, and business, etc. The latter will be the focus in the next chapter.

Chapter Two

Speaking and Communicating in Business English

III. Chapter Two

Speaking and Communicating in Business English

3.1. Introduction

“*English has become the international language of business.*” (Dudley-Evans and St John, p.53). That is why, it occupies the field of interest of adult learners over the world whether they are working or preparing to work in business contexts.

So, speaking English is the most appropriate medium to interact in business areas. This fact is discussed in the present chapter which is divided in to two sub-sections. In the first one, we will deal with speaking in business English including the definition of ESP and its main branches, followed by the definition of business English then speaking skill in business English, ending with techniques to improve business speaking skill. The second one is communicating in business English in which the focus will be on the main reasons for communicating orally in business. After that, the definition of business communication, concluding with the communication needs.

3.2. Speaking in Business English

3.2.1. Definition of ESP

There are many definitions of ESP and all of them noted that learner’s needs are the key element behind the appearance of English for Specific Purpose (ESP).

According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987) the main variable which contributes to the appearance of ESP as a branch of language teaching and learning is “*the learner’s needs to learn English for specific reasons.*” So, ESP has been developed to serve the different needs of the different groups of learners. (P.19)

Moreover, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) saw that “*ESP is a branch to language teaching and learning as well, but not as a product.*” Besides, ESP does not involve a particular

methodologies or materials for teaching process, they said: *“ESP must be seen as an approach not as a product. ESP is not a particular kind of language or methodology, nor does it consist of particular type of teaching material.”* (P.19). And they saw that the foundation of ESP is due to the simple question: why does this learner need to learn a foreign language? .Hutchinson and waters emphasized on learner’s role in designing ESP content and method and they defined needs as the reasons for learning. Finally they concluded that *“ESP, then, is an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to contents and methods are based on the learner’s reason for learning”*(ibid.).

Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) in their definition of ESP, provided three presiding definitions of Hutchinson and waters as we have seen then Streven’s definition which is depends on the distinction between two variables characteristics and four absolute characteristics of ESP. And Robinson’s definition is concentrated on two defining criteria which are: *“ESP is normally goal- directed and that ESP courses developed from need analysis, which aims to specify as closely as possible what exactly it is that students have to do through the medium of English”*.(p.3). And two characteristics of ESP courses which are: *“ESP courses are generally constrained by a limited time period, in which their objectives have to be achieved, and are taught to adults in homogeneous classes in terms of the work or specialist studies that the student are involved in.”*(ibid.)

Dudley-Evans and St John commented on these three definitions and they see that all of them has *“validity but also weakness”* and they select Strevens’definition as the *“most comprehensive of the three quoted”* (ibid.)

Dudley-Evans and St John modified Strevens’ definition of ESP and removed the fourth absolute characteristics which is ESP is *“contrast with general English”*. (ibid.). And they added other variable characteristics as follows:

I. Absolute characteristics

- ESP is designed to meet specific needs of the learner;
- ESP makes use of the underlying methodology and activities of the disciplines it serves
- ESP is centered on the language (grammar, lexis, and register), skills, and discourse genres appropriate to these activities.

II. Variable characteristics

- ESP may be related to or designed for specific disciplines;
- ESP may use, in specific teaching situation, different methodology from that of general English;
- ESP is likely to be designed for adult learners, either at tertiary level institution or in a professional work situation. It, could, however, be used for learners at secondary school level;
- ESP is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students. (P.04-05).

3.2.2. The Main Branches of ESP

ESP has been always divided into two main branches of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Occupational Purposes (EOP). These two subdivisions of ESP are also divided by their turns into other branches, according to discipline or professional area as represented in the diagram which is designed by Dudley-Evans and St John (1998, p.06):

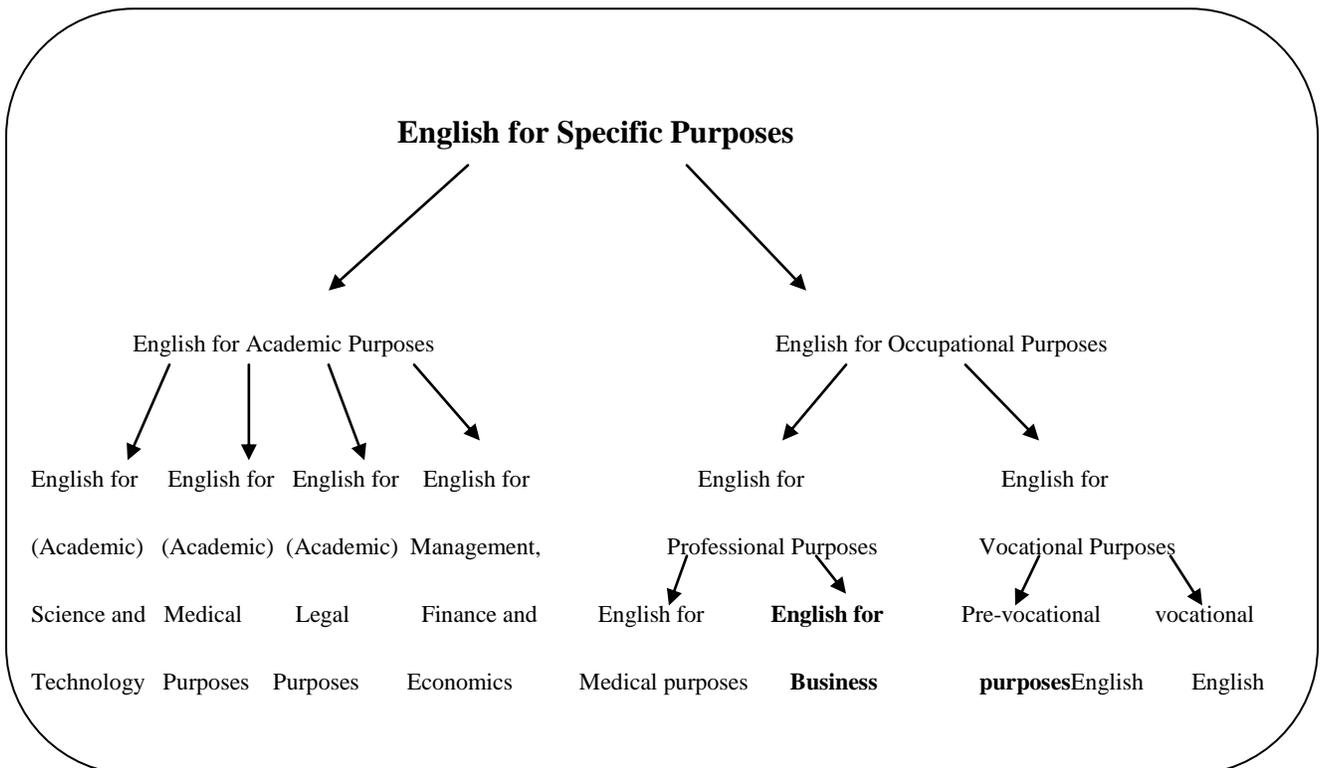


Diagram3.1. ESP Classification by professional area (As cited in Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998)

3.2.3. Definition of Business English

EBP is one of the most important types of ESP that cannot be easily determined in such linguistic terms. (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998).

For Donna (2000), adult learners and workers have a great demand on Business English courses rather than courses of General English, because the first ones depend clearly on the occupational purposes of the learners and serve their needs.

According to Pickett (1986 as cited in Dudley-Evans & St John, *ibid.*) “A lot nearer the everyday language spoken by the general public than many other segments of ESP” as well as he represented his definition in the following diagrams:

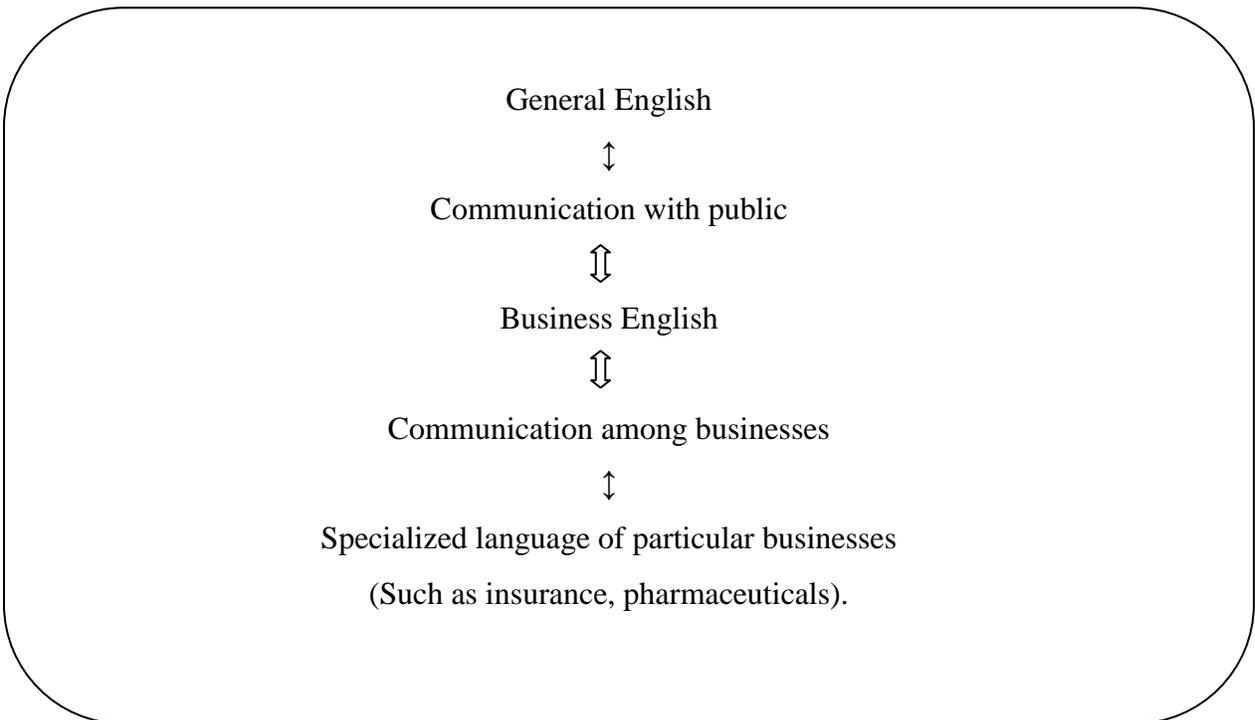


Diagram 3. 2. Definition of BE (As cited in Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998, p. 55)

This diagram shows two aspects of business communication. The first one, communication with the public .i.e., a part of Business English is similar to General English in

the case, that people involved in BE communicate with the public (ibid.). The second one, communication within (intra) a company or between (inter) companies. That is to say, the specific part of the language that occurs when business people communicate with each other within a company or between companies (ibid.).

3.2.4. Speaking Skill in Business English

According to Dudley- Evans and St John (1998), Communication orally in business English is fundamental, though written language is the most reliable in doing a research. Consequently, grammar and lexis are neglected in business English. They noted that:

Much of the language-based research has been on written documents, yet spoken transactions are fundamental to business. In addition, little the research has considered interaction between two non-native speakers, although this is the communication that predominates internationally. Thus there is, as yet, no identifiable core grammar and lexis for business English, but some broad areas to focus on. (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998, p.64 - 65).

For Dudley-Evans and St John “*spoken monologue, that is oral presentation, can be a feature of EOP and EAP work*”. (p.112). In other words, There are two basic components of oral presentation that are: language and skills also it requires confidence. This latter is one of the important features of spoken language as (Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998) mentioned “*confidence is significant factor for many people in speaking language, and classroom feedback should based on maintaining and increasing confidence*”.(p.112).

ESP courses took those variables into consideration. Moreover, it focused on the following devices which are related to oral presentation, structuring, visuals, voice, and advance signaling as well as language.

- **Structuring**

Oral presentation follows the same structure as the written one because the listener is like the reader in following the events carefully. Dudley-Evans and St John said “*structuring a presentation has much in common with structuring written communication in as much as listeners want a clear map to follow; there should be a start, a middle and an end*”.(ibid.).

- **Visual**

There is another way of contacting with people is eye contact which has its indication and meaning. *“It is often said, visuals are worth a thousand words”*. In addition, there is *“specific spoken language associated with visual aids”* (ibid.).

- **Voice**

Voice is one component of spoken language that has many devices to be more clear (phrasing, posing, and speed of delivery, volume and tone variation). (ibid.)

- **Advance Signaling or Signposts**

It is like a guider or aid for the listener to order the information and following visual signals *“for instance through enumeration as in ‘I’ve divided my talk into three parts ‘or advance labeling as in ‘the next table helps us understand why’”* (ibid.).

Oral presentation can be provided through reading and writing-based projects as Dudley-Evans and St John mentioned in *“the presentations are prepared and given by groups. Such a component has motivational value where learners want to improve their spoken English even though their main immediate needs are with the written word”* (ibid.). In addition, there are techniques that should be respect by the speakers in spoken monologue: *‘the stand-up, prepared talk accompanied by visuals’*. But in business presentation people often need a short presentation *“for many business people the short, fairly impromptu presentation in a meeting is a more common event; they may asked to state the current position of project, to fill in details, to explain the need for extra resources”*(Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998, p.114).

3.2.5. Techniques to Improve Business Speaking Skill in English

The Practice Office and Wright (2010) provided ten top techniques to enhance or maximize business speaking skill in English as follows:

Technique1: Set smart goals

“Define your goals and know how to measure them” (Practice office and Wright, 2010)

We should not design goals haphazard and let them without time limited. Thus, we have to guide our self with time limitation. Smart goals have five features as follows:

- ❖ Specific: specifically define goals.
- ❖ Measurable: Establish criteria for measuring progress towards achieving a goal.
- ❖ Achievable: Humanly possible to achieve with resources and time frame you have.
- ❖ Realistic: set a realistic goal to help you make measurable progress-for motivation.
- ❖ Timely: a goal must have a time frame or else it could last forever and never finish. (P.VI).

Technique2: Make it a game

“We learn best through fun challenges” (Practice Office and Wright, 2010)

Everyone knows that when challenge himself to do or achieve something so, he must reach it. In this case *“we believe that accelerated learning happens when the brain is entertained and challenged”* (P.VII). *“From this point of view let us make a challenge as fun, so, when you have to do something, ask yourself, how can I convert this into a game (With a fan challenges)?”* (ibid.).

Technique3: know yourself

“Learn what you do well and what needs improving” (Practice Office and Wright, 2010)

It is said that knowing your weaknesses is a step toward success unless you will improve it. In other words, *“Know your strengths and areas to improve”* (P.VIII).

Technique4: Find business speaking partners

“You’re not alone- find business speaking partners” (Practice Office and Wright, 2010)

To improve your business speaking skill, you should find a partner to talk with and to whom you can train your speaking ability or practice your language. *“New technology offers many opportunities to practice business speaking”*. For example, *“Online language learning communities enable to meet people looking to exchange and practice language. They focus on*

general English but if you know which type of partner you want, you find business speaking partner” (P.IX).

Technique 05: Squeeze your time

“Use your time productively” (Practice Office and Wright,2010)

The practice office provided “some suggestions to help you use your time productively” (P.X) as follows:

- Before starting business speaking set your goal criteria.
- Then, record yourself either using audacity or using your web come software.
- Then, ask for feedback based on your criteria.

Technique 06: Get a progress report

Motivation is the key element behind success and progress or continuation. According to Practice Office and Wright (2010) *“Without motivation we quickly lose interest and often decide not to continue” (P.XI).* In addition, motivation comes from progress after evaluation. *“Motivation comes from knowing that we’re making progress. This best achieved by asking others (you respect) to evaluate you and give you feedback” (ibid.).*

Technique 07: Good communicators

In global business world, we may encounter different professionals with different spoken levels in English, for Practice Office and Wright (2010) *“some will be extremely fluent, while some you will barely understand” (P.XII).* Though good communicators do not necessarily are fluent ones because *“some of the best communicators are that ones who are less fluent and have strong accent” (ibid.).* So that there are shared characteristics of a good communicators:

- Getting your ideas across (transmitting your ideas to people).
- Making sure you are understood.
- Communicating with confidence.

Technique 08: Clear, simple and concise

“*Change the chip in your brain*” Practice Office and Wright (2010, P.XIII)

Many people who use English language for international business are non native speakers. And, they need to speak English for the sake of communication, so they have to be Simple, Clear and Concise (it is called CSC ship) in their interaction to achieve effective and quick communication.

Technique 09: Cultural norms

Good communicators are the ones who know their and others’ culture to interact efficiently with the others from target culture. For Practice Office and Wright (2010), “*Each culture has unique ‘dos and don’ts’ that can be very different from those in your own culture. They called cultural norms*” (P.XIV).

Technique 10: Communication Techniques

“*Monroe’s Motivated Sequence*” (Practice Office and Wright 2010)

“*It’s a simple communication technique used by sales people to persuade*” (P.XV).The five elements of the motivated sequence are:

1. Attention.
2. Need.
3. Satisfy.
4. Visualization.
5. Action.

3.3. Communicating in Business English

3.3.1. Definition of Business Communication

Communication is the best way to success in any business, for instance when you want to sell a product or answer a query, etc. (Bennie 2009). Also, Bennie (2009) claimed that communication is “*the process by which information is exchanged.*” (p.1)

Moreover Rodgers (1998) saw that *“it is intended for advanced-intermediate to advanced students who are preparing to be or presently are business majors, as well as for business people who wish to improve their English and communication skills.”* (p.1)

3.3.2. The Main Reasons for Communicating Orally in Business

Communication in business requests for written or spoken mediums. However, it has certain reasons to appeal greatly to spoken one as Bennie (2009) noted below:

- To have a discussion: Discussion with the others via chatting, memo or a letter is very difficult since written medium lacks some devices like gestures and rapid response which may facilitate oral communication.
- To receive instant feedback from the audience: Spoken language involves immediate response from the other partner. However, sometimes a careful response is better than rapid one in many situations.
- To be able to judge the audience’s reaction to what you are saying: while we are interacting with the others we may receive a comment. And judging what the others saying about us is in the core of communication. And this will be happening just in *“face-to-face interaction”*
- For speed: comparing written and spoken mediums we found that *“Even the fast typist or writer cannot match the speed at which we speak.”* So, to communicate in fast way demands oral or verbal interaction rather than written one.
- If the person with whom you to communicate have initiated the conversation: If someone speaks with you so you should respond to him with the same medium. Unless you cannot express the response clearly. In this case, it is preferable to do that with the written medium. (p.2).

3.3.3. Communication Needs

According to Frendo (2005) *“Different types of communication inevitably give rise to different types of communication needs.”* (p.17). The analysis of communication needs shed lights on the various situations in which learners will use multi style of discourse.

The first part of communication needs analysis determines the learners' purposes, means what do they need English for, for example, they may need to be able to use the telephone with English speaking clients or to work within foreign companies, etc.

So, to analyze these needs, you can use observation, questionnaires and interviews in addition to other tools. If, for example observation was not an effective device in analyzing needs it is possible to adapt questionnaire. The latter, can be so helpful to serve the learners' communication needs. On the one hand, the answers of the direct questions (questionnaires) show the needed skills in the target situations. On the other, these answers will be used to design classroom activities and then to diagnose the target language. To exemplify, when studying about typical meetings; the teacher will need to know the content of the discussion, the discourse (formal/informal) and the proportion of attendance, etc. this provides the teacher with more information about such a type of meeting.

The other main part of communication needs analysis is concerned with the level of language use and the communicative competence of learners. So that, the placement test is used as valuable tool to place learners by comparing their needs and abilities. The good placement test should be valid (should test what it is tended to test), face validity (credible to learners), authentic (reflects the target language) and reliable (having the same or nearly the same results when doing the same test by different testers and test doers at different times). In addition to the diagnostic test that examine any weaknesses. In short, these tests help teachers a lot in filling the gaps and scrutinizing the target needs in order to progress the communicative skills of learners.

3.4. Conclusion

Because of the internationality of English language that makes the world one community. This leads to the increase of the exchange of the information between English speakers and non-English speakers. The latter tended to improve their business speaking skill. As, has been mentioned in this chapter which contains of two main parts. The first part is speaking in business English, under this title we have reviewed ESP definition and its main branches, besides the definition of business English and speaking in business English. In addition, we have cited such techniques to improve business speaking skill in English. The second part has been labeled

communicating in business English. It includes the main reasons for communicating in business, moreover the definition of business communication and communication needs.

Practical part

Chapter Three

The Importance of Spoken English in Business Context

IV. Chapter Three

The Importance of Spoken English in Business Context

4.1. Introduction

After the background knowledge we have provided in the preceding chapters, it is high time to measure our hypothesis on the basis of practical study. This chapter is organized as follows: sample, description of the questionnaire, administration of it, data analysis, and its interpretation.

4.2. Sample

This sample consists of twenty employees. They are mixed female (4) and male (16). The strategy which we followed to choose these participants is simple random sampling. So, we selected the required number (20) of the participants randomly in which all of them have an equal chance to be a selected. This method is reliable in collecting valid data. It is called “Epsem sampling”. According to Ross(2005) *“Epsem is widely applied in educational research because it is usually lead to self-weighting samples in which the sample arithmetic mean obtained from the sample data is unbiased is estimate of the population mean”*(p.09).

4.3. Description of the questionnaire

The experimental study of this thesis is conducted though a questionnaire. This later was oriented to twenty of the employees of ‘British Petroleum’ company (BP) in HassiMassaoud (Ouargla). It consists of five pages. And the questions were closed ones in the form of multiple choice in which the respondents have to pick up the appropriate answer(s) or ‘yes’, ‘no’ questions in addition to open question were they have to write their comments or additions if they have. This questionnaire was administered to be answer in no more than twenty minutes.

4.4. Administration of the questionnaire

The questionnaire was piloted on the 20th May 2014. Since it was impossible to gather all the employees in one place so, it was preferable to submit some of the sheets to an assistant to give them to the participants to answer them, on the one hand. On the other, we were near some

of the participants and we provided them short introduction about the questionnaire. Some of the employees have finished the answers in ten minutes whereas, the others they spend more than this because of their work interruption.

4.5. Analysis of Results

4.5.1. Employees' Questionnaires Analysis

I. Personal information

Option	Number	Rate	Total
Males	14	70%	20
Females	6	30%	100%

Table 01: Employees' gender

This table shows that the rate of male employees is (70%) whereas the rate of females is (30%) this means that males are more interested in business field.

Option	Number	Rate
20	5	25%
40	10	50%
More	5	25%

Table 02: Employees' age

In this table we classified the age of employees both males and females into three columns. The first column is of (20) years old. The second is of (40) years old and the third is of more than (40) years old. After the analysis, we found that (50%) of employees are 40years old and (50%) is divided into (25%) for 20 years old and (25%) for more than (40%) years old. That is to say, in our sample the employees are mixed between adults and old men and women, but most of them are matures.

Option	Number	Rate
Algerian	12	60%
Foreign	8	40%

Table 03: *Employees' nationality*

According to this chart, we notice that this company is consisted of Algerians whose percentage is (60%) and foreigners who are (40%). This requires daily interactions between them through English language since it becomes the world language. So, we devoted our study to see the importance of spoken English in business area.

Q 04: Have you studied in private school?

Option	Number	Rate	Total
Yes	10	50%	20
No	10	50%	100%

Table 04: *Rate of employees who have studied in private school*

Concerning this question, the half of our participants (50%) stated that they have studied in private school in order to develop certain skills.

Q 05: If yes, what was your main skill to promote?

Option	Number	Rate	Total
Speaking skill	6	60%	10
Reading skill	0	0%	10
Writing skill	2	20%	10
All of them	2	20%	10

Table 05: *The main skill to be promoted by employees*

The answers of employees about the main skill to promote in private school was (60%) for speaking skill, (0%) reading, writing (20%) and all of them (20%). These results determine that speaking is the main skill to be developed.

Q 06: How important for you to be as proficient as possible in spoken English?

Option	Number	Rate
Not important	0	0%
Little important	0	0%
Important	4	20%
Very important	16	80%

Table 06: *The importance of being proficient in spoken English for employees*

Because this company is multinational, spoken English is demanded. For this reason, the majority of the employees see that being proficient in spoken English is very important (80%), while (20%) see that it is important to be proficient.

II. Speaking English for Business Purposes

Q 07: To what extent speaking is an important skill in your context?

Option	Number	Rate
not important	0	0%
important	6	30%
very important	14	60%

Table 07: *The importance of speaking skill for employee's context*

For (70%) of (BP) employees speaking skill is very important, whereas (30%) reported that speaking is an important skill and non of them stated that it is not important. It is obvious that spoken English is more necessary in their workplace.

Q 08: How much spoken English is used in your company?

Option	Number	Rate
Seldom	0	0%
Usually	6	30%
Frequently	14	70%

Table 08:*The frequency of using spoken English in (BP) company*

We asked this question to seek information about the frequency of using spoken English in (BP) company. So, we found that it is used frequently as (70%) of participants reported, whereas (30%) reported that they use it usually.

Q9:Does your company devote training courses to progress your spoken English?

Option	Number	Rate
Yes	20	100%
No	0	0%

Table 9:*Employees' answers about devoting training courses in their company*

In order to progress the speaking level of BP employees, all the participants declared that their company devotes training courses for them.

Q 10: How is your current level in spoken English?

Option	Number	Rate
Average	4	20%
Good	7	35%
Fluent	9	45%

Table 10: *Classification of employees' current level in spoken English*

From this question, we can distinguish three current levels of participants, (20%) average, (35%) good and (45%) fluent.

Q 11: If yes, which approach is focused on during this training?

Option	Number	Rate
General English	0	0%
ESP	20	100%

Table 11: *The approach focused on during the training*

This table shows us the approach focused on during the training courses in this company which is ESP because it serves learners' needs.

Q 12: On which skill you rely to enhance your speaking ability?

Option	Number	Rate
Writing skill	2	10%
Reading skill	4	20%
Listening skill	10	50%
All of them	4	20%

Table 12: *Skills those participants rely on to enhance their speaking ability*

Employees rely on different skills to enhance speaking ability as represented in the following percentages. (10%) rely on writing skill, (20%) on reading. most of them rely on listening (50%) and the rest (20%) rely on all of them. From these amounts, we conclude that listening is the most reliable skill to progress speaking ability, because speaking and listening are more combined.

Q13: Since you are a business man (woman), which skill seems to serve you more in and out of your work?

Option	Number	Rate
Writing skill	6	30%
Speaking skill	10	50%
Both of them	4	20%

Table 13: *The skill that seems to serve employees more in and out of work*

For these employees speaking is the skill that serves them more in and out of work because they are business men they may travel or reserve in hotel for example because it takes (50%) percentage and writing (30%), and both of them (20%).

Q14: According to your experience, do you agree that Spoken English is necessary in business world, nowadays?

Option	Number	Rate
Not agree	0	0%
Partially agree	0	0%
Totally agree	20	100%

Table 14: *Employees' views about the necessity of Spoken English in business world, nowadays*

In this question, all of the participants (100%) totally agree with the view that speaking is necessary in the business world nowadays, according to their experience. So, this view reveals that speaking English is in the heart of business field.

III .Business Communication

Q15: What is the most appropriate medium for communicating in your company?

Option	Number	Rate	Total
Written English	6	30%	20
Spoken English	9	45%	100%
Both	5	25%	100%

Table 15: *the appropriate medium of communication British Petroleum (BP) Company*

We have been asked this question to see what main skill that BP employees use as a medium of communication .their reports showed that speaking is the most useful one (45%) then written language (30%), and both of them (25%).

Q16: What do you need business English for?

Option	Number	Rate
Meeting	6	30%
Face to face interaction	5	25%
Both	9	45%

Table16: *Areas needed in business English*

The participants who reported that they need business English for both meeting and face to face interaction are (45%).And those who reported that they need it only for meeting (30%).and the others only for face to face interaction are (25%).As we have seen the higher

percentages are for both meeting and face to face interaction were the spoken medium is required for business purposes.

Q17: Do every day interactions contribute to develop your speaking ability?

Option	Number	Rate
Yes	16	80%
No	4	20%

Table 17: *The role daily interaction in the development of spoken ability*

The majority of participants (80%) see that daily interaction contribute in speaking development .Whereas, the minority of them (20%) do not agree with them.

Q18: Do you face any difficulties in understanding non native speakers?

Option	Number	Rate
Yes	9	45%
No	11	55%

Table 18: *Employees’ opinion about the difficulties in understanding non native speakers*

(45%) of workers answers were ‘ yes’. In the other hand, (55%) of them were ‘ no’ .This is may be due to the frequency of daily interaction between each other.

Q 19: If the communication breaks down, how do you restart it again?

Option	Number	Rate
Gestures	8	40%
Code switching	7	35%
Code mixing	5	25%

Table 19: *Solutions required if communication breaks down*

Communication between speakers of different nationalities can be break down. So, our objective form this question is to see which solution that employees required in this situation. (40%) of the participants choose gestures, may be because it is the easiest solution for them. (35%) of the workers choose code switching, so that, when they forget or do not know any word they lend it from another language is filling the gap of the missing words.

Q20: Have you fallen in embracing situation in which you mispronounce phrase a sentence?

Option	Number	Rate
Yes	11	55%
No	9	45%

Table 20: *Employees ‘opinions about if they mispronunciation of a phrase or a sentence*

(55%) of the respondents reply ‘yes’ were as the others (45%) said ‘no’ .So, eleven of the participants which they represent (55%) will continue to answer the following question.

Q21: If you yes what was your interlocutor’s reaction towards you?

Option	Number	Rate	Total
Laugh at you	2	18,18%	11%
Misunderstand you	2	36,36%	100%
Correct you	5	45,45	100%

Table 21: *Listener’s reactions toward mispronunciation of some employees*

This question was oriented only for the participants who have answered ‘yes’. (18.18%) of the workers reported that the reaction of the interlocutor’s towards them when they mispronounced a phrase or a sentence is laughing at them. (36.36) reported that they misunderstand them. And the majority of them said that they correct them (45.45%).

Q 22: What have you decided to do?

Option	Number	Rate	Total
Stop the interaction	0	0%	11%
Continue it	11	100%	100%
Change the topic	0	0%	

Table 22: *The decision the mistaken employees took on the light of their listener's reaction*

In responding this question all the participants prefer to continue the interaction (100%) because it seems like a challenge for them. The other options were rejected. Also, this question reveals the importance of speaking skill in maintaining the role of communication in business context.

4.6. Interpretation of Results

I. personal Information

The aim of this section is to seek information about our participant. After the analysis, we start the interpretation with gender, we can see that the most employee are males (70%) since they work in foreign company and they are more motivated and interested in business field in contrast of females who are only (30%). Also, the half (50%) of our participants are of 40 years old and have a long experience in that company.

Question 3, (BP) is consisted of Algerians (60%) and foreigners (40%) (English speaker) this involves daily communication through English language between all the employees and increases the importance of spoken English within business area especially for non native speakers. That is why, the half (50%) of our participants stated that they have studied in private schools in order to promote certain skill.

The majority (60%) of them claimed that speaking skill was the main objective to be achieved from private schools. (80%) of employees added that it is very important to be proficient as possible as they can in spoken English, because they work with English speakers as we mentioned previously.

II. Speaking English for Business Purpose

Here we try to show more details about the importance of spoken English for business purposes and how it is developed.

In response to question 7, (70%) of BP employees reported that speaking Business English is very important in their context, because they are in everyday interaction with English speakers whether face to face or telephoning. Moreover, the same amount of participants claimed that they use business English frequently in their place.

The analysis of question 9 provided us with three current levels (of participants) in spoken English average (20%) good (35%) fluent (45%). For this reason, this company devotes training courses to progress the employees' spoken English as all of them said and ESP is the approach focused on during this training because it is designed to meet the learners' needs. Besides, each participant relies on certain skill or skills to enhance his speaking ability, but the majority (50%) rely on listening skill because it is more integrated to speaking and too helpful.

For (BP) employees speaking is the appropriate skill that serves them in and out of work as (50%) of them reported. At the end they totally (100%) agree that spoken English is necessary in business world, nowadays, according to their experience. This confirms that spoken English is in the heart of business communication.

III. Business Communication

In this section our question is designed to show the necessity of speaking English for communicating within business companies. In fact after the analysis of the result of this section we can deduce that British Petroleum employees with their multi nationalities need to communicate via spoken English. They expressed that this medium is the more dependable for communicating and it is used in meeting and face to face interaction.

Also, the majority respondents reported that every day interactions contribute to develop their speaking ability. Though, some the participants face difficulties in understanding non native speakers. According to their answers of the question twenty eight, the workers rely more in gestures (40%) to restart the conversation because it seems to be accompanied with speaking when the speaker face problem in transmitting a message clearly. The other respondents choose

code switching (35%) and the others (25%) used code mixing as a means to survive their communication.

In the final questions (20, 21, 22) were asked to see to what extent discussions between employees can be beneficial in developing speaking skill. And this is true because all of the workers (55%) who answered 'yes' in the question (29) "Have fallen in embracing situation, in which you mispronounce a phrase or a sentence?" preferred to continue the conversation. Thus, we can result that daily interaction is too helpful to develop speaking ability.

IV. Employees' Suggestions

This section allows us to have an idea about the participants' suggestions. They were interested in the content of the questionnaire. Generally, to be a good speaker in English language was their basic objective. So, they commented that learners should have an opportunity to interact with native speakers (English speakers), so that to have a good level in spoken English. As, they added in order to learn and master any language you should practice it. In addition, they confirmed that Business English especially the spoken one is very needed and prominent in their (workplace).

4.7. Conclusion

After the analysis and interpretation of the results, we conclude that spoken English is used frequently, in British Petroleum, since it is a foreign company. Moreover, the employees stated that daily interactions between native speakers (English speakers) and non native speakers is a successful way for the latter to progress their spoken English.

General Conclusion

V. General Conclusion

To confirm this theoretical frame work, we adopted a questionnaire as a tool to collect valid data. After collecting our data, we analyzed then interpreted them. After that, we came to conclusions that speaking English is very crucial in business companies and the employees are aware of its dominance. Moreover, they strongly want to progress their English spoken ability for business purposes. This view ensures our hypothesis which is speaking English is very necessary in business communication.

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Appendices

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Speaking as a Prominent Skill in EBP

Employees' Questionnaire

This questionnaire is a part of our dissertation. Its objective is to see to what extent speaking is an important skill in business contexts. Thus, we have chosen your company as a population from which we will take some employees to be our sample.

Dear employees,

You are kindly requested to read and then answer these questions in no more than twenty minutes. Please, put (X) in the appropriate box. You are greatly thankful for your participation.

I. Personal information

1. **Gender:** Male Female

2. **Age:** 20
40
More

3. **Nationality:**

Algerian

Foreign (precise)

4. **Have you studied English in private school?**

Yes

No

5. **If yes, what was your main skill to promote?**

Speaking skill

Reading skill

Writing skill

6. How important for you to be as proficient as possible in spoken English?

Not important

Little important

Important

Very important

II. Speaking English for Business Purposes

7. To what extent speaking is an important skill in your context?

Not important

Important

Very important

8. How much speaking English is used in your company?

Seldom

Usually

Frequently

9. Does your company devote training courses to progress your spoken English?

Yes

No

10. How is your current level in spoken English?

Average

Good

Fluent

11. If yes, which approach is focused on during this training?

General English

English for Specific Purposes

12. On which skill do you rely to enhance your speaking ability?

Writing skill

Reading skill

Listening skill

13. Since you are a business man, which skill seems to serve you more in and out of your work?

Writing skill

Speaking skill

14. According to your experience, do you agree that Spoken English is necessary in business world, nowadays?

Not agree

Partially agree

Totally agree

III. Business communication

15. What is the most appropriate medium for communicating in your company?

Written English

Spoken English

16. What do you need Business English for?

Telephoning

Meeting

Face to face interaction

17. Do everyday interactions contribute to develop your speaking ability?

Yes

No

18. Do you face any difficulties in understanding non native speakers?

Yes

No

19. If the communication breaks down, how do you restart it again?

Gestures

Code switching

Code mixing

20. Have you fallen in embracing situation in which you mispronounce a phrase or a sentence?

Yes

No

21. If yes, what was your interlocutor's reaction towards you?To:

Laugh at you

Misunderstand you

Correct you

22. What have you been decided to?

Stop the interaction

Continue the interaction

Change the topic

**IV. If you have any suggestions or additions concerning this context,
please mention them.**

.....
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Thank you for your cooperation

الملخص

تتألف هذه الأطروحة المعنونة بـ "أهمية مهارة تحدث اللغة الانجليزية في مجال الأعمال " من المحاور الثلاثة التالية : المحور الأول تحت عنوان مهارة التحدث , والثاني التحدث والتواصل باللغة الانجليزية في سياق الأعمال أما المحور الثالث فهو الجانب العملي الذي سطر لاختبار مدى ضرورة وأهمية تحدث اللغة الانجليزية في ميدان الأعمال . وللقيام بذلك اخترنا الاستبيان كأنسب وسيلة لجمع البيانات (المعلومات) . جرى هذا التطبيق في شركة النفط البريطانية "بريتش بتروليوم" في بلدية حاسي مسعود ولاية ورقلة , حيث اخترنا عشوائيا مجموعة تتكون من عشرين عاملا كعينة للمساهمة في إنجاز هذه الدراسة بعد تحليل البيانات و التعليق عليها استخلصنا أن تحدث اللغة الانجليزية جد مهم في مجال الأعمال.

كلمات مفتاحية :

مهارة التحدث , اللغة الانجليزية للأعمال , التواصل في مجال الأعمال , شركة النفط البريطانية (بريتش بتروليوم).