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How Secondary School Libyan Teachers Assess Students' Oral Communication

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the
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Zadma El-Taher Al-Fourganee

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ABSTRACT

Assessment as an area of research has a rich history of theories and debates and numerous studies deal with the definitions and different functions of assessment. Recent developments in the assessment field (Sadler, 1989; Black & Wiliam, 1998; Black et al., 2004; Taras, 2005; Fraser, 2016) stress the influence of assessment on learning and show a switch in assessment responsibilities from teacher to students. Although, there is a broad literature on the need for research on language assessment across many parts of the world like the United States of America, Europe, and Australia, there is still very limited research in the Arab world, particularly in Libya.

Therefore, this study aims to investigate factors related to teachers' assessment practices in public secondary schools in a Libyan context. It sought to explore teachers' and students' perceptions towards these processes and identify major influences that could have effects on these processes. The research sample consists of 180 male and female students and 50 male and female teachers from 6 secondary public schools in Libya. The different schools in this study were chosen randomly using stratified random sampling. The study addressed various issues that may influence teachers' practices, including teachers' and students' perceptions about the different assessment processes to evaluate students' academic learning.

A combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods was utilised to collect data. A closed-ended questionnaire was administered to 50 teachers and a student's questionnaire was distributed to 180 students. In addition, 12 semi-structured interviews and observations were conducted with 12 teachers and 12 semi-structured interviews were also conducted with students. SPSS software was used to analyse the questionnaire responses, while thematic analysis was applied to the qualitative data. The findings revealed that most teachers and students were aware of the significance of assessment practices, including both the traditional test item forms and the new assessment processes. Teachers' comments showed that they were able and willing to implement different practices to evaluate their students' learning performance. However, there were some

external factors such as; the accountability for the external exams, the class size and the lack of training that negatively influenced their application of different assessment forms and restricted their capability to introduce new assessment procedures. Furthermore, the instability of the country and the war affected the teachers' decisions towards students' evaluation and assessing with the latter sometimes threatening teachers with guns in order to gain high marks in their poor achievement. Teachers' responses also indicated that they would welcome any further plans that help in introducing any assessment workshops and training sessions in the new assessment processes.

The findings of the current study draw attention to the impact of these factors on assessment practices, and further studies are needed to explore these issues in more detail and in different contexts. Additionally, the research findings provide empirical information that can be utilized in improving pedagogy in countries where English is taught as a foreign or second language.

DEDICATION

To those who devoted their lives in order to provide me the opportunity to be a knowledgeable and respectful woman, to those who nurtured in me the love of learning, to the spirit of my wonderful and lovely parents: El-Taher Al-Fourganee and Mbarka El-Beskri

To my husband (Muhsen), your great support, encouragements and sacrifices through this long process stimulated me to finish this work. Thanks a lot for your help, care and understanding.

To the pleasure and true meaning of my life; to my six shining and lovely stars: Mohammed, Marwa, Ahmed, Abobaker, Safa and my youngest son Mahmoud who accompanied me during my staying in the UK. You are all my hope in the bright future.

To my brothers and sisters who encouraged me during their calls throughout the years of my study.

I dedicate this work with my love

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I certify that, to the best of my knowledge, all the materials in the thesis in hand represent my own work. What I have cited or paraphrased has been mentioned in my reference list.

Signature...

Date...

ABBREVIATIONS

TEFL	Teaching English as a Foreign Language
FL	Foreign Language
EFL	English Foreign Language
SL	Second Language
L1	First Language
L2	Target language
CF	Corrective feedback
T	Teacher
Ss	Students
GPCE	General People's Committee of Education
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Science
GT	Grounded Theory
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development
ELT	English Language Teaching
EAP	English for Academic Purposes
FLT	Foreign Language Teaching

CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1. INTRODUCTION

Assessment is a process for judging the level of students' understanding while participating in classroom activities. For many years, students' achievement has been assessed using many types of tests. Most of these tests are used in schools to determine whether students comprehend the curriculum materials and achieved the intended instructional objectives. They are also used to determine students' attainments and to measure their aptitudes and knowledge that is required to pass and succeed in school (Hughs, 2003, p.1). Nowadays research on assessment practice has become increasingly prominent. Numerous research studies started to consider a new assessment practice. These practices could help in eliminating the negative effects of the traditional practice and provide informative feedback to students and teachers to overcome any difficulties that they may encounter during the learning process (Gipps, 1994; Black & Wiliam, 1998; Sadler, 1989; Black et al., 2004; Taras, 2005; Tileston, 2004; Broadfoot, 2007; Stobart, 2008; Pickford & Brown, 2006; Fraser, 2016). Therefore, assessing students' learning and outcome in daily classroom practice is considered to be an essential issue for many researchers in education and psychology. These scholars insisted on the importance of direct and immediate feedback when evaluating students' learning. Therefore, this study is motivated by the fact that assessment in general and assessing oral communication, in particular, is still an area neglected by research in multicultural pragmatics and in language teaching and learning especially in the Arab world, particularly in Libya.

To provide the required background for the study, this chapter presents the statement of the problem and the essential objectives of the study. It states the main research questions. This chapter also sheds light on the main contribution of the study to the field of teaching and learning English as a foreign language. Finally, it provides the structure of this investigation.

1.2. STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

This study was mainly aimed at obtaining a description of assessment practices in Libyan secondary schools. Assessment activity at Libyan secondary schools is the subject of inquiry in this study because it plays a vital role in any educational system. The effects of the assessment processes used in assessing students' communicative competence of the language in Libyan secondary schools has been unknown and remains undeveloped.

It has been argued that mastering a good level of competence in language skills allows learners to use the language effectively in different areas and for various purposes. However, low level of one or more of the language skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) can hinder students from using the language successfully. In this context, assessment process becomes important since it is the main tool for monitoring student achievement during instruction. Investigating assessment of students' oral competence is given a considerable concern in this study because of the undeniable role of English in the modern world ranging from its importance in the global economy to its perceived important concern for all people daily lives (Sauvignon, 1997, p.10; David, 2013).

Because of this, a great attention was given to teaching and learning English language in the Libyan context. The teaching of English language in Libya is taught as a foreign language and Libyan students start studying English as a school subject during grade seven. They continue learning English language through all the years of their education up to university level. The State of Libya seeks to develop and renovate the entire education process, taking into consideration the target goals and value aims to be reached. Teaching English to secondary school students in Libyan context aims to enable students to:

- learn foreign languages to communicate with the world in all areas of interest;
- encourage students by providing diverse opportunities to gather knowledge and general information through self-learning;

- promote students to choose a specialization, which is in conformity with their abilities, and meets the needs of the society (National Commission for Education Culture and Science, 2004).

However, it seems that these goals are not being realised. Different studies (Alhmali, 2007; Aldabbus, 2008; Ali, 2008; Abdussalam, 2009, and Orafi & Borg 2009; Shihiba, 2011; Ahmed, 2012; Tantani, 2012; Dalala, 2014) have found that the majority of Libyan students feel that they lack self-confidence and appear to show no interest and are reluctant to participate in the learning process. Further, students also seemed to be unable to employ what they have learned in real life situations. The lack of research on assessment, and on the outcomes of English language instruction in secondary schools is evident and would benefit from being addressed urgently.

More importantly, it has been a general opinion that students who have been learning English for more than six years have a good command of the English language. However, Ali, (2008) and, Ahmed, (2012), confirmed that Libyan secondary school students are unable to develop their communicative competence, even after finishing their study in secondary schools. This issue was also perceived by the present researcher who has been teaching English language for more than twenty-five years in secondary schools and six years as a university teacher of English foreign language (EFL).

Although, one of the general objectives of education in Libya, is how to provide and support new types of education and enable students to discover their abilities and acquire knowledge through self-learning (GPCE, 2008), it was apparent that assessment practices are not well employed by Libyan English teachers in secondary schools, and they are not well understood. These findings are supported by a study carried out by The Ministry of Education (2004), which revealed that students' performance in English language was not satisfying but disappointing. They assumed that one of the reasons for their poor performance could be related, to the inefficiency of the current teaching and assessment processes in Libyan schools. After many years of introducing the new English textbook which includes different communication activities and learning tasks that

have been primarily designed to be performed through pair and group work, it seemed that the required opportunities for students to participate and evaluate their work are still not approachable. The local empirical research (Alhmali, 2007; Ali, 2008; Orafi & Borg, 2009; Shihiba 2011; Tantani, 2011; Dalala, 2014) have revealed that the instructional approaches of most Libyan EFL teachers in secondary schools are still teacher-centred. On average, this could be responsible for keeping Libyan students away from involving in the communication activities. In addition, students are not given chances to assume responsibility for their learning and work collaboratively (UNESCO 2002). Therefore, the appropriate implementation of these activities involves students' true engagement and active participation and teachers' adoption of the role of a facilitator instead of controller and presenter of knowledge (Phillips et al., 2008).

The traditional method of teaching limits students' chance to practise evaluating their work, and using the English language which creates difficulties for students when trying to engage and communicate in oral activities. This is confirmed by (Ali 2008), who mentioned that the majority of Libyan teachers are not satisfied with their role in teaching because they did not come across the new approaches in the past, especially at secondary education level. As a result, many teachers and students who have been teaching and studying English language in Libyan secondary schools are incapable of communicating successfully and confidently. Further, students still depend largely in their learning on their teachers. However, little Libyan research has been conducted on assessing oral communication in secondary schools which might further help in finding out the reasons of what promotes or hinders students from performing well during oral activities.

The researcher's interest in discovering what processes and activities Libyan secondary school teachers' use when they evaluate their students' speaking skill originated from the belief that it is an important skill that students need to master in order to be able to communicate and connect with the world. Therefore, this study was intended to provide a comprehensive picture of the assessment processes employed when teachers assess their students' learning. Firstly, it discovers what assessment activities Libyan teachers in secondary schools use and then explores how and why these practices are used. Secondly, it aims to

explore the perceptions and beliefs of the teachers and students towards these practices. This study also compares the teachers' and students' perceptions towards assessment processes.

1.3. RESEARCH AIMS

This research aims to (1) determine what practices exist in Libyan secondary schools, in the teaching and assessing English language; (2) in order to develop a culturally sensitive model of assessment, we need to know what perceptions are held of assessing English and ELT by both teachers and students; (3) explore the similarities and differences between teachers' and students' perceptions towards assessment process. All of these aims are explored in-depth in order to contribute to on-going debates about teaching and assessing students' learning. The research questions in this study are presented below.

1.4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In order to meet all the above-mentioned aims, the following questions will be addressed:

1. What are the assessment processes Libyan teachers use at secondary schools in assessing students' oral communication?
2. What are:
   A. Teachers' perceptions towards these processes?
   B. Students' perceptions towards these processes?
3. What are:
   A. The similarities between teachers' and students' perceptions?
   B. The differences between teachers' and students' perceptions?

1.5. ORIGINALITY OF THE STUDY

Assessment is important in providing information that helps students to progress and enables teachers to plan clear and comprehensible structures of work that facilitate this progress (Black, 1998; Broadfoot, 2007; Gardner, 2012). Assessment takes up a considerable proportion of time and effort from both teachers and students. Recently, educators and researchers realized that assessment can be a process for improving learning or as a harmful approach

that demotivates learning. Many conclusive decisions are often taken based on summative assessment, which is often a kind of examination that makes much stress and tensions for both teachers and students. Therefore, many philosophers and writers about education such as (Broadfoot, 2007; Gardner, 2012) have criticized this form of assessment and called for a new assessment practice for assessing students' achievements.

Despite the increasing emphasis on the importance of assessment, in general, little research has directly addressed the issue of the role of the assessment processes that teachers use with respect to the oral communication. The effect of assessment in helping students to engage in oral activities and be active learners is not well recognised. Previous local studies conducted in the Libyan context about the education system in Libya such as those by Alhmali (2007), Aldabbus (2008), Ali (2008), Orafi (2008), Shihiba (2011), Abdurahman (2011), Ahmad (2012), Tantani (2012), Warayet (2013), Dalala (2014), Waragh (2016), have all focussed on other aspects of EFL teaching and learning and did not investigate the oral communication assessment process in secondary schools, and the major factors that might affect the education system with regard to the huge development in the educational assessment area and the new assessment practices that were suggested in the literature, which could be implemented to make assessment application more informative.

Hence, this study contributes to knowledge of L2 oral communication assessment, by investigating the assessment processes used by Libyan secondary school teachers in assessing speaking skills. It will contribute to the pedagogical literature, as it will add new insights about EFL teachers' perceptions and practices of assessment. This study intends to provide the information needed to enhance teaching and assessment practices and improve learning conditions. Further, the current research will improve the understanding of the difficulties that face teachers and students during assessment processes. It will add empirical data that can be employed by teachers and educationalists through suggesting perceptions and implications for using more effective, and applicable assessment activities that help students to involve and speak English language.

This study will provide data, which might help in responding to the common argument about assessment in the literature, which was raised by researchers such as Black & Wiliam (1989), Taras (2001), Gardner (2006) to investigate the suitability of the need for implementing, formative rather than summative assessment in classrooms. In addition, the study was conducted due to an interest in discovering what happens inside the classroom and identifying to what extent teachers of English transfer their perceptions and beliefs into practice. This is based on the assumption that teacher's perceptions and thoughts guide and reflect what they subsequently do in the classroom. Being knowledgeable and skilful are important and needed to complement teachers' successful practice. Therefore, this study is significant because it adds to the literature new insights about EFL teachers' as well as students' perceptions of the teaching and assessing of oral communication.

1.6. RESEARCH CONTEXT

The present research was carried out with students in secondary schools across six public schools distributed in Janzour city in Libyan context. All the schools involved in this study included male and female students. The research in hand incorporated one hundred and eighty students with an equal balance of both level and gender to collect the quantitative data. The samples' age is eighteen and over. For the purpose of collecting qualitative data twelve students with equal level and gender were interviewed. The other sample for the current research included fifty teachers both males and females to gather the quantitative data while twelve teachers were observed and interviewed for qualitative data. However, the percentage of females was very high compared to that of males (see subsection 5.2.1).

1.7. STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

This study includes eight chapters. A brief overview of each chapter is provided below:

Chapter one served as an introduction to the whole study. It has stated the research problem, presented the main research questions in which the researcher will survey and has clarified the aims of the study. The originality and

contribution of the investigation have been provided. Chapter two includes a background about learning and teaching English language in Libya, followed by a description of the education system with special emphasis on the intermediate education system, which is the focus of this study.

Chapter three is divided into two parts. The first part deals with a discussion of teaching and learning oral communication. It describes the development of learning theories relevant to second language learning research. It, then, proceeds to review the existing literature on teachers' perceptions and approaches to students' learning, including factors affecting oral communication assessment. The second part focuses on the literature review about assessment. It addresses the different researchers' point of views towards assessment process.

Chapter four is the methodological framework and presents the research tools which were used in data collection. It shows how the sample was chosen; a description of the quantitative and qualitative samples, data collection procedures and a detailed description of the methods of data analysis used, namely SPSS software package (quantitative data) and grounded theory (qualitative data) is also included in this chapter.

Chapter five contains the analysis of the quantitative data, which was collected from teachers' and students' questionnaires, using the SPSS programme. It explores the assessment practices used by teachers and the perceptions of teachers and students towards these practices. Chapter six presents the analysis of the qualitative data results obtained from the semi-structured interviews and classroom observation using grounded theory.

Chapter seven discusses the findings of both the quantitative and qualitative data with regard to the research questions and the relevant literature. Chapter eight primarily sums up the main findings and outlines the limitations of the study and its pedagogical implication; it ends with recommendations for future study.

The following figure (1) shows the research design for the current study.
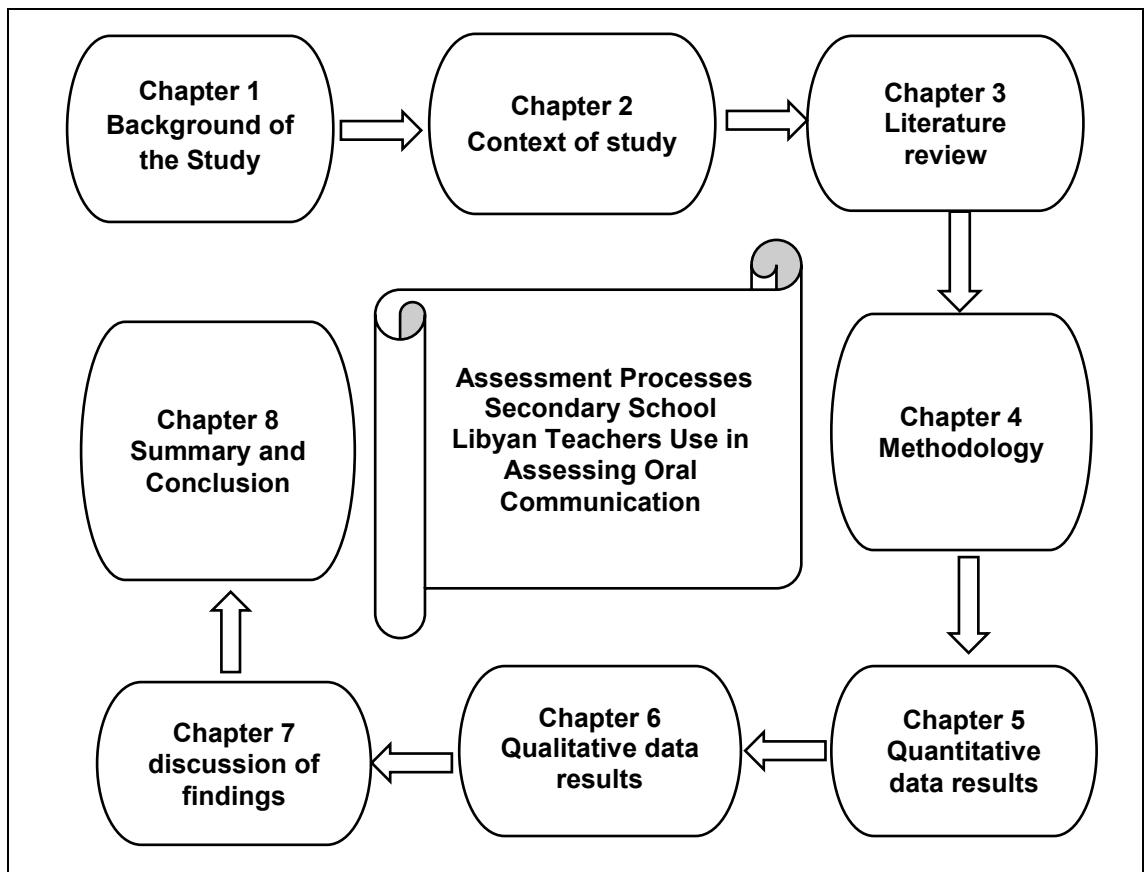
Figure 1: Structure of the study

1.8. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This chapter has provided an overview of the study. It began with a discussion of the research problem and purpose of the study followed by research questions and the originality of the study. Finally, the structure of the whole thesis was briefly described. The next chapter describes the Libyan context where this study was carried out.

CHAPTER TWO: CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

2.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter starts by providing a brief background to the development of the education system in Libya with special highlighting on teaching and assessing English as a foreign language. It discusses the changes in the education system comparing the old and the new structure; changes that happened in all stages and levels of the education system. It focuses in particular on teaching and learning English. This chapter, also, illustrates the general goals of secondary education and some educational philosophy as well as a brief description about assessment in Libyan context.

2.2. EDUCATION SYSTEM IN LIBYA

Libyans believe that education is very important to anyone (male or female) in order to build and develop their society to cope with new state of life and technology. They also ensure that dissemination of education among all citizens, male/female rural and urban alike is the role of the state. Therefore, Libya's law requires every citizen to register his/her children in education until the end of basic stage, which is nine years of education. The current education system consists of three main stages: basic, intermediate, and higher education, as will be illustrated later. The education system in Libya is either private or public at all levels. The public sector, which is this investigation's concern, is completely free while in the private one students are required to pay their own fees. However, private education did not exist and was not allowed until the 1990s. Kindergarten has recently established and it is not compulsory. More detail about the stages of the public education system in Libya is discussed in the following sub-sections:

2.2.1. Kindergarten

Children can be enrolled in kindergarten at the age from four to five. At this stage, children learn some English words and they are motivated and disposed to join the primary school. The time spent at kindergarten is two years before joining the primary school; at this stage, children are introduced to single English words. This

is very beneficial for children as such exposures to an English environment in an early age creates a positive attitude towards English as a target language. However, the majority of children who can attend this level of education live in the cities beside the families with high income (Ahmed, 2012, p.14).

2.2.2. Basic education

According to education policy in Libya, all students aged between six and fifteen are required to enrol in basic education. At this stage, students have to complete six years at a primary school beside three years at the preparatory school. Primary students start studying English in the fifth year of basic education and at the end of this level, pupils would receive a certificate of completing primary education; then, they can enrol in preparatory school for three years (Ali, 2008). At the preparatory stage, students study English Language, which is designed to cover the four skills listening, speaking, reading and writing. The English curriculum is represented in two books namely a subject book and a workbook. The preparatory course is the second stage of basic education, which ends in a general examination that leads to general basic education certificate (Ministry of education 2004).

2.2.3. Intermediate education

This level of education, which is the concern of this study, accepts students who have completed their preparatory stage. Students enrol in this level at the age of sixteen and over. Secondary education is divided into two different forms: the first form is general secondary education, lasting three years. Students have the opportunity to choose either to join science stage or Arts. The former stage concentrates on scientific subjects while the latter is concerned with social subjects. This level of education system lasts three years and the certificate awarded is the intermediate education certificate. Completion qualifies students to study at university. On the other hand, the other form is technical and professional secondary education and it lasts for three to four years. It is called 'specialised' secondary schools. There are six types of specialised schools, focusing on the following subjects: economics, basic sciences, engineering, arts, media and social sciences. Students are supposed to join this stage at the age

of sixteen and are offered the opportunity to specialise and study the subjects that interest them.

This study focuses on general secondary schools' education rather than mid-institutions or other specialised schools because all of the students who graduate from the language secondary schools become teachers of English. Students who are studying in these schools are prepared to be teachers and they can join English departments at the university; their curriculum includes teaching the four skills reading, writing speaking and listening (Shihiba, 2011, p.14). Each school sampled in the present research includes two stages of study either science or arts. In each stage, students can study three years, they can choose to join the stage according to their marks and their interest. The average number of students in each class is about twenty-five to thirty students. The number of students in each class might be one of the factors that minimise the possibility for employing collaborative activities in a Libyan context.

2.2.4. University Level and Higher Education

The first college of Arts and Education, which was the base of the Libyan universities, was established in Benghazi in 1955. The only number of students at that time was 33 male students. Since then, the university has grown and the number of universities and colleges developed to reach 14 universities with different departments in the academic year (2004-2005) with a considerable number of public and private universities and higher education institutes besides technical and vocational centres established. They have been constructed in different cities all around the country to provide better facilities so students to be able to join these universities. Admission to university or higher institutions requires the Secondary Education Certificate which requires the completion of secondary education stage schools (The Development of Education National Report of Libya, 2008). The student enrols in one of the university faculties suiting the specialisations s/he got a certificate for or enrols in teachers' training college that qualifies him/her. At university level, the students' age was eighteen or over. The duration of study, at this stage, vary according to the nature of study in each college or faculty and institutions. Students can choose to join the college they

would like to study at, based on the average marks they have obtained at the national final exam of the secondary level. At the end of this stage, the students would get their degree with which they could then gain a good job.

2.2.5. Advanced Studies Level

This level is for students who intend to pursue higher education after they finish university. It aims to prepare qualified staff members in different fields in higher education. The government encourages students to continue their studies so that, it might be a successful step in contributing to scientific research and educational progress in different fields. Figure 2 below summarises the stages of the public education system in Libya.
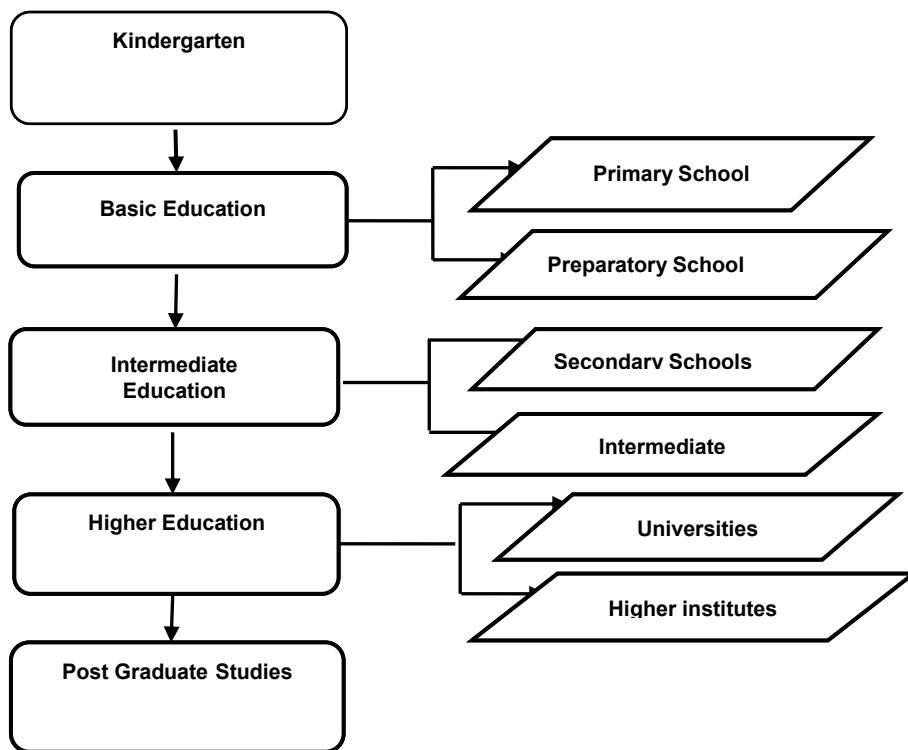
Figure 2: The structure of education in Libya

2.2.6. Teaching English Language in Libya

English, as mentioned above, is a compulsory subject among other subjects in third year secondary schools. The curriculum at secondary level is designed to enable the creation of specialized, vocational and technical schools in addition to traditional academically oriented schools (The Development of Education National Report of Libya, 2008). By using the new curriculum in all Libyan

secondary schools, which is based on interaction and communication approaches, students are encouraged to learn language through real situations and avoid using the traditional methods in teaching and learning a foreign language. The education authority in Libya seeks to provide Libyan students with the necessary skills needed for better learning (see ibid, 2008). Therefore, teachers are required to follow the instructions of the teachers' handbook, which facilitates how teachers can adapt to the new methods of teaching and learning.

However, teaching English in Libyan secondary schools is dominated by teachers. In other words, the teaching process is mostly controlled by the teacher's questions and the selection of students to respond besides, teachers' demonstration of examples on the board. All students have to do, is to imitate and repeat orally. Therefore, the learning process is largely seen as a mechanical habit formation. According to Al-Boseifi, (2001) & Aldabous, (2008) some Libyan teachers believe that students should be provided with large amounts of vocabulary and grammar structure rules. Students are required to memorize these rules and then, teachers can start thinking of introducing different activities to practise the language. Teachers still doubt the value of communicative activities, because they believe that vocabulary and grammar rules must be the starting point in learning any foreign language. Therefore, their beliefs reflect their practice inside the classroom where traditional methods such as grammar translation method are dominated (Orafi, 2008; Waragh, 2016).

2.2.7 Teachers of English in Libya

Teachers at secondary level nowadays graduate from English departments at universities or higher teachers' institutes. Abo-Farwa, (1988) stated that during the period between 1970s and 1980s teachers were trained for four years in training institutions when they complete their secondary education. However, Ahmed, (2012) indicated that from the year1995 teachers started to be trained in colleges of education. There are various problems, which teachers encounter in teaching and learning English Language. Libya is a non-English speaking community so, English is not used anywhere whereas people use Arabic as a

medium of education even in English classes. Therefore, some difficulties may arise from the Arabic influence.

Moreover, Ahmed, (2012) pointed out that, there is a shortage of well-qualified teachers in Libyan secondary schools, which contributes to the issues outlined. This is also, supported by Ali, (2008) who illustrates, that teaching English in the secondary stage, is carried out by teachers who have limited exposure to English for communication purposes, and their training was not in an English environment.

2.2.8 The curriculum

The curriculum of English language in Libyan secondary schools consists of two books namely course and work books. Course books deals with the four language skills and is used by teachers while, work books are designed to practise what have been studied in textbooks and are used by students. Also, there is the teacher's handbook, which contains detailed lesson plan with extra teaching suggestions and answer keys for exercises. The materials are written and developed in an English unit under the supervision of the Curricula and Educational Centre at the Ministry of Education. The latest version is called "*English for Libya*", published by Garnet Publishing Ltd. However, innovation matters are the responsibility of the Ministry of Education in Libya. Teachers and learners do not influence any curriculum change. In addition, parents have no role in what is going on in school especially if the matter is concerned with the curriculum change (Khalifa, 2002cited in Al-Dabous, 2008).

All students in public schools can get these materials free of charge where their use is compulsory. Students study five 45-minute sessions of English each week. Secondary Year 3 has two sets of materials: Level 1 and Level 2 for the first and second academic terms respectively. Each set consists of a course book, a student's work-book, and a CD of audio recordings for listening activities. The English syllabus at these two levels includes the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. The course book is divided into 8 units that are spread over the academic year. Each unit is divided into eight lessons. Each unit deals with a specific theme which is developed in terms of vocabulary, grammar, reading,

speaking and writing. In each unit, there is one lesson which focuses on speaking. In the speaking lesson, there are sections in every unit which ask the students to use the new words and expressions they have recently learned and to activate the language they already know. These sections may require students to do role-plays, read sample conversations, discuss a topic or solve a problem. Accordingly, as an alternative to the previous curriculum to Libyan secondary schools, this new curriculum focuses more on the functional use of language, where many interactive activities pair work and using English by teachers and students are highly recommended.

2.2.9. Assessment in Libyan Secondary Schools

According to The General People's Committee of Education, (2008) the Libyan government has attempted to raise the teachers' quality in teaching English language through training courses, and different workshops so that it can be a positive step in helping teachers to be aware of the modern methods in teaching and learning. However, examinations and grades still represent the most common assessment practices used by Libyan secondary school teachers (Alhmali, 2007; Ali, 2008; Orafi & Borg, 2009; Shihiba, 2011; Dalala, 2014). The assessment process in Libyan educational system is managed by the GPCE every year and it determines the criteria for evaluating students' learning (see GPCE, 2008). These tests are the most formalised among many types of educational assessments and Libyan teachers depend largely on these practices to find out the level of their students' understanding (Ali, 2008; Shihiba, 2011; Ahmed, 2012; Dalala, 2014; Waragh, 2016).

The memorization of meaning and the spelling of words are common practices of assessment in English tests. The structure of any tests usually depends on multiple-choice questions, matching words with pictures or writing missing letters in words. It could be argued that oral component is normally neglected in English tests (Al-Boseifi, 2001). The main interest for students is how to pass the exams and the purpose of conducting such tests is to help teachers track the progress of their students and record the scores that students obtained and send it to their parents. The monthly written tests by which students are evaluated are very

common in Libyan schools. At the end of the academic year, students have a written examination in order to pass the subject. If a student fails to achieve the required score, another chance is provided. In cases of not passing the exam for a second time, s/he cannot be transferred to the next level (Al-Ddabous, 2008; Ali, 2008). Therefore, examinations and grades represent the most common assessment strategies used by Libyan secondary school teachers (Alhmali, 2007; Orafi & Borg, 2009).

To sum up, the present system of assessment in Libyan secondary schools is that students take one mid-term examination and a final examination for each course of study. Students usually do not have any chance to get feedback on any aspect of the examination. Therefore, students do not know about their strengths or weakness. Because of this nature of assessment, teachers are not able to monitor students' learning effectively and their students' competence is assessed according to some criteria that they made and not against explicit criteria.

2.2.10 Libyan Classrooms and Revolution's Aftermath

The majority of Libyan classrooms' design do not represent the suitable environment for a good and successful teaching and learning. The common features of the classrooms are rows of desks with a blackboard on the wall fixed at the front of students. A table and a chair are usually placed in front of the desks' row. The classrooms contain two to three rows. Male students sit in a row, which is isolated from the rows of female students. There are two wide windows open towards the yard of the school in each class.

Most classes are poor in terms of equipment such as; overhead projector charts or maps and sometimes are without lights. Apart from that, war has affected negatively on the whole society especially education. For example, many educational buildings such as schools were damaged. A lot of equipment was stolen and some school walls were messed up with paintings and immoral graffiti. Furthermore, teenager students, as the ones being the subject of the current study, turn out to be rebellious and sometimes threaten their teachers if they are not satisfied with their marks.

Although, most of the secondary students, who are the subjects of this study, are from the west of Libya, they have experienced less trouble compared with those in other parts of Libya during the period of revolution. This is because; most of the war actions occurred in the middle and eastern areas of Libya though the consequences of the war have affected the whole society. As a result, the climate of teaching and learning has not been natural and has a negative effect on both students and teachers. In addition, students are likely to have experienced significant loss, unhappiness, stress and shock during those days. War and violence had a traumatic and deep effects on everyone especially students and their families.

These experiences can profoundly shape students' responses in the classroom. Accordingly, those students often have more emotional needs than other students and they need more help and support. School staff are required to be able to deal with the psychological conditions such as, anxiety and stress that students may have experienced, and try to create an environment and target effective strategies that help to redirect these students to be safe and calm again.

All this can be achieved according to Muijs &Reynolds, (2011) through good relationship between the teacher and students and a warm, supportive environment besides, "specific approaches to creating a classroom, environment that fosters the learning for all pupils" (p.204). Consequently, it requires time and effort from both teachers, education authority and the whole of society to minimize the immediate and the long-term consequences of terror and war and make students feel safe and relaxed in and outside their classrooms. Teachers are required to "encourage positive social and emotional skills" (Blackburn, 2016, p.128) because memories of upsetting experiences may persist for years.

It can be concluded that teaching and learning processes were negatively affected by this new condition, which is the result of the bad war that took place five years ago and has yet to settle down.

2.3. Summary and Conclusion

This chapter has included an overview of the context where the study was carried out. It described the development and the changes of the Libyan education

system with special reference to the secondary school education system. This chapter also, clarified a brief description about Libyan English teacher, teaching English, curriculum, assessment, classroom layout and the revolution's aftermath in a Libyan context.

The following first phase of chapter three presents an overview about oral communication including a description of the learning theories and teachers' perceptions and approaches to learning. The second stage will be dealing with assessment including the researchers' point of view and their beliefs regarding assessment. It will shed lights on assessment with regard to oral communication, the process of assessment, functions and purposes; factors affecting oral communication assessment and the role of teachers and students in assessment.

CHAPTER THREE - LITERATURE REVIEW I: TEACHING AND LEARNING ORAL COMMUNICATION

3.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter offers a discussion of the literature relevant to this study. This review of literature is divided into two themes. The first part of this chapter will shed lights on definitions and aspects of oral communication. It provides a review on learning theories, including teachers' perceptions and approaches to learning. It will also present teachers' and students' role in assessment and factors affecting second language learning. The second theme talks about the concepts and terms that are associated with assessment and explores the various definitions, processes, purposes and products of assessment. It then focuses on two types of assessment, formative and summative assessment. Finally, it presents a summary and conclusion.

3.2. DEFINITION OF ORAL COMMUNICATION

According to the literature review, researchers have shown that there are various definitions to communication. For instance, Scales, (2008, p.28) argued that communication can be defined as an interactive productive process by which people can convey, construct and receive messages in order to achieve specific purposes and needs. Communication is the ability to encode the need to communicate with others in a form of spoken or written words, a gesture or facial expression that helps the one who receives it to decode and try to understand what it conveys. This definition illustrates that learning to speak includes how learners practise producing the utterances in a social context. It concerns the performance rather than learning only the structure of the language. It is not clear whether oral communication requires the learner to ignore the structure of the language and focus mainly on how to produce the message. Similarly, Brown's (2007) definition pointed out that oral communication means the ability to carry on a conversation in a practical and proficient way. However, Brown's definition did not mention whether learners are required to master all the aspects of spoken

skill or just the ability to interact with others as conversation requires both speaking and listening skills.

In both definitions, the emphasis was placed on the learner's ability to communicate socially. Brown's definition also insists on social and cultural knowledge, which speakers need to understand and use when they try to communicate. This indicates that Brown placed emphasis on interaction in oral communication, which is verbal between interlocutors. Brown also pointed out the effect of culture and sociolinguistics in communication, which is considered very important because, every language is ruled by many principles in the way of speaking, the place, and the time and to whom a person speaks. This is because; choosing words, style of communication, facial expressions, intonation, and stress may affect oral communication.

However, carrying out a conversation requires both speaking and listening skills (Anderson et al., 2004). Hence, if oral communication is just conveying the message through interaction it indicates that it is unknown whether the speaker or the listener is required to adopt a suitable strategy in the case of any difficulty or problem that might occur while communicating. Likewise, speaking can be defined as a skill that functions for different purposes. For example, people communicate to each other to describe or criticise things or even to ask for something. Accordingly, speaking can be a conversation or engaging in a discussion to express opinions or thoughts (see Richards & Renandya, 2002). In his definition, Bygate, (1987) clearly viewed oral communication as the ability to process and adapt the speech to the situations efficiently, which requires what he called motor- perceptive skills and interaction skills.

This means that oral communication is the skill by which speakers can identify and articulate sounds and structures of the language. Speaking involves being able to make decisions and employ the appropriate strategies while communicating. Bygate's definition considered that speaking and writing need the same skills whereas, spoken interaction is different from writing in that, in the latter, the writer is absent most of the time, while, in oral communication, the speaker is present most of the time, especially in face-to-face communication. In

the same line, Nunan, (1998, p. 40) considered that success in speaking is measured in terms of the ability to carry out a conversation in the language. Nunan insisted on what Bygate, (1987) suggested that a further feature of oral interaction needs interlocutors to be able to negotiate meaning and manage the interaction regularly.

McDonough & Shaw, (2000) also added on Bygate's, (1987) definition and defined speaking as the ability to use the correct sounds and structures of the L2 and the ability to share the general knowledge of the interaction between the speaker and the listener in order for meaning to be clear between the interlocutors. They added that speaking and listening are connected to each other. Consequently, what the speaker said is dependent on what is being understood by the listener. McDonough & Shaw's, (2000) defined speaking as the "active process and one which is difficult to dissociate from listening in many ways" (p.153). These scholars emphasised the importance of interaction between the speaker and the listener in oral production of language. McDonough & Shaw's, (2000) definition assumed that speaking has an overlap with oral communication, conversational listening skill and oral production. I believe the most important thing in this definition is that speaking requires the listener to be able to interpret what the speaker says on top of all these shared verbal communications.

Harmer's, (2007, p.343) definition also, proposed that speaking can be characterised as interactive or non-interactive. Speaking is the ability to speak in a range of different genres and situations. It is how the speaker is able to use a range of conversational and conversational repair strategies, besides managing how to function the exchanges. Harmer's (2007, p.343) definition pointed to the sociolinguistic side of language, which helps speakers to know how to act successfully during interacting with others. Speaking can also be defined as "choosing the right words, the appropriate syntactic structures, the right pronunciation, the style appropriate to the situation, the right non-verbal gesture" (Simensen, 1998, pp.135-36). This definition indicates that the speaker is required to be able to master these various types of component skills in order to convey his/her message appropriately. Whereas McDonough et al., (2013)

provided the most practical definition to oral communication. They pointed out that speaking is:

> Not the oral production of written language, but involves learners in the mastery of a wide range of sub skills, which added together, constitute an overall competence in the spoken language" (ibid, p. 156)

From this, we may elicit that reading a text or any suggested written language is not considered to be as oral communication. Speaking is the ability to employ language effectively and appropriately in social interaction not only using verbal communication, but also using the manner of speaking to communicate particular meaning such as pitch, stress, and intonation beside non-linguistic elements such as gestures and body language in order to communicate his/her needs to a listener. The definition that the current study is adopting is McDonough et al., (2013) definition. This choice is based on the judgement that this definition seems to be inclusive since it elaborates the components and the discourse elements that accompanied speaking skills that are presented by other researchers. In addition, it includes a number of characteristics related to oral communication. It suggests the extent of the successful communicator and how the good speakers communicate using spontaneous language rather than artificial language that used sometimes with low-achieving speakers.

I conclude by saying that researchers such as McDonough et al., (2013), Simensen, (1998), Harmer's (2007) have similar views regarding speaking, oral communication, conversation and interaction in English language. However, the definition of oral communication in the present study takes the view that when we talk about oral communication it means any verbal actions which indicative of sending messages to the listener excluding any type of communication such as electronic emails and text messages. The current research focuses on oral communication inside the classroom (Harmer, 2007). In addition, oral communication has a systematic way, which should be followed by the speakers of particular language within specific context start from signal sound, words, structure, meaning and pronunciation in which teachers take in consideration in

assessing their students. The following sub-section sheds lights in more detail on the significance of oral communication.

3.2.1. IMPORTANCE OF ORAL COMMUNICATION

Sauvignon, (1997, p.10) argued that oral communication does not only concern language teachers, but it is an important concern for all people's daily lives. People begin to communicate at birth by interacting with those who are around them and get into negotiation to fulfil their needs. People develop their communication strategies automatically through their interaction experience with others. They also learn to use many features of communication such as intonation, gestures and facial expression in order to convey their message. Therefore, it is a continuous process of expression, understanding, and negotiation of meaning. Oral communication is a process concerned largely with communicating ideas and feelings. It is the tool which people use in their social interactions.

The importance of oral communication is that it involves enabling someone else to understand what we want to tell him or her. It can be a factual message or opinions and emotions which relate to everyday situations, or can be one-way speech which does not require response or intervention such as a radio broadcast. In this case, the audience is referred to as a listener. In addition, communication can be two-way in which there is a considerable amount of talking such as face-to-face conversation (see Lynch, 1996). In the classroom, oral communication can be practiced through a range of oral activities such as the interaction between students or between teacher and students or repetition drills (Sauvignon, 1997 p. 105).

3.2.2. ASPECTS OF ORAL COMMUNICATION

It is well known that oral communication is different from written communication because in the latter, the writer is absent most of the time while in oral communication the speaker is present especially most of the time in face to face communication. However, assessing oral communication may affect some aspects as follows:

3.2.2.1. Accuracy

Accuracy is different from fluency in that during the teaching and assessing of oral activities, accuracy deals with what the teacher designed the activities for and what teachers expect their students to achieve (Harmer, 2001, p.104). If the activity is designed to gain accuracy, students are required to concentrate on vocabulary, pronunciation and accurate grammar. Accuracy is normally meant to linguistically correct language (Simensen, 1998, p. 175). In oral communication, researchers differentiate between accuracy and fluency in order to correct students' oral errors.

Harmer, (2015, p.58) made clear differences between accuracy and fluency during 'communicative and non-communicative' activities as the following citation reveals:

Non-communicative activities   **Communicative activities**

No communication desired No communication purpose Form not content One language item only Teacher intervention Materials control	⟷	A desire to communicate A communicative purpose Content not form Variety of language No teacher intervention No material control
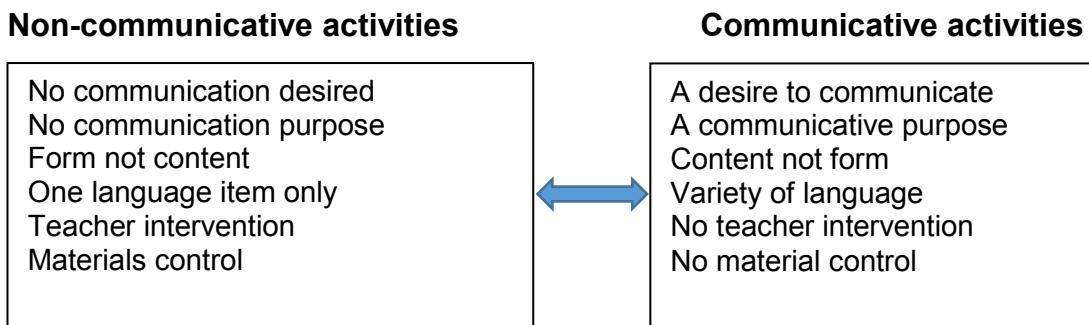
Figure 3: cited from Harmer (2015, p.58) the communication continuum

When teachers use communicative activities, students are willing to communicate with the focus being the content of what they are trying to produce or write rather than the language form such as in non-communicative activities. However, some researchers such as Richard-Amato, (2003, p.56) consider that focusing on accuracy during oral classroom activities where teachers often feel that their main role is to ensure correctness does not help in increasing students' ability to communicate in the target language and it can lead to language anxiety.

Therefore, I may conclude by saying that accuracy is emphasised on the correct form structure, grammar stress and intonation rather than meaning. Consequently, the student concentrates on producing a piece of communication free of mistakes and it is much easier to assess accuracy than fluency because it is an objective matter.

3.2.2.2. Fluency

The term 'fluency' has been accompanied by the emergence of the communicative language approach in the 1980s, which gave much emphasis to the role of developing fluency and distinguished it from the accurate use in the context of foreign language (FL) teaching, especially when teachers describe oral language production during second language oral proficiency development (Housen & Kuiken, 2009). Fluency is "how various language competences and skills can be mobilized" (Simensen, 1998, p. 175). This indicates that activities in speaking and writing lessons must range between focusing on not only how to say or write as well as what to say or write.

Fluency has been used by course-book writers to describe the aim of the speaking activities. When people converse they need to use the language in the right context; using this language depends on the status between interlocutors. When speakers become able to interpret what have been said between the participants and formulate the appropriate responses, they can be described as fluent speakers (Hedge, 2000). Fluency means:

> Responding coherently within the turns of the
> conversation, linking words or phrases, using intelligible
> pronunciation and appropriate intonation, and doing all
> this without hesitation (Hedge, 2000, p.261)

Accordingly, English language teaching (ELT) has been concerned about how to improve fluency drills whilst recent debates between teachers focus on which schemes help students to become more fluent particularly when they want to communicate in oral activities (Hartmann & Stork, 1976 citied in Brown, 2003). Similarly, Fulcher, (2003) points that the speaker is described as being 'fluent' when his/her speech becomes clearly automatic, and when he/she can use both the language structure and content accurately and automatically at normal conversational speed (Brown, 2003).

Both writers emphasise the importance of automaticity for speakers to be described as fluent speakers. Fulcher, (2003, p.30) defined some phenomena that may help in understanding what is meant by 'fluency' or the lack of it:

- Hesitation consisting of pauses, which can be unfilled (i.e. silence) or filled (i.e. with noises like 'erm').
- Repeating syllables or words.
- Changing words.
- Beginning in such a way that the grammar predicts what comes next, but the speaker changes the structure of the utterance part way through.

Therefore, fluency can be described as the ability to produce the language in real life without hesitation when learners focus more on meaning rather than the form of the language to accomplish a task (Ellis, 2012, p.207).

According to the above definitions presented by Hedge, (2000); Fulcher, (2003); Brown, (2003) and Ellis, (2012), it can be said that fluency is strongly contacted with hesitation, pausing and repeating of the syllabus or words and speed, which break the communication and sometimes may lose or impede the meaning of the message. Both fluency and accuracy are important goals in communicative language courses. Fluency is seen as the primary aim in language teaching (Brown, 2007, p.324), and it can be achieved by giving a chance for the speaker to process the language smoothly without bothering about errors, which might be committed while producing the language.

Harmer, (2015, p.387) suggested that teachers need to use quick 'instant' fluency activities in every lesson in order for students to get used to them. The more teachers include short fluency-type activities, the more familiar students become with speaking. When teachers apply this practice, students feel more relaxed and more confident about speaking; when students commit errors during fluency work while trying to express themselves, it is more helpful to offer what Harmer called 'gentle correction'. This may take place when the communication breaks down completely during a fluency activity so teachers intervene to offer a form of correction by simply reformulate what the student has said.

During fluent speech, teachers should not interrupt their students because it is more beneficial to let students continue their speech (Ur, 2012, p.96). However, teachers might face a dilemma if they do not correct and risk the error being reinforced. The solution for this problem according to Ur (2012) depends on the teachers' professional judgment. Teachers should identify how and when error correction may be useful and productive, taking into account a number of factors relating the students' kind of error and the goal of the course. Correction can be one of the successful means in teaching and learning although there is no consensus among teachers or researchers about the appropriate time to offer it (McDonough, 2003).

Both fluency and accuracy are important goals when considering oral communication. Teachers need to organise activities in pairs or groups so that students find opportunities to speak as much as possible. Teachers are also required to help students apply the language knowledge as it is pointless knowing a lot about a language if you cannot use it (Scrivener, 2011, p.213). This is because acquiring the linguistic knowledge which is considered as competency, is not an indicator of good performance (Fulcher, 2003).

The discussion in this section reflects the fact that understanding how to deal with both accuracy and fluency in instructional education can benefit teachers. It might help in the way that they assess their students. I believe that, assessing fluency can be different from assessing accuracy, in that the latter can clearly be measurable whereas fluency is a subjective matter and depends on the strategy and knowledge that teachers use. These two concepts have been used as parameters for the oral and written assessment of language learners and as indicators of learners' proficiency (Housen and Kuiken, 2009).

Investigating the assessment practices requires an insight into the theories of learning and their suitability in learning of English in Libyan secondary schools in terms of the effective way to learn and use the English language which will be explained in the following sections.

3.3. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LEARNING THEORY

Learning theories are considered one of the most important factors which influence the learning and teaching process. However, there is still no agreement on a particular theory of learning and its role in learning a language. The following sub-sections explain the development of these theories in more details.

3.3.1. Behaviourism and Learning Oral Communication

There are various philosophical approaches to learning, which have a particular philosophical factor that differs from the others in explaining the process of learning. For example, behaviourists, which are influenced by researchers such as Waston, Pavlov, Thorndike and Skinner, view the human mind as a mirror that reflects reality. They believe that, learning takes place by acquiring knowledge of the natural world and teachers communicate this knowledge to their students in the classroom. Students learn the knowledge by the imitation and repetition of the same structure (Mitchell & Myles, 2004). In other words, students are seen as passive receptive learners whose minds are filled with rules of the language grammar and learning takes place when they have the opportunity to practise making the correct response to an assumed stimulus.

Behaviourism theory was criticized, particularly when applied to language, because its premise is that the main focus for learning a language is how to learn the structure and the rules, rather than learning how to use this knowledge of language in social situations and during interacting with others. For example, Brown, (2000) found that learners learn well when they are involved in situations that require employing the knowledge of language for various purposes. Most theoretical viewpoints consider that learning a language occurs when learners speak it (Mitchell et al., 2013, p.123). Modern practices of assessment which are determined by assessment experts, have a great influence on the assessment process as a part of a wider educational restructuring. These new styles of assessment need students to be active and responsible for their own learning and the emphasis changed to be focused on the dialogue between the assessor and the assessed besides, what has and what has not been achieved (Huddleston& Unwin, 2008).

The following subsections illustrate more details about different theorists' point of views on learning speaking and assessment.

3.3.2. Constructivism and Learning Oral Communication

A constructivist theory considers learning a language as a personal process of constructing meaning from previous experience and knowledge. Therefore, constructivism's view of learning is that learning happens inside the heads of learners. If learners want to develop new skills and knowledge they are the ones who can bridge the gap between the teaching and the learning by engaging in their own learning (Gadsby, 2012). Accordingly, one of the functions of assessment is to identify this gap between what the learners can do and what they can do with the help of others, and how the learners can make progress. According to the constructivist theory, different roles need to be adopted by both the teacher and the learner in teaching and learning a language.

In other words, the teacher's role is assumed to be that of a guide, organizer, and facilitator whereas the learners' role is to be an active learner who works independently by engaging in classroom activities. This requires teachers to create tasks that provide opportunities to students to become involved in their learning. The social constructivist perspectives focus on language as communication between individuals. The constructivist view is that sharing and starting from students' idea is critical in teaching and learning (Harlen, 2013). Brown, (2000, p.245) claimed that foreign language teaching started to be viewed as "creation of meaning through interactive negotiation among learners". Through the application of these new approaches, students may gain the ability to direct their learning interests and needs according to the feedback they get from teachers and peers. In addition, students may compare their current educational progress and desired goals with agreed specific criteria and standards (Taras, 2005). This might be a challenge for some contexts, as in the Libyan context students are accustomed to a teacher-centred approach.

3.3.3. Socio- Cultural Theory and Learning Oral Communication

How to learn a second or foreign language has been a controversial topic and has had great debate among researchers and theorists. For example, in recent

years, language learning is influenced by the socio-cultural approach in which a great emphasis has been placed on social interaction with talk playing the greatest role in the development of knowledge and the process of learning. The theory developed by the psychologist Vygotsky (1978), has contributed to the current understanding of classroom interaction, where students are encouraged to interact with the others around them such as, their peers or teachers in the classroom. By engaging in such activities, students can gain more success with the help of people that are more knowledgeable rather than on their own (Vygotsky, 1978).

The socio-cultural point of view considers learning as a socially mediated process through language where interaction plays the central role for learning. It has become influential in the field of education and is applied in many classroom studies; the core concept of this has been Vygotsky's zone of proximal development or 'ZPD' (Mitchell et al., 2013, p. 222). Accordingly, the skilled learner is able to manage to learn through self-regulation. However, for the unskilled students 'scaffolding', a kind of support (described below) is needed from teachers and peers. To achieve what Vygotsky called 'Zone of Proximal Development' (ZPD), there should be a collaborative activity in the classroom so that a new language is created so students overcome any difficulties with the help of their teacher or peers. Further, in his socio-cultural theory, more emphasis was placed on the social context of learning. Vygotsky (1978) placed stress on social interaction as a means for learning the language. He considered talk as the central medium for understanding and developing the ability to speak the language and one of the processes of learning. Vygotsky's theory requires an involved teacher who is an active participant and guide for the student. In other words, the teachers' role is important in creating collaborative activities and facilitates the learning process by encouraging students to work in pairs or groups.

This nature of assisted performance is called by educators scaffolding. It indicates how learners are helped to bridge the gap between their existing knowledge and skills, and the demands of a new task which might be unapproachable without the help of others. One of the activities that might help

and by which learners can achieve more success is by establishing a stress-free atmosphere context where students find opportunities for talking, and where they can interact with their teacher and with other students (see Mitchell et al., 2013). Students also might be able to be more successful and manage assessing their work if the teachers encouraged them to practise assessment by establishing clear criteria or standards and provide clear feedback. This would help students experience assessment and encourage them to gradually progress towards being independent learners.

It is only in the last of the different language learning theories, i.e. social constructivism that oral communication has been in focus. However, the applications of social constructivism theory in Libyan context may require teachers to adapt their methods of teaching and assessing their students' oral communication. They need to change their roles from being just the controller and presenter of knowledge to a facilitator who encourages and pushes students to participate and become more involved in classroom discussion. Correspondingly, teachers of oral communication should be aware of the importance of understanding the assessment process and its role in improving students' learning. All of these considerations promote the development of the teaching and learning of oral communication. Teachers are also required to be 'Assessment Knowledgeable', and try to put the knowledge of assessment process into practice in their classrooms in order to improve the ability of their students and use the language confidently, as the teachers' perceptions and beliefs can strongly influence their classrooms practices (Brown, 2004) which may not always be consistent with their beliefs (Black & Wiliam, 1998). Creating a positive and motivating environment for students in which they feel interested in sharing the learning process, and being able to evaluate their work, is an essential element in language teaching and learning (Brown, 2004).

To sum up, we can highlight that, assessment is not seen by educational learning theorists and researchers as something which is used just to give grades to learners, and a compulsory requirement for various purposes. It is "a powerful process, which can both empower people as well as damage them" (Huddleston and Unwin, 2008, p.164). In other words, it can be said that, assessment

occupies a central part in students' life alongside other related teaching and learning matters while many decisive decisions are often based on students' achievement in examinations, which results in a source of pressure and stress for both students and their families.

That might be why Oscarson, (2009) emphasised that, "the power of assessment on a personal as well as societal level should not be underestimated" (p. 234). It might also be why many educationalists and researchers call for participatory and alternative practices to traditional assessment and criticize those that are depending only on summative assessment which main focus and concern are grades and examinations. This old-style approach represents the primary tool for evaluating students' learning in the field of teaching and learning contexts in many instances particularly in language learning in Libya.

In order to understand more about teachers' perception and practice of teaching and learning, the following section and sub-sections bring us to their views and their approaches to learning.

3.4. TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS AND BELIEFS OF LEARNING

Understanding teachers' and students' perceptions and beliefs towards the methods of teaching and assessing oral communication, may play a crucial part in the processes in both learning and teaching English as a FL. Therefore, the study has chosen to research what assessment processes teachers use and the influence of teachers' and students' perceptions on assessing communicative competence. Teachers are highly influenced by their beliefs which in turn affect their view and the decisions they make on classroom practices, and the way they behave in the classroom (Williams & Burden, 1997). That is to say "Teachers' beliefs about what learning is will affect everything that they do in the classroom, whether their beliefs are implicit or explicit" (ibid, 1997, pp.56-57). Perceptions and beliefs of teachers play an important role in taking decisions, and the way of evaluating the students (Woods, 1996); consequently any behaviour, which is performed by teachers might have a strong influence on the teaching and learning process**.**

Brown, (2004) confirmed that teachers' beliefs and attitudes to teaching and learning have a great impact on teaching practices and outcomes inside the classroom because "what teachers do is a reflection of what they know and believe" (Richards & Lockhart, 1996, p.29). In other words, teachers' beliefs and knowledge have influence on their practice in their classroom. This indicates that these beliefs have a great effect on the teachers' decision-making and action. For example, when assessing oral communication, some teachers believe that, errors should be corrected instantly, while others consider that, the best method to correct errors and enhance students' learning is to encourage collaboration.

These beliefs according to Richards & Lockhart, (1996) are derived from different sources such as: (a) their own experience as language learners (2) experience of what works best (3) established practice (4) personality factors (5) educationally based or research-based principles and principles derived from an approach or method (ibid, pp.30-31). Teachers are believed to bring their individual past experience of school or work with them, which might shape their method of teaching (Gregson et al., 2015, p.37). In addition to the afore mentioned, the curriculum and the limited resources could affect teachers' behaviour in responding to each student in the classroom, which sometimes does not help in creating a good relationship between the teachers and their students (Cooper, 2011, p.137). A number of studies conducted by many researchers such as: Haney & McArthur, (2002); Tsai, (2006) pointed out that the teachers' beliefs and perceptions can influence the teachers' classroom practices (James et al., 2014, p.401).

However, although many people believe that positive attitudes can reflect good practices some researchers such as James et al., (2014), Boud, (1995) have different views towards this matter. For example, researchers say that positive attitudes towards formative assessment may not translate into good practice, because teachers may develop negative beliefs based on certain approaches when they discover that implementing formative assessment practices would require great effort and time. As a result, they try to avoid their use (James et al., 2014, p.402). In addition, teachers who feel that they are incompetent and unable to implement educational assessments are likely to develop negative attitudes

that result either in avoiding using various assessment processes or implementing poor practices (James et al., 2014).

These findings also supported by Boud, (1995, p.181), highlighted that "the ways staff conceptualise their role as teachers, and the attitudes they hold to their position, might not in all cases match closely enough the conditions necessary for effective implementation of student self-assessment". Therefore, it is important for teachers to be aware of the impact of the assessment practices they employ because the way teachers assess their students can have a positive or negative influence on their students' learning. Teachers are required to provide "activities which support learners as they move forward, not just intellectually but also socially and emotionally, so that once these supports are removed, learning is secure" (Gregson and Hillier, 2015, p.92).

All these facts and issues are needed for EFL teachers of English language in order to convey their teaching knowledge to their students for their learning progress. They are considered as a part of the good strategies that teachers use when they check their students' learning in this study. The following section and sub-sections review the teachers' methods to learning that are assumed suitable for improving students learning.

3.5. TEACHERS' APPROACHES TO STUDENTS' LEARNING
3.5.1. Error Correction

Correction is a procedure used by the teacher to help students clarify their understanding of meaning and construction of language. It should be in a gentle manner, in the right kind of atmosphere, which lead students to enjoy correction (see Harmer, 2010, p.97). There is still a debate between theorists about the role of correction, which is called by Mitchell et al., (2013, p.18) negative and positive evidence. Negative correction such as the formal correction used by teachers, is not beneficial for students. In other words, in this context, either the teacher corrects errors without asking the student to correct (direct teacher correction) or he/she corrects after many students fail to give the correct answer. In the former case, the teacher does not give students the chance to correct themselves or each other. Consequently, the teacher dominates the correction process which is

viewed as an ineffective process as it provides the least effective formal feedback to the student improvement. The student can only repeat corrected words without internalising the correction. According to Hedge, (2000, p.15) "there is increasing evidence that learners progress faster with meaningful language practice in a rich linguistic environment and with an informed policy of error correction on the part of the teacher".

However, there are different opinions in the literature regarding the best time to correct errors. Sociolinguistics such as McDonough and Shaw, (2003) consider that the language learning process is essentially social and the language is constructed and reconstructed through interaction. Correction according to the interaction theory (Mitchell et al., 2013) takes different forms of correction, ranging from a formal correction untaken by a teacher to a more informal one offered by a native speaker during the communication. McDonough and Shaw, (2003, p.152) advised teachers to correct errors during the oral skills class through speech so teachers are required to be very sensitive while correcting especially with silent students. Teachers are also required not to correct the mistakes that students commit unless they asked to do so by the students. These mistakes can be worked out and can be dealt with later in other tutorials.

Empirical research Hedge, (2000), Ellis (2012) on the strategies and techniques that might help students to overcome difficulties in oral activities showed that it is more beneficial to give students a chance to correct themselves. Hedge, (2000, p.291) argued that a study carried by Nobuyoshi and Ellis, (1996) on adult learners of English in Tokyo about whether the request for clarification when students produce errors in a form focused on communication activity, encouraged a student to self-correct and help to produce language that is more accurate. They found that some students self-corrected successfully while the others did not. They also, discovered that students who used self-correction made progress in their accuracy language later. This indicates that teachers should be aware of how to encourage students to be independent and practise correcting themselves.

Educators say that students can make more progress in their learning through self-monitoring as a useful practice that helps students to discover their strengths and weakness. Oxford, (1990, p.161) stated that "self-monitoring is important for speaking, but students should not become obsessed with correcting every speech difficulty because this would kill communication". This means that self-correcting orally is helpful in making progress in the learning process, but it should be limited and balanced so that, it does not act as counter-productive in students' learning especially in oral communication.

However, students who struggle with learning a language might need more assistance from their teachers. Cornelius & Harbaugh, (2010) proposed that facilitative relationships characterized by empathy, acceptance and honesty can develop students' learning. Further, teachers are required to diagnose the difficulties of those students who face problems more than the others in learning a language as soon as possible and prepare how to deal with and react to them. Moreover, teachers should provide their students with immediate feedback concerning to their points of weakness (Gipps, 1994; Black et al., 2004) as it is considered a powerful tool to enhance students' learning. Thus, good student-teacher relationships provide a positive climate, which motivate students to engage and take part in the learning process. I believe that if teachers use poor assessment techniques that can discourage students and hinder them from being active learners; teachers play a vital role in the teaching and learning process. Cornelius & Harbaugh, (2010) emphasised that

> Even having little or no formal instruction on educational theories, everyone has their own sense about what learning and teaching are, what is important for students, and how teachers can best contribute to student development (p.17)

3.5.2. Grading

A number of arguments have been produced for and against the grades as a product of evaluating students' achievement. Grades can be seen as a useful procedure that teachers use to assess the students and motivate them to gain

more progress. They are considered beneficial as a means for improvement (Entwistle, 2009). Teachers provide their students with grades according to their performance in exam, quizzes or several tests. Another possible way to assign grades to students is during work in classroom activities, homework or assignments (Oscarson, 2009). However, grades can be demotivating if they are considered as a process to compare between students' achievements. Mostly, in these cases, students will lose interest in learning if they assume that the desired grade will not be reachable (Black et al., 2004).

Grades can be essential in formative and summative measurement in developing students' responses to assessment tasks. If students see grades as the desired goals, their performance will improve and they will be more motivated (Sadler, 2009, p.824). Marks can also have a role in understanding standards. They are not only very important for measuring students' development but they need to be reliable and provide the right measures of students' achievement. They can be retained as a value prove over time not only for students but also, for higher education as social institutions (Sadler, 1989, 2009). However, Tanner & Jones, (2000) consider that, giving detailed comments helps students to make progress more than just providing them with marks or grades (Tanner & Jones, 2000, p.208), and that grades do not help in developing students' learning, thus teachers must avoid using them (Black & Wiliam, 1998). These above researchers believed that assigning grade to assess students' performance was an unbeneficial assessment product for students, since it did not guide them to gain better achievement and it was considered a waste of teachers' time. In other words, when teachers give feedback with grades to their students, learning can be affected in that, learners focus on marks and ignore comments (Black & Wiliam, 2010, p.84). According to Black et al., (2004, p.13) when teachers give a score or grade to their students when they assess their work, they could affect students' learning, as it might be seen as a competition between students, or final judgment.

One of Black & Wiliam, (1998) empirical findings is a study carried out on 48 11-year Israeli students exploring the effectiveness of providing different types of formative evaluation feedback. In the study, participants were given two types of

independent written tasks with an oral introduction and explanation. Three sessions were held with the same pair of tasks used in the first and third. After that, each student received one of the three types of written feedback. One-third of the group was given comments on to what extent their work matches the criteria, the second group was only given grades and the third was given both grades and comments. The findings revealed that comments with grades had a negative effect on the students which indicates that even use a praise with grades can affect the quality of students' performance.

The conclusion that can be drawn from this discussion is that the significant role for grades as tools that lead to progress in learning is still disputed. One of the main conclusions of Black and Wiliam, (1998) is that descriptive feedback has the most important role in leading students to the highest improvements in performance. Therefore, teachers are required to be familiar with the notion of marking and consider that students need to be provided with opportunities to understand how the grades are used when they apply assessment practices, which should help encourage them to achieve their learning objectives.

3.5.3. Questioning

Questioning is one of the most common practices used by teachers. It assists teachers to determine the students' instructional needs, and steps should be taken to satisfy their students' needs. It also helps students to develop and explain their idea around particular tasks (Richards and Lockhart, 1996; Black et al., 2003; Harlen, 2013). These kind of questions can be classified into two types-convergent questions and divergent questions. The former focuses on short answers responses from students, while the latter requires students to engage by providing extra information. Therefore, teachers prefer asking more convergent questions because it does not need much time, thus limiting the opportunities for students to practise the target language. Teachers use questioning for several reasons:

- They stimulate and maintain students' interest.
- They encourage students to think and focus on content of the lesson.
- They enable a teacher to elicit particular structures or vocabulary items.

- They enable teachers to check students' understanding.
- They encourage student participation in a lesson (Richards and Lockhart, 1996, p.185).

However, this practice used by teachers might minimize the opportunities for students to take part in initiating the questioning strategy. As a result, it can be said that classrooms are still more dominated by teachers. Ur, (1991, p.230) advised that language teachers' aims in questioning should help students to engage and participate in the classroom activities through speech. The features of the effective questioning practice are the ones that motivate students and enhance their learning through designed criteria. When teachers use oral questioning, it helps to change the atmosphere of the classroom from teacher-centred activity into an interactive and challenging one. It helps teachers to find out the level of their students' understanding which in turn, facilitate, explore and solve any problems that students might have. When for example, teachers initiate oral questions in the classroom, students could attempt to respond and give the answer they expect as correct, by engaging and participating in such activity through speech (Avis et al., 2010, p.127).

Students could solve any problem they might be encounter through negotiation and interacting with their teachers. This activity can encourage students to participate and be motivated with the help of the teachers. Activities that are mediated through language or involve the negotiation between the teacher and students provide the opportunity for students to use the language they know in a real situation. As a result, students become active and interested. However, Avis et al., (2010) advise teachers to be patient and confident when they use this process, for example, teachers can ask nominated questions or ask the question to the whole class and ask students to work in pairs to avoid students being stressful. Teachers can give their students opportunities to practise oral language if they provide them with what he called 'Genuine' questions (Ur, 2012).

These questions involve a real transfer of information and they can be implemented during the classroom interaction. They are the initiation- response-feedback which can be communicated by various statements. In this respect, teachers can use short or long question response, although questions that require

longer responses create more chances for better learning; short ones can be beneficial in discovering the level of student understanding. Effective questioning practice is believed to be the "one that elicits immediate, motivated, relevant and full responses" (Ur, 2012, p.230).

3.5.4. Code Switching

Nunan and Carter, (2001) defined code switching as a "phenomenon of switching from one language to another in the same discourse" (275). There are varied perspectives on the phenomenon of code switching. Some linguists believe that code switching is inevitable in teaching and learning a second language. They argue that it can be a valuable communication strategy. It helps to express meanings more precisely. Others believe that code switching vitiates language, rather than enhances the communication between individuals (Nunan and Carter, 2001; Macaro, 2003).

Teachers most often code-switched for various purposes such as, checking whether their students understand the objectives of the activity being employed and explaining general concepts, which might be difficult to understand. Students also code switch to their mother tongue to continue the communication by trying to make use of the native equivalent of a certain lexical item in target language. During cooperative activities and when involved in group work, students may not use the target language and code-switch to their native language, perhaps because the student may feel that he/she has not conveyed the exact meaning in the target language (Nunan and Carter, 2001).

Cook, (2001) confirms this, and argued that learners tend to communicate using their mother tongue during working together and when explaining tasks. This indicates that students may prefer to apply their first language (L1) either because they are not capable, or they are shy or unmotivated to communicate in their "Target Language" (L2). In fact, the two different points of views towards utilizing L1 as a strategy to approach learning a language highlighted the pros and cons of using code switching. Some researchers such as Nation (2013) consider that code switching can be beneficial for students. It can help students to maintain the

flow of communication which, in turn, could promote fluency. In addition, when teachers want to clarify any difficulties for their students, they find it helpful to transfer the necessary knowledge for their students using their native language (Nation, 2003).

It can be argued that these situations were experienced by the researcher when, interviewing the students and some of the interviewed teachers in English. Initially, I did not seek answers using code switching. Yet, after several days of interviewing in English with the participants, code switching was employed to put them at ease. This strategy helped as well as open the participants up to the interview questions which, in turn, had a positive influence on establishing a good rapport with the respondents and made them more relaxed when they wanted to express their thoughts and messages. However, the other view considers that using this strategy can have a negative impact on students learning, in that it can minimize the chance for students to practise using the target language. Therefore, it should be banned in English classes, as it might interfere with the students' efforts to master the target language.

This view is confirmed by a study carried out by Lee, (2005) using observation to show the impact of utilizing the L1 in classroom activities in South Korean primary school classrooms which extremely depended on their mother tongue to complete communicative tasks. The findings of this study revealed that this strategy in learning the language prevents them from exploiting the opportunity to listen and speak in the target language. Nevertheless, Johnson, (2008) concluded that research has found that learners are different in their attitudes towards using L1. Some learners do not prefer using L1 even though it is necessary. Others become unhappy and upset if their teachers do not use L1 to facilitate their learning. In summary, different arguments have been made about the teachers and students' use of L1 in L2 classes. Therefore, the current study takes into account the extent to which teachers and students use the L1 in oral activities lessons.

3.5.5. Employment of Cooperative Activities

Researchers such as Tsui (2003) emphasise that the employment of cooperative learning can be a good practice for encouraging students to be independent learners. This perspective is related to the notion of student-centred learning where students are seen as active learners are able to undertake the responsibility for their own learning. Pair and group classroom activities in this section refer to all classroom tasks planned by the teacher and/ or prescribed in the textbook that involve students in practising spoken language. These activities are supposed to help students to develop their speaking performance. Tsui, (2003) argued that practising students to work in groups encourages them to be active and take part in classroom activities.

In recent teaching materials, a lot of attention has been paid to designing activities that focus on tasks mediated through language or that involve the negotiation and sharing of information by participants (McDonough et al., 2013). Teachers can establish different activities for communicative purposes. These activities such as problem-solving role-play activities and information gap activities, give a chance for students to speak in different social contexts and assume different social roles. In such activities, students are encouraged to share and exchange information with other students actively. Consequently, students find the appropriate opportunity to practise both speaking and listening the language (McDonough et al., 2013). Teachers are advised to provide learners with the opportunity to use the language they know in meaningful activities they feel interested in talking about.   Speaking activities, which interest students, are often considered useful way of giving them valuable opportunities to use English. In this kind of activities, learners can practise oral strategies such as describing, predicting, and asking for feedback (McDonough et al., 2013).This notion is supported by many scholars who believe that employing cooperative learning in language classrooms can enhance learners' motivation and interest in language learning and helps learners to become more responsible for managing their own learning (Freeman & Anderson, 2011).

However, research shows that teachers' lack of a good strategy of how to manage and use paired and group work activities inside their classrooms, can

have a negative effect on students' learning. Orafi and Borg, (2009) carried out a study on Libyan EFL teachers who were using this practice in their teaching. This study revealed the usefulness of these activities for offering students the opportunity for producing spoken language. Teachers were using them as a question and answer session, and they failed to act as a facilitator during practising these activities. This indicates that these teachers had a lack of understanding of how these activities can be effective in students' learning. Therefore, teachers are required to prepare well before employing these strategies to avoid wasting their time.

3.5.6. Teachers' Feedback

Teachers' feedback is considered a significant aspect and a major element in formative assessment. It is also, seen by many researchers and educators (Sadler, 1989; Taras, 2005; Brown, 2004; Black & Wiliam, 1998; Gipps, 1994; Black et al., 2004) as a powerful tool to enhance the teaching and learning process. It can be given in different ways to inform students about whether they are on the right track or not. It also helps teachers to modify current actions for a more successful outcome. Various definitions describe feedback. For instance, Sadler, (1989, p.123) used Kulhavy's (1977) definition, which considered that feedback is "any of the numerous procedures that are used to tell a learner if an instructional response is right or wrong". Another definition was given by Stobart, (2008, p.168) who used Deborah Butler & Philip Winne's (1995, p.275) definition describing feedback as information that empowers the learners to regulate their knowledge. It is a tactic skill with which a learner can restructure and adapt strategies to improve learning.

In other words, feedback is a procedure by which students can discover their strengths and the area which needs more attention, therefore, try to develop it through effective participating in the learning process. Feedback is totally linked to formative assessment, and it is defined as the information that is used to close the gap between the current level of students' understanding and the required standard. Teacher's feedback is considered linked to the formative assessment process and it should help control students' learning in order to gain the target goals. Feedback in the context of teaching in general, can be used to inform

learners about their performance. It is provided for improving their learning and can be used in two different ways. It can be utilized to assess learners by informing them how they have performed, through giving grades or providing a comment whereas in correction teachers use it to determine specific aspects of the leaners' performance and notify what the learners did right and what they did wrong and why (Taras, 2005, p.505; Brookhart, 2008, p.58; Ur, 1991, p.242).

Feedback is considered as an important element which should be constructive, and should motivate students to be involved in assessing their own performance in order to improve their learning. This is because of its great role in identifying the students' current level of achievement and the standards level aimed to be achieved. Since formative assessment is considered an assessment for learning that helps students in their learning feedback is linked to it (Gardner, 2006; Taras, 2005) and can play a vital role in learning. In order for feedback to be effective and support students to engage and develop in their learning Boyle & Charles, (2014) mentioned some features that feedback should include; feedback needs to be clear, purposeful, meaningful and compatible with the pupils' prior knowledge and provide logical connections. It needs to promote active information processing on the part of the learners, have low task complexity, relate to specific and clear goals and provide a minimal threat to the person at the 'self' level (113). Good feedback helps students become self-regulated learners. Good feedback gives students the help they need to become masters of their own destiny when it comes to learning.

Teachers are advised not to give unclear feedback and need to create a conversation with their students in order to scaffold them when they need help instead of just giving marks (Gregson and Hillier, 2015, p.314). Teachers are also required to provide feedback, which helps in pushing learning forward and be provided in the right manner. Black et al., (2004, p.10) explained that, "an assessment activity can help learning if it provides information that teachers and their students can use as feedback in assessing themselves and one another and in modifying the teaching and learning activities in which they are engaged".

In this research, the working definition of feedback is any information about the strengths and weaknesses that teachers provide to their students, either written

or verbal. Feedback does not just express and explain students' gaps but informs about how to improve and close the gap through encouraging students to engage in the learning process.

Given the benefits that both teachers and their students may gain from the application of feedback. The question is how feedback can be applied effectively in the context of the curriculum and the time available (Sadler, 1998). Due to the importance of corrective feedback in assessing oral communication in L2 classes its use is considered in the following section.

3.5.7. Corrective Feedback

Ellis, (2012) argued that both second language acquisition researchers and teacher educators have been interested in corrective feedback; although their theoretical perspectives differ in how feedback is seen to contribute to learning, they both acknowledge that it can play an important role in improving the learning process. Corrective feedback refers to "specific move that corrects a learner error" (p.135). As a large number of studies on language teaching shows, errors occur in learning new languages, and need to be corrected (Ellis, 2012; Brown, 2007; Johnson, 2001). Therefore, how and when to correct students' errors has been questioned by many educators and researchers. Some of them have shifted to accept correcting errors in the field of learning as a step in the learning process, which results in learning progress. However, in the early 1960s there was a great influence of the behaviourist theory which dominated the teaching and learning of a native language and a second or a foreign language. Learning a language was thought to be an imitation of others without errors (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2011). Consequently, oral work was teacher-dominated whereas speaking and listening have only recently been considered as important skills. The oral language was taught by methods based on behaviourist theories of learning which emphasise the importance of input before output, and it was believed that repetition was central to learning (ibid).

Hence, oral language was thought to require no more than repeated oral production of structures, and how to develop grammatical and phonological accuracy (Nunan & Carter, 2001). In the 1970's, cognitive and sociolinguistic theories influenced language teaching and stressed on the importance of using

new methods such as communicative approach. These approaches were extended to include the teaching of interactional notions and how learners communicate (Larsen-Freeman and Anderson, 2011, p. 115). Further to this, there has been a great impact of psychologists such as Vygotsky's work, which highlighted that learning takes place when individuals talk with others by engaging in a social process. Teachers generally feel that errors need to be corrected. Different points of view on what and who should do the correcting, the teacher, the student who committed an error or another student as in peer feedback (see Ellis, 2012, p.137).

Although, research showed that lexical errors are more likely to be important for teachers than grammatical errors during oral activities teachers vary in the way they correct oral errors; they use different strategies to correct learner errors. Teachers and students do not always have the same perceptions on corrective feedback, as revealed from a study carried out by Lasagabaster and Sierra (2005) on University learner level on the effectiveness of corrective feedback (CF) which showed that both teachers and students had the same beliefs. However, another study conducted by Yoshida (2008) explained teachers' different choice of CF strategy and learners' preference for different CF types, showed a gap between language teachers in Australia and their students. Teachers demonstrated that they prefer modifying students' errors while their students prefer self-correction. The next most common type of correction preferred by teachers was (elicitation, followed, by clarification requests, metalinguistic feedback, explicit correction and repetition). Teachers also revealed that they used (elicitation or metalinguistic-clues) for instance, they realised that the learner became able to use self-correction (see Ellis, 2012, p.141).   .

Therefore, providing corrective feedback depends on the strategies teachers' use; and every teacher has its own strategy on how and when to provide corrective feedback. The teachers' lenient methods of providing corrective feedback and the way of building positive support in which students feel motivated and unthreatened, are essential parts to encourage students to make positive contributions in oral activities and accept their teachers' error correction. However, if the teacher treats a student who commits errors as a low-achieving

student, s/he will always feel annoyed and frustrated whenever they commit oral errors. As a result, students will be unwilling to speak or communicate for fear of the teacher's method of correction (Cook, 2001).

Given the above controversies, one of the aims of the current study is to offer certain findings for building complete EFL assessment practices which help in developing learning oral production language.

3.6. TEACHERS' ROLE IN ORAL COMMUNICATION ASSESSMENT

Traditionally, as an educational practice, it is the teacher's responsibility to assess their students' performance. According to recent theories in teaching and learning, various assessment processes can be employed by language teachers in order to achieve the goals and objectives of the language course. Teachers' beliefs and views about how to teach and improve students learning have progressed (Black et al., 2003). They now consider sharing the responsibility of the teaching and learning process with their students. However, teachers need to be aware of how to involve their students to be active participants in the classroom, as "students gain maturity and proficiency and become more accustomed to sharing power in the classroom they need to continually work toward becoming autonomous learners and effective communicators in the classroom and out" (Richard- Amato, 2003, p. 82).

There are various challenges that teachers might face when they introduce the new practice of assessment and learning. For example, one of the factors that might affect teachers' application of the forms of formative assessment, is a feeling of losing the traditional control over their classrooms. When teachers act as facilitators they share the learning process that, "may be considered to have the potential for undermining the teachers' authority" (Sadler, 1989, p.141). Another perspective stated by Breen & LittleJohn, (2000, p.61) is that some learners find it difficult to take the teachers' role and prefer to be assessed by their teachers instead. Likewise, teachers are often used to be dominant and are not willing to give up their authority they have been given because some of them have a fixed picture of their role.

The teachers' role is necessary as feedback providers to help students take part in their learning beside assessors, to inform their students how well they have done. Teachers need to function as an adviser, help students to discover their errors and mistakes as well as their strengths and try to tell them what should be the next step (Harmer, 2010, p.25). During oral activities, one of the teachers major responsibilities according to Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, (2011, p.122) is to act as "an adviser, answering students' questions and monitoring their performance. He might make a note of their errors to be worked on at a later time during more accuracy-based activities". This indicates that teachers should facilitate the process of learning by encouraging students to produce the language even when they commit errors; they need to create a positive, effective climate during language lessons. Teachers need to choose error correction strategies which do not put the student in an embarrassing or singled-out position. This helps the students feel comfortable enough to participate in the foreign language activities.

If teachers tend to address the new assessment practices effectively, it is important to inform their students how and for what they are being assessed. Teachers need to make students aware of the criteria for successful work and they should have a clear picture about what teachers are looking for, so that students can measure themselves against this. When teachers correct or give grades, they must be provided in a sensitive and supportive manner (Harmer, 2010, p.60). Consequently, teachers who are considered successful, try to use different processes that make their teaching helpful and more useful and create opportunities, which encourage students to engage in a discussion such as oral activities (Harmer, 2001).

According to Harmer (2001), the teacher plays a great role as assessor in oral communication. Teachers' practices for assessing their students' performance vary to some extent with the type of activity they apply inside the classroom. Tutors can assess their students in different ways such as providing feedback, correction and grades. When teachers assess their students, they are required to inform them whether they are using the right command of English. Harmer, (2007) described different roles of a teacher and claimed that a teacher can act

as a facilitator, who pushes students to be independent learners through the use of group work and paired work. A teacher can act as a controller who is in charge of the class and organize drills; a teacher can be a prompter who encourages students to think creatively in a friendly environment. The teacher can also act as a participant who stands back during discussion making activities to give a chance for students to get on by themselves and offer feedback and/or correct mistakes when it is needed. All these characteristics of a teacher, shape the teachers' role as an organiser and monitor rather than "being a model for correct speech and writing and one with the primary responsibility of making sure students produced plenty of error-free sentences" (Richards &Rodgers, 2014, p.98).

Another essential feature as defined by Donald and Kneale, (2001, pp.18-19) indicates that good language tutors gear their speech to the ability level of the class; maintain discussion at an appropriate intellectual level; broaden and enrich students' vocabulary and knowledge of structures by deliberately using a wide and varied range of words, phrases and registers; and strike a balance between correcting mistakes and encouraging communication. Good teachers are the ones who notice and respond to feedback because he/she ensured that feedback is linked to empathy (Scales, 2008, p.51). Therefore, it is important for teachers to pay attention to their students' feedback, interpret it and respond accordingly. Additional roles supposed by communicative approach teaching is that the teacher, during oral activities, monitors, encourages and seeks to help the speaker and the hearer, through paraphrasing, confirming and providing feedback (Richards & Rodgers, 2014, p.99).

Based on the aforementioned theories, I strongly maintain that the teacher's role is very significant and crucial in the operation of assessing oral competence. I agree with Harmer, (2007) who argues that, teachers need to present a professional face to their students. Students should see "someone who looks like a teacher whatever else they look like" (108). I also emphasise that the solution always lies in providing students with the encouragement and motivation to use language accurately and appropriately.

To conclude, teachers play a vital role in helping students to produce the language accurately and fluently and they need to be aware of the impact of the following factors that Farrell (2007, pp. 80-18) states:

- The underlying communication structure in the classroom- if the communication follows the unmarked IRF structure or if there is a variation at any stages of the lesson.
- The impact of underlying communication structure of the communication in the classroom.
- How students follow what is required from them in lessons.
- The functions of teacher's talk in the classroom such as the teacher's use of:
  * Praise
  * Instructions
  * Speech modifications
  * Use of comprehension checks
  * Feedback
  * Questions-the number, type and functions of questions.

3.7. STUDENTS' ROLE IN ASSESSMENT

The learner is the central core in the teaching and learning process. S/he has a key role to play inside the classroom. Although according to Ellis (2012, p.151) little research has been done on the learner's contribution to classroom discourse. Richards and Rodgers, (2014, p. 98) emphasised that the learner's role in the process of communication is different from those in traditional second language classrooms. They described the learner's role as mentioned by Breen & Candlin, (1980) as follows:

The learner needs to act as a negotiator within the group and within the classroom procedures and activities. Learners also need to learn how to be in-depended. With the communicative language teaching and learning, students are required to participate in classroom activities and need to work with their peers in group work or in pair work tasks, rather than being dependent on their teachers. Students are required to interact with each other. With the new theories of

learning, students also need to learn that successful communication is achieved by taking responsibility and part in the learning process (Richards and Rodgers 2014). Teachers and students can work together to set appropriate learning goals in which students feel that they are responsible for their own learning (Black & Wiliam, 1998). Students can make progress in their learning by experiencing self-assessment and peer assessment which according to Sadler, (1989); Black & Wiliam, (1998); Taras, (2002; 2010) found to be an essential practice for involving students in their learning. Accordingly, peer-assessment and self-assessment can support learning when they are employed in the classroom activities.

Students need to be encouraged to practise assessing their own work. This task might not be an easy task and needs a lot of effort. This is because students might not be able to gain this aim easily and they might assess themselves by providing lower or higher grades to their work (Abdul-Rahman, 2011). Therefore, a lot of effort and time are needed for training students to practise assessment. It is important for students to "view assessment as an opportunity to reflect upon and celebrate their effort, progress and improvement, as well as their processes and products" (Tierney et al., 1991, p.21 cited in Hedge 2000, p.397). However, various issues might influence the oral assessment practices as explored in the next section.

3.8. FACTORS AFFECTING ORAL COMMUNICATION ASSESSMENT

During the operation of teaching and learning, research in education and psychology highlighted many psychological and social variables that might play an important role in students' success or failure. Among these factors are; the learning environment, emotions towards learning and assessing, test anxiety, students' motivation to learn, class size, teachers' experience and many other developmental and social factors (Gipps,1994; Hedge, 2000). According to Hedge, (2000, p. 292) speaking activities are "probably the most demanding for students and teachers in terms of the affective factors involved". That is to say when students try to communicate and produce the language with others, they might feel anxious and shy. This is because being unable to be a fluent speaker

could touch their self-esteem in that students might feel that they are presenting themselves at a much lower level of cognitive ability.

Thus, it is important for teachers to put into consideration these factors when planning an assessment activity so that students feel secure and being encouraged by their teachers to overcome such difficulties. Although, there are many other factors that may have significant impact on the process of learning and assessment, the focus of this section will be on five issues; the learning environment; students' emotion; teachers' experience, class size and gender. The reason for choosing those specific factors is related to their direct influence on students' achievement, which could be affected positively and/or negatively through the application of assessment processes in classrooms.

3.8.1. Learning Environment

School learning environment is one of the factors that may have significant effects on students' motivation to study and learn. Creating positive and constructive environment can motivate students to be active learners because,

> if classrooms are places that students enjoy coming to
> because the content is interesting and relevant to their
> age and level of ability, the learning goals are
> challenging yet manageable and clear, and atmosphere
> is supportive (Lightbown & Spada, 2013, p.88).

Therefore, to make the learning process more effective, the learning environment should be enjoyable and pleasant for students since it is the place, where learners feel that they are safe and keen to be involved in their learning. In other words, a learning environment can be developed by designing and collecting materials that suits students' needs and interests and can help in motivating students to engage in classroom activities. Creating a supportive and positive atmosphere, inspires students and helps them to feel secure and self-confident. This might be why researchers insist on teachers' job as "to provide the kind of warm, embracing climate that encourages students to speak, however halting or broken their attempts may be" (Brown, 2001 p. 269).

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Consequently, it is essential that these issues be considered. Teachers should generate positive classroom environment and understand what interests their students and what difficulties they are facing (Hedge, 2000, p.393). I believe that students would find it difficult to communicate fluently if he/she lacks self-confident although they might be knowledgeable about the language. Thus, teachers can play a vital role in helping students to feel positive self-esteem by inspiring and creating a practical and positive environment.

3.8.2. Students' Emotions and Learning

Emotion is considered as an important factor for success in the classroom (Brown, 2001). As a result, learners' positive or negative feelings towards language plays an essential role in learning a language. Krashen's 1985 notion of the affective filter assures that attitude, anxiety, keenness, and other emotional responses can help or hinder language learning. Consequently, if the learner has positive feeling towards FL learning we might say that the learner is more open to input and he/she can gain success, but if the learner has negative feeling that means his filter is blocked and many difficulties could be faced (Brown, 2001, p.94).

Therefore, teachers need to be aware of the impact of a positive or negative feelings on students' learning and be willing to participate in the learning process. They should provide feedback that is motivating not demotivating (Taras, 2002, 2005). Emotion is considered central to successful teaching and learning, and "Through individual contact, through dialogue and close observation in a secure and trusting climate, both teacher and student understand the learning process more specifically, which helps teachers support individuals more appropriately" (Cooper 2011, p.119). This indicates that if students feel happy and interested in their learning that helps more in encouraging them to be active and engage in classroom activities. However, if students feel that they are uncomfortable, frustrated and nervous, this might become as a barrier that hinders their learning.

As cited in Arnold (1999), Canfield & Well, (1994, p.5) advised that teachers can help their students emotionally and intellectually by creating a mutual support and care environment. In this environment, students feel that they are valued and

trusted which inspires them to gain progress in their learning. Similarly, Hedge, (2000, p. 393) recommended that teachers need to understand what motivates their class and learners and identify the problems that they experience.

3.8.3. Teachers' Experience

Another important element, which has its effects on students' performance and achievement, is teachers' influence. Wiseman et al., (2002) and Ali, (2008) showed that experienced teachers can inspire their students to attain academically more during their learning. Teachers' experience is developed over years of practice. Such development can lead to more success in teaching practice and helps teachers to be more aware of their students' needs and requirements. Experienced teachers "refine and perfect teaching strategies and may become 'experts' in a particular strategy, approach, or philosophy" (Wiseman et al., 2002, p.17). Teachers acquire experiences when they have taught different textbooks and have been exposed to different situations while teaching. They become more used to various strategies and techniques in their field and considered to be more confident and satisfied than other teachers. Therefore, experienced teachers tend to create the appropriate environment for their students in which students feel safe and can build positive relationships with their teachers. These teachers might accept to share the responsibility of teaching and learning with their students (Richards & Rodgers, 2002). Consequently, they are considered more able to employ different practices that encourage students to engage in classroom activities.

However, "teachers with less experience (under 10 years) are often less strong on leadership and more uncertain and dissatisfied than their more experienced colleagues" (Harkin et al., 2001, p. 81). As cited in Shihiba (2011) Ali's study (2008) focused on the oral correction techniques and was used by sixty-five EFL secondary school teachers in Libya. Some findings of this study are outlined below:

- less experienced teachers believed that "accuracy is the most important element in learning a language" (p.270);

- less experienced teachers did not pay attention to the differences between individual students (p. 270);

- less experienced teachers "were affected by the methods and techniques they learnt when they were students and tried to apply them" (p. 270).

- experienced teachers "mixed different techniques including the ones gleaned from their teaching experiences" (p. 270);

- experienced teachers were "able to encourage students to build their self-confidence by establishing the meaning of communication rather than accuracy" (p.270), and

- experienced teachers believed that "encouraging students' self-correction or peer correction creates confidence and student-student cooperation" (p.269).

Therefore, it can be argued that the years of teaching has a positive role in the success of the strategies and practices, beside the materials that teachers select during teaching and assessing students' achievement (see Richards & Rodgers, 2002).

3.8.4. Class Sizes

Many studies show that there is a relationship between class size and student achievement. The number of students in a class may affect the teaching and learning process in various ways. For example, it might affect how students cooperate or interact with the teacher as well as with each other when they are involved in activities in classroom. The large number of students in class might affect how much the teacher is able to focus on individual students and satisfy their needs (Cooper, 2011). David, (1999, p.232) stated that many of the learners he taught were unwilling to speak because they were educated in large classes.

This view is also supported by Ehrenberg et al., (2001) as cited in Ahmed (2012), who argued that the size of the class might make classroom more or less noisy, and provide students with an environment, in which students become less controlled with disruptive behaviour. This kind of environment might in turn affect the kind of activities that teachers can conduct with their students within a limited time. It might also touch the relationship between teachers and students in that;

the former might not be able to satisfy the latter's needs. Therefore, it could contribute to the difficulties that teachers encounter when they try to help students in their learning. Similarly, in the Libyan context, students might not be provided with the appropriate chances to take part in the learning process, due to the lack of time and the overcrowded classes (see Ali, 2008).

However, these views were opposed by some other studies. For example, Shapson et al., (1980) in their study found that large class size did not necessarily limit learning opportunities in language learning. They emphasised that it is the methods that teachers employ in their teaching and the kind of activities which help students to interact and engage in the classroom; teachers' role also has a great effect on the teaching and the learning process. Most of the classes at Libyan secondary schools often contain more than thirty students, and are likely dominated by the teacher who is still the main provider of information. Therefore, students are considered as passive learners (Alhmali, 2007; Ali, 2008; Orafi & Borg, 2009; Shihiba 2011; Dalala, 2014).

Consequently, creating a social environment inside such classrooms may be a big challenge for secondary school students, and teachers who tend to maintain interaction among students in order to engage in classroom activities. Nonetheless, if the class size is large this might make it difficult for the teacher to apply various and suitable assessment practices. The large number of students might also make assessment time-consuming, therefore, the possible process for teachers to use is the application of very traditional assessment practices. These practices have been found to be unhelpful for students' learning. It does not let teachers know what students are able to do and how teachers fulfil their students' needs (see Pineda, 2014, p.182).

3.8.5. Gender

It is important to distinguish between the terms gender and sex. Gender is considered more suitable for describing and distinguishing people on the basis of their behaviour, speech and their interactions in the society. Sex is the physical and biological difference between male and female. It also refers to whether people are born male or female and it is biologically determined (Holmes, 2001).

Gender refers to how people's behaviours are influenced socially and what, they are expected to do as a man or as a woman. Society's perspectives towards women and men and the social functions that society deems suitable for them are different although, both of them are linked to each other (Smith, 2007).

In many cultures around the world, a significant amount of consideration has been given to how gender acts as a variable in attitudes, motivation and achievement (Macaro, 2003). It is considered one of the factors that can influence communication, but not always. Smith, (2007, p. 5) stated that studies have shown that there is a difference in communication between men and women, verbally and non-verbally. The research revealed that some women tend to have more actively facial expressions during interaction and conversation than men, and they are more communicatively supportive by using signs to inform that they are interested and paying attentions in the conversation.

Holmes, (2001, p. 297) is completely in agreement with Smith (2007) and considered that women are more cooperative when they talk with others and in a conversation. They tend to provide more encouraging feedback to their conversational partners than men do. He emphasised that "women tend to avoid criticising people directly because this would cause discomfort" (p.299).

However, a number of studies revealed no significant gender difference in the way of communicating, and revealed that, personality is more important either for male or female (Macaro, 2003, p.97).

3.9. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The first part of this chapter presents an overview about issues related to oral communication. The effective processes that might aid students to improve their learning and the in depended variables and factors that might affect students' learning have been considered. Despite the enormous amount of research on language learning process in general and oral communication in particular in second language research, different important areas still need further explanations. Assessing students' communicative competence in Libyan secondary schools has often been ignored. Therefore, the second phase of this chapter will be concerned with assessment process.

CHAPTER THREE - LITERATURE REVIEW II: ASSESSMENT

3.10. INTRODUCTION

This second part of the literature review offers a discussion of the literature relevant to this study. It talks about the concepts and terms that are associated with assessment, and explores the various definitions, processes, purposes and products of assessment. It then focuses on two types of assessment, formative and summative assessment. Finally, it presents a summary and gaps in the literature.

3.11. ASSESSMENT – TERMS AND THEORY

Although assessment is one of the main topics for debate in education in the world, there appears to be little research into the assessment of language oral competence in Libyan secondary schools. Therefore, it is still largely unknown to both the instructors and researchers. Assessment is crucial and an important element in the process of teaching and learning operation. It serves many useful purposes in different skills such as reading, writing listening and speaking. Black, (1998) pointed out that assessment lies at the heart of the teaching process and a tool that can help in understanding students' achievement. It is, by which progress can be made in students' learning. Assessment helps both teacher and student to weigh the amount of knowledge that the student gained and how s/he uses it in a practical situation. It is, nowadays, essential to all phases of the educational process and are integral parts of learning (see Tileston, 2004; Stobart, 2008; Black & Wiliam, 1989; Taras, 2005; Fraser, 2016).

Several concepts, synonyms to the term assessment, such as evaluation and tests, have sometimes been used interchangeably with the term assessment by many researchers (Rowntree, 1987; Gipps, 1994; Weeden et al., 2002; Havnes and McDowell, 2008; Bachman & Palmer, 2010; Wiliam, 2011; Taras, 2005, 2012; Harlen, 2013). According to Rowntree, (1987), the misperception between the terms 'assessment' and 'evaluation' is caused by different understandings of the terms in the USA and in the UK. In Britain, it is common for the term 'assessment' to refer to judging students' work and the term 'evaluation' to refer

to the judgements regarding courses or course delivery, or the process of making such judgements. In contrast, academics in the USA prefer to use the term evaluation when they are dealing with assessment. Therefore, some educationalists believe that it is sometimes difficult for others to differentiate between these terms. Evaluation as described by Scriven (1967), is a methodological activity. It can help in determining the strengths and the weaknesses that could appear during the programme process, which could help in treating and modifying the problems before the end of the programme. It can also be used to assess the effectiveness of a specific programme when it comes to an end, and also helps to find out the reasons behind the gained outcomes (Satterly, 1989; Rea-Dickins, 1992).

There is a distinction between the terms 'assessment' and 'testing'. "Testing is a method of collecting data for assessment" (Harlen, 2013 p.7). Assessment is a broader term and it covers "other methods of gathering and interpreting data as well as testing" (ibid). It is used as a process to identify the strengths and weaknesses of learners. It is essentially a "judgment according to explicit or implicit criteria and standards" (Taras, 2012, p.6), and is carried out according to clearly systematic procedures that could be replicated by others at any time (Hughes, 2003). It is not considered as an end-point judgment to obtain a certification and selection of participation but a tool for learning and a practice to enhance students' performance (Havnes and McDowell, 2008, p.11). It is concerned with communicative and strategic competence. It is formal and informal process and its aim, is to help students overcome any difficulties during the operation of learning (Areiza and Restrepo, 2009 cited in Pineda, 2014 p.185). More details about assessment in the following section.

3.12. Definition of Assessment

Assessment is a process for gathering and interpreting evidence according to a clear criterion to form a judgment (Broadfoot, 2007, p.4). It is considered by many researchers Pickford & Brown's (2006), Taras (2005) as a vital component in students' learning. This assumes that assessment is a procedure which needs time and goes through many stages and steps in order to come up with complete

judgment. Assessment is "essentially social activity which shapes both learner identity and the kind of learning that takes place" (Stobart, 2008, p.169). This stresses the notion of the learner's active involvement in acquiring and constructing ideas and knowledge for him/herself rather than being a passive recipient of knowledge. Learners share the assessment process through engaging in classroom activities to discover how they make progress in their learning.

Consequently, assessment needs to go through a well-designed process strategy whereas teachers and their students should collaborate in order to gain improvement in the learning process (Pickford & Brown's 2006). It can be said that assessment is a practice that teachers follow in order to help their students to enhance and make improvement in their learning. It is "performed to gain an understanding of an individual's strengths and weaknesses in order to make appropriate educational decisions" (Salvia & Ysseldyke, 1995, p.26), and it requires clear criteria and standards throughout its processes (Taras, 2012). It is the "means by which students' language learning development and achievements are monitored over time" (Hedge 2000, p.376).

We may come up with the conclusion that assessment does not depend on a test or an examination only. It goes through various steps and procedures during the whole operation of teaching and learning. It is a direct and indirect measuring practice according to clear obvious criteria to judge and evaluate the learner. It is a cooperative operation between teacher and his/her students. Accordingly, assessment helps both teacher and student to weigh the amount of knowledge that the student has gained and how s/he uses it in practical situations besides how to increase and develop this knowledge. It can be said that assessment is an ongoing procedure, which monitors, facilitates, and pushes students for more progress. Assessment can be described as: "the *key* driver for learning. It enables the certification of learning and can facilitate learning in its own right" (Conole & Oliver, 2007, p.145).

The working definition of assessment in the current study involves the process of gathering information to judge students' skills and knowledge according to an

authentic standard. It is all the activities such as classroom discussion, examining and investigating students' homework and teacher observation. This process also includes "deciding, collecting and making judgements about evidence relating to the goals of the learning being assessed" (Gardner, 2006, p.103). All this information gathered, helps teachers to find out the progress that students are making, besides the area that they are having trouble with and needs improving (Butler & Mcmunn, 2006, p.2; Black & Wiliam, 2010, p.82).

Talking about assessment requires an understanding of these processes that are currently used in the assessment of students' learning and which will be dealt with in the following section.

3.13. Assessment Process

The efficacy of the traditional assessment processes had been questioned by many researchers. They were subject to serious criticism because of their limitations in assessing students' competences in learning a language. Fraser, (2016, p.133) advised that assessment process "must be expanded beyond the traditional concept of testing", and needs to be well designed with its parameters based on clear criteria or/and standard, which will help making the quality of the judgment valid and reliable. It also requires selecting goals so that, students can compare their current level of learning to the required performance and justify each of them (Taras, 2012). This indicates that Fraser, (2016), Taras (2012) believe that assessment must test deep understanding of students' learning and should, therefore, be provided with the feedback that can guide for better progress.

3.13.1. Assessment Criteria

Assessment criteria is one of the parameters of the assessment process. Sadler, (2014) defined criteria as the properties or characteristics that teachers use to assess the quality of students' performance. Different kinds of criteria might be needed to assess students' performance. When teachers use criteria as a learning target, they need to establish explicit and understandable criteria so that they make precise decisions. One other important issue that related to the need for clear criteria is that when teachers share assessment criteria with their

students that creates a kind of positive relationship and therefore increases the academic achievement of students (Black et al., 2003). In turn, setting explicit criteria helps students to be active learners and engage in their own learning (Taras, 2001; Chen, 2008). In addition, it can be an effective aspect that supports students to be more successful in their learning. In other words, when students are involved in the assessment criteria that plays a significant role in making them aware of the requirements of good work. It supports them to participate in classroom activities. Consequently, students become familiar with the quality of any good work and improve their learning (Boud, 1995). When students understand the educational targets that they should achieve, they can evaluate their current ability and their present level of understanding against the required target and work to close the gap between them (Sadler, 1989, 2014; Taras, 2012). In the current study, criteria refers to the requirements according to which the quality of the students' performance may be assessed.

3.13.2. Assessment Standards

Standard is the required value that is needed to be attained and it is headed towards measuring the level of students' achievement by providing the products of this measurement such as grades or pass or fail. Sadler, (2014) defines standard as "a minimum achievement level used as a reference point when judging the quality of a student's work so that the appropriate code can be assigned to it" (p. 275). Therefore, standards can be considered as the level of quality or attainment of students' work as measured by test score or examination grade. Applying formative assessment forms such as self-assessment process requires well-defined standards and criteria by which students can assess and compare their present academic progress with the one they want to achieve.

3.14. Types of Assessment

Researchers have pointed out two types of assessment: summative and formative, posing different views towards them. Some tutors (Harmer, 2003; Ecclestone, 2005; Havnes and McDowell, 2008) consider that summative assessment identifies how much progress has been made in students' learning, whereas, formative assessment helps teachers to find out the current knowledge

of their students, and how that can be improved. These terms are used by many researchers as different kinds of assessment or different methods for collecting information and considered as different in their purpose and effect (Sadler 1989). Some researchers (Taras, 2005; Gardner, 2006; Cutting & Kelly, 2015) argued that the only distinction between them is how people use this information. However, researchers insisted that both of them are necessary to capture issues relating to students' learning, and both types can be used formally or informally. More details about summative and formative assessments in the following subsections.

3.14.1. Summative Assessment

Summative assessment is a procedure of a judgment which summarises all the evidence that leads to an end point of this judgment; its functions do not affect this procedure (Taras, 2005, p.468). It is carried out to provide accountable confirmation of learners' achievements (Sadler, 1989), which is associated with grades to plan for the next stage of learning "in relation to curricular or individual targets" (Leung 2002, p.82). Usually, summative assessment is concerned with summarizing what the students have achieved and it is used at the end of a course of study to determine the acquired skills and knowledge, and to help teachers capture an overall picture about a students' performance (Avis et al., 2010, p.169). Summative assessment is considered a reliable and valid practice (Sadler, 1989; Black & Wiliam, 1998), and it must proceed formative assessment to determine the value of the work before giving the feedback (Taras, 2005, p.471).

Nevertheless, the argument about the effectiveness of the current summative assessment practice in supporting learning and teaching to best effect, resulted in calling for alternative assessment practices, alongside the traditional summative assessment by many researchers such as Black & Wiliam, (1998); Gipps, (1994); Black et al., (2004); Brown, (2004); Taras, (2005); Gadsby, (2012); Harlen, (2013); Cutting & Kelly, (2015) and Fraser, (2016).This new practice considers students as part of the assessment procedure as the following sub-section illustrates.

3.14.2. Formative Assessment

There is no consensus among researchers on particular definitions of formative assessment and a lack of agreement about what this concept implies. Therefore, several definitions have been provided. Formative assessment is used to gain information about learner's development, as it is vital for teachers to have "awareness and understanding of the pupils' understanding and progress" (Boyle & Charles, 2014, p.10). The essential element in formative assessment is the feedback provided to students so that they can improve their work and to teachers for future planning (Gipps, 1994, p.105; Sadler, 1998). It is:

> concerned with how judgments about the quality of student responses (performances, pieces, or works) can be used to shape and improve the student's competence by short-circuiting the randomness and inefficiency of trial-and-error learning" (Sadler, 1989, p.119).

Sadler (1998) also insisted on encouraging self-monitoring as one of the important component in formative assessment. Formative assessment can be used to aid teachers to adapt and modify their instructions according to their students' needs. It helps them in identifying the gap between students' current levels of understanding and the desired learning goals (Noyce & Hickey, 2011, p.145). Besides, it helps them to monitor student progress, so that they can construct a valid picture of their students' performance and learning abilities. Formative feedback should be given to students soon after the completion of test or homework while students should be given time to reflect on the feedback (Wylie et al., 2012, p. 23). Accordingly, formative assessment can help to make progress in learning, since it can be an important part of the instruction, which aids students to discover their strengths and weaknesses and assist teachers and learners to inform future instruction (Wylie et al., 2012).

Feedback, a necessary element in formative assessment, helps students to fill the gap between their actual level of the work being assessed and the required standard (Taras, 2005, p.468). Formative assessment has a special purpose in education, which differentiates it from the summative assessment that is, its

impact and concentration on deepening and furthering the learning rather than simply measuring it (Clarke, 2005, p.8). Another major function of formative assessment is to direct, guide, and modify students' behaviour (Reynolds et al., 2010; 2006, p.278). Teachers can apply formative assessment throughout the school day, as it can be an informal evaluation, which is not planned, and helps to determine and measure students' abilities (Fraser, 2016).

This means that it is mainly concerned with the difficulties students are having when the difficulties occur, the reasons for the difficulties, and how the difficulties can be treated. It is a method teachers use to improve instruction (Noyce and Hickey, 2011, p.49). It plays a valuable role and is considered as a tool by which teachers can support the progress of their students' understanding by providing significant feedback (Pickford & Brown, 2006, p.15; Gardner, 2012, p.53). The other important element of formative assessment different to summative, is the need for student involvement. The information collected on students should be communicated and teachers should encourage and support students to take the responsibility of their learning in order to achieve improvement (Black & Wiliam, 2009).

Based on that statement, formative assessment is seen as assessment for learning, which can be described as "the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there" Gadsby, (2012, p.2). This assumes that teachers can present assessment as something exciting and motivating. It can be used as an effective tool that promotes learning, through using evidence about where students have reached in relation to the desired goals of their learning, since it concerns both difficulties and positive achievements (Gardner, 2006, p.104). Formative assessment activities can be varied some activities provide the opportunity for students to engage and assess their work such as quizzes and presentations while, some other activities can be improvised and unprepared to measure students understanding such as asking oral questions or observing students' attitudes and body language (Avis et al. 2010, p.170). Such activities that can be employed within a classroom or workshop can characterize formative assessment as the following:

- Assessing learning with the intention of making future learning more effective;
- Providing information to teachers on how their students are progressing;
- Providing feedback to students concerning their own progress;
- Diagnosing students' needs or barriers to learning.

To sum up formative assessment is believed to be an essential practice, which is related and linked to feedback, whose main purpose is to gauge the students to a better understanding through setting learning goals as an important aspect of formative assessment. According to Harlen (2013, p.18) in formative assessment, who participate in judgements about progress and decisions about next steps in relation to the goals of work through peer and self-assessment, are in the centre of the learning process. The following figure (4) shows how students are linked to the assessment process for formative purposes.
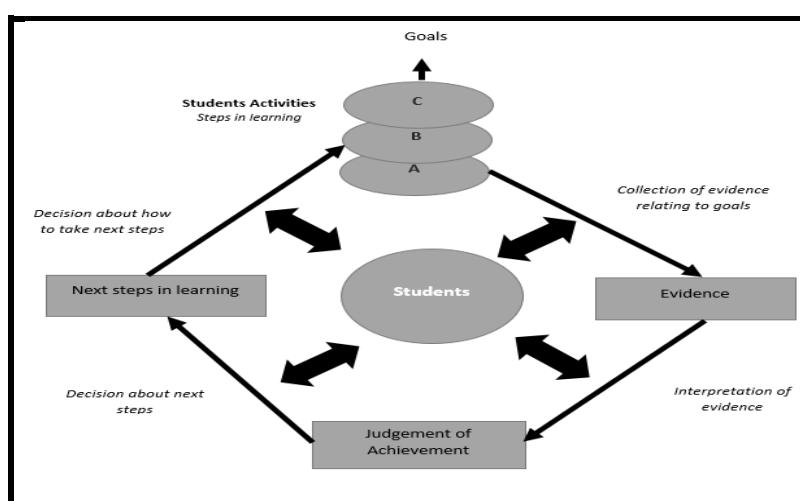
Figure 4: Assessment for formative purposes (adopted from Harlen 2013)

Teachers' role in the process of formative assessment is assumed to be a facilitator and a guide that aid students for more improvement. The current argument regarding the move and the new direction in terms of assessment and learning methods, may aid learners in managing their own learning through alternative assessment practices alongside the old ones. This may lead to identifying what new forms of formative assessment teachers think as effective

for students' learning, as will be explained in more details in the following subsections.

3.14.2.1. Self-assessment

Self-assessment, in general, is often used to refer to judgements made by learners about their own proficiency. It is a specific type of meta-cognitive strategy, which aims to help students improve their abilities to assess their own performance, and the ability to be self-critical (Taras, 2010; Oscarson, 2009). The role of self-assessment is insisted by many educators, since learning can be developed through encouraging students to take possession of their own learning through self-assessment. They train how to take responsibility in the learning process and be independent learners. One of the key arguments for self-assessment according to Roberts, (2006, p.70) is that "In student-centred assessment students choose their tasks and experience an increased ownership and commitment to their learning process". This indicates that taking part in evaluation can help students to be aware of their learning process and it might create a more positive attitude towards learning.

One other perspectives about the positive effect of self-assessment on students' learning comes from Taras, (2001; 2010) who makes clear the necessity of students' involvement in assessing their work and in identifying criteria or standards when they practise self-assessment. She justified her view by arguing that when students experience assessing themselves that makes a big difference from just having it provided for them. She explained five models in her different articles including self-marking. This assumes that, when students mark their work, through self-marking that benefit them, as in this case they are practising both the process and the product in the same way as their teachers would normally do. Taras's models require students to evaluate their performance according to explicit identified criteria or standards. Self-assessment is considered not just an assessment practice, but rather it is in fact a learning activity, which can inspire students to take part in their own learning and learn how to reflect on their own performances (Roberts, 2006, p.70); self-assessment

yet is still not popular as an important form of assessment for many teachers in many contexts.

Some other researchers emphasised that self-assessment should be an essential part in teachers' daily activities, (Black and Wiliam, 1998; Broadfoot, 2007, p.135). They discussed that this process encourages students to feel self-confident and pushes them to participate by taking part in the decision of criteria building and other areas of study (Tanner & Jones 2006, p.75). Likewise, students often assist when they engage in a self-assessment process, as a result, it becomes easier to provide valuable feedback to themselves and others. That is why many researchers believe that students should be placed at the centre of assessment and should be encouraged to participate in the assessment process (Wylie et al., 2012, p.26).

Students need to monitor their learning by comparing their current knowledge with the desired goal or standard and how they can make progress (Sadler, 1989; Hedge, 2000, p.94). The application of this new assessment form could benefit students to increase self-awareness and deepening their insight into the assessment process (Brooks 2002, p.68; Gardner 2012; Sadler 1989, 2010), by "identified criteria or standards" (Sadler, 2014, p.146). These researchers emphasise that, students are reliable in self-assessment and in assessing one another. When students understand their learning goal, they can assess what they need to do to achieve that goal.

Although many researchers confirmed that self-assessment has an important role to play in helping students to be independent learners and provide the chance for students to take part and feel interested in learning, most of the studies lack of clear discussion and clarifications on how to increase the level of understanding of criteria and standards among the students. In addition, there has been a lack of empirical research that helps more in understanding its role and how it can be effectively employed. Further, more effort and time are needed to train students in self-assessment so that, they can understand the main purposes of their learning, and be aware of what they need to do to achieve their objectives (Black et al., 2004, p.14; Black & Wiliam, 2010, p.85). It would also be

difficult to convince teachers to share the assessment responsibilities because they are required to challenge and support the students to experience self-assessment to enable them to become a good self-assessor (Garden, 2012; Sadler, 2013).

3.14.2.2. Peer-assessment

Peer assessment is another form of formative assessment. It involves arranging students in groups to carry out assessment tasks through commenting or making judgements upon each other's work and through discussion activities, which help students to interact and discuss their progress with each other (Roberts, 2006, p.6). Many researchers believe that peer assessment can be a valuable practice that has positive influence on students' learning. It is considered as an important complement to self-assessment (Black et al. 2004), since students "may accept criticisms of their work from one another that they would not take seriously if the remarks were offered by a teacher" (14). This assumes that when students work together this allows them to exchange perspectives on the content of learning. It also provides them with the opportunity for real communication and may increase their confidence (Garden, 2012; Black et al., 2004). Therefore, it will be a worthwhile experiment.

However, research on peer assessment reported a number of disadvantages of practising peer assessment in classrooms. Many scholars believe that employing peer assessment in language classrooms can be ineffective and does not help in improving students' learning. According to Weimer (2002) some issues related to students' bias can affect students' evaluation of their peers' work. This is also supported by Harlen, (2013) who doubted the efficiency of peer assessment because of the power of the relationships when students assess each other. Saito and Fujita, (2004, p.33) also argued that biases such as 'friendship bias', 'reference bias', 'purpose bias', 'collusive bias', and 'feedback bias' can negatively affect peer assessment. Both peer and self-assessment are considered to be essential to learning and allow students to make progress. Fostering students' independent learning can be a challenge that faces many educational contexts. One of the problems could be related to teachers as

confirmed by Sadler, (1989, pp. 140-142), who pointed out that teachers' might be unable to implement formative assessment forms because of their fear of decreasing their authority or control over their classrooms. Other difficulties could be related to students' inability to make accurate assessment and reliable judgements about themselves as stated by Nunan, (1989).

The main conclusion that can be drawn from this discussion about peer and self-assessment and the arguments for implementing them in learner-centred classrooms is related to the lack of sufficient empirical evidence for the validity and practicality of implementing these forms for evaluating students' learning in schools. Therefore, assessing students' learning is a complex process which needs more time and effort. Whenever the proposed targets become clear for both teachers and their students through working collaboratively and through positive interaction and discussion to target setting development, then it becomes possible to practise self and peer assessment (Black & Wiliam, 1989; Taras, 2005).

3.15. PERCEPTIONS ON SUMMATIVE AND FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

Many studies have been conducted to examine the research evidence of the impact of assessment on students' learning. These reviews found that summative assessment practice could affect the teaching and learning process. For example, it could present a high level of anxiety to students and teachers and put much pressure on students that can affect their responses as it is mainly employed for purposes of certification (Sadler, 1989, p.119). Further, researchers and educationalists criticize summative assessment for its examination of only insignificant aspects of subject and its encouragement of rote teaching and learning, because the primary tools of assessing students' learning are traditional methods. These methods can push students to concern about how to achieve good grades and how to pass examinations (Boud, 1995, p. 3).

Therefore, in such situations, it will be difficult to eliminate students' worries about these assessment processes whereas students who do not perform well in the assessment will soon be demotivated. One of the empirical evidence about the negative impact of summative assessment forms, can be seen in a study carried

out by Choi, (2008, p. 39) on the perceptions of students in Korea on the impact of standardized tests on EFL education in Korea. A hundred Korean students and forty teachers participated in this survey. The findings of this investigation revealed that most of the teachers and students were not pleased with this kind of tests as it had negative effects on their learning. They explained that such examinations do not help in improving learning and they do not evaluate students' proficiency of English. Therefore, it can be argued that, this investigation pointed out the failure of preparing students for this form of tests in developing students' ability to achieve communicative competence and make improvement in their learning.

Meanwhile, many studies confirmed the importance of implementing formative assessment methods in classrooms. Research into self-assessment reports that students have found that to be an honest and accurate way of assessing their own work (Tanner & Jones, 2006). One of the empirical evidences of the effectiveness of using formative assessment forms such as self-assessment can be confirmed by a study carried out by Oscarson, (2009, p. 231). The study investigated a hundred and two EFL Swedish upper secondary school students whose ages ranged between 17 and 20 and 2 EFL teachers. The investigation was conducted to find out the role of self-assessment in enhancing language-learning skills. Four questionnaires and interviews were conducted with the two teachers and forty-one students from the eight focused groups. Participating students were given a chance to evaluate and use grades on their written assignments. Later, the researcher analysed those assignments.

The findings of this study revealed that focus group participants were capable of evaluating and assessing their written work. In addition, the findings revealed that both students and teachers had a positive attitude about the integration of self-assessment in the FL writing classroom. It also indicated the vital role that the cooperation between teachers and students can play in creating reliable assessment practice with reference to national syllabuses and grading criteria. Chappuis & Stiggins, (2012, p. 20) described four guiding principles that help students to be involved in classroom assessment during their learning and to evaluate their own and each other's work in order to become better performers.

These principles are; clear purpose, clear target, quality assessment and effective communication. In other words, if students have the desired goal and clear target, they can enhance and improve their learning to achieve their objectives with their teachers' help and encouragement.

However, despite the aforementioned advantages of employing formative assessment forms, many arguments have been raised against depending on using formative assessment such as peer and self-assessment for evaluating students' learning. One criticism comes from some researchers who doubt the effectiveness of employing self-assessment in classrooms. It was described as the least effective process, and it cannot be valid and reliable because the same person is carrying the object and the agent (Cullingford, 1997, p.228). One other criticism comes from Sadler, (1989) who claimed that when teachers decrease their authority over their classrooms and hand it over to their students, they might face many challenges; teachers might also become reluctant to implement this form of evaluation in their classrooms. Another source of criticism for implementing self-assessment comes from Nunan, (2004) who doubted students' ability to make clear and accurate assessment of their work. All these and other challenges and difficulties attributed to the resistance for employing such forms of formative assessment.

Therefore, before expecting teachers and students to employ these methods of assessment in their classrooms and for more constructive assessment processes, both teachers and students need more preparation. Students need to be trained before giving them more power over their assessment; they need to be prepared on the self-assessment process. Students also need to be trained how to make judgments about the extent to which they have met the criteria and standards (Brown, 2001; Taras, 2001; Roberts, 2006; Chen, 2008).

In sum, both summative and formative assessments seem to be interdependent and not mutually exclusive. In other words, they directly complement one another and no matter what functions or outcomes, they both serve to clarify how the criteria and standards have been addressed. Both summative and formative assessments can be used to improve learning and, therefore, they can support

each other rather than contradict each other. Therefore, summative and formative assessments are not mutually exclusive (Black & Wiliam, 1998).

3.16. FUNCTIONS OF ASSESSMENT

Assessment plays a number of roles in the life of a student. It can do more than simply diagnose and identify students' learning needs; it can be used to assist improvements across the education system in a cycle of continuous improvement (Weeden et al., 2002; Black et al., 2004; Broafoot, 2007; Black & Wiliam, 2010; Taras, 2012). Despite the separation between formative and summative assessment functions by many researchers, Taras, (2005) ensured that both summative and formative are linked to each other and could provide the same function based on their process. According to Ecclestone, (2005, p.14) there are four main reasons for assessing learners:

- Diagnose strengths and weakness and learning needs for forthcoming program;
- Provide feedback on progress, strengths and weakness and barriers to learning and assessment activities;
- Select learners for the next educational stage, such as the next module, a new programme, progression to another institution or level, or for work; and
- Certificate and confirm achievements to a wider audience, such as employers and admissions tutors at the next stage of progression.

The concept of assessment has been changed to aid students' learning (Havnes & McDowell, 2008). If teachers plan to arrange and design assessment activity, which suits the needs of their students, that will help in creating a positive attitude towards learning the language. When assessment is used well, it can play a powerful and positive role in motivating learners and encouraging them to take more control over their learning (Ecclestone, 2005, p.3). This assumes that assessment enables an understanding of what we do, how we do it and how we can change and/or improve what we do (Taras, 2012, p.4).

Davis (1998, pp.13-15) mentioned three functions of assessment:

a- To facilitate matching and differentiation: teachers try to facilitate tasks that match students' understanding in order to find out the extent of their students' achievement, and make decisions about the appropriate activities to engage students in the learning process.

b- To provide feedback to pupils on their progress: in this circumstance, teachers provide feedback to their students so that they can learn more effectively or they might advise their students about the problems and difficulties they still face.

c- To enable teachers to discover how effective their teaching has been: that indicates whether teachers are using the correct measurements during the teaching process or if that needs to be changed.

One other purpose of assessment is to identify the gap between the current level of students' performance and the anticipated performance which helps teachers to offer support to their students to close that gap (Weeden et al., 2002; Lightbown & Spada, 2013).Thus, the role of assessing students is essential in discovering the level of students' understanding so that teachers are able to scaffold students who need to achieve the desired goals (Reynolds et al. 2010, 2006, pp. 2-3). It is also seen as an incorporated part of duty between teachers and students (Pickford & Brown, 2006; Havnes and McDowell, 2008).

When teachers assess their students, they need to find out something about them (Tanner & Jones, 2006, p.43), and to ensure that learning has taken place (Lines & Lambert, 2000; Black et al., 2003; Tanner & Jones, 2006; Gardner, 2012). In order for learning to take place effectively, it is important to build a good rapport between teaching and learning (Wiseman, et al., 2002).This means using various kinds of assessment practices for learning whereas the most effective assessment practice as Black et al., (2004, p.10) support is "any assessment for which the first priority in its design and practice is to serve the purpose of promoting students' learning. It, thus, differs from assessment designed primarily to serve the purposes of accountability, or of ranking, or of certifying competence".

In this study, we are especially interested in assessment that aids learning and improves teaching process.

3.17. Summary and Gaps in the Literature

This chapter presented a general review of the literature related to the focus of the current study which is assessment practice. Understanding the nature of the process of assessment and becoming familiar with the history of the assessment practice is crucial for becoming aware of how to help students to improve their learning and how to deal with their needs. Several views and studies have been undertaken showing the significance of assessment and the importance of identifying the effective assessment practices that encourage students to be active learners. The majority of these studies lack empirical evidence and they are set in educational contexts with well-established systems of education.

Since assessment is considered an essential process for successful teaching, and a powerful tool in student learning, teachers are required to imply many efficient valid and reliable types of assessment practices, in order for learning to take place effectively. Exploring EFL teachers and students' understanding of the underlying philosophy of using different forms of assessment processes represents a serious gap in this research. The studies dealing with assessment are mainly almost absent in Arab schools. As an example, there is a clear gap in educational literature about assessment in the Libyan context. The current assessment practices have been in place for many years without review to determine the flaws and address the oral English language assessment shortcomings at secondary schools.

Conclusions that can be drawn from this discussion and arguments for implementing participatory and additional forms of assessment in learner-centred classrooms is that; many educationalists and teachers are aware that assessment plays an essential role in pushing students' learning forward. It can be employed to make learners more motivated when it is used in the right manner. Assessment, as it can be noticed in the light of the literature review above, has several functions which serve as an important part of the learning process. It "is not only a mandatory requirement of awarding and validating bodies for whose qualifications you are preparing students, but you will need to assess in order to maintain a record of students' progress and to assist them in planning their own learning" (Huddleston & Unwin, 2008, p.162). Assessment is

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now "accepted, in some cases rather unreflectively; as a force for good" (Gardner, 2012, p.3).

Establishing a clear understanding of the role of the assessment processes that teachers employ to assess their students' communicative competence is essential, especially for the Libyan education system which needs reforming. An urgent development should be done to build more effective education system that helps students to improve, be able to communicate and use the language in real situation. In sum, effective assessment practices that transfer and share the task of learning with students is rigorous manner which needs more time and effort in many contexts such as Libyan context.

Therefore, this investigation was carried out as an attempt to address this issue through exploring the variation in the opinions of a sample of Libyan EFL teachers and students of the assessment practices that teachers use in secondary schools.

The following chapter discusses the research methodology and methods adopted by this study.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a description of the methodology, which was adopted in this investigation and its framework, including the data collection methods as well as the methods used for data analysis. The research tools are provided and were designed to produce a description of data through different methods namely; (classroom observation, semi-structured interviews, and questionnaires). In addition to the ethical issues involved in the study and the validity and reliability of the research instruments, a description of the participants was also explained.

This chapter presents the methods of selecting the sample and the benefit of using the triangulation technique. This chapter also clarifies how the researcher conducts the pilot study and the feedback that was gained. To analyse the qualitative data, the researcher adopted thematic analysis style while SPSS software was used to analyse quantitative data.

4.2. Research Questions

This study was designed to explore the assessment process employed by secondary school Libyan teachers in assessing students' oral communication. It was intended to investigate the teachers and students' perceptions towards these practices. Further, it aimed to find out whether there were any similarities and differences between teachers and students' views towards the assessment processes used. To achieve these aims, a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods was employed.The following are the research questions to be answered:

1. What are the assessment processes Libyan teachers use at secondary schools in assessing students' oral communication?

2. What are:

   A) Teachers' perceptions towards these processes?

   B) Students' perceptions towards these processes?

3. What are:

    A) The similarities between teachers' and students' perceptions?

    B) The differences between teachers' and students' perceptions?

4.3. Methodology and Methods

Some researchers often use the terms 'methods' and 'methodology' interchangeably. However, Blaxter, et al. (2010, p.59) differentiate between 'method' and 'methodology' by saying that "method can be understood to relate principally to the tools of data collection or analysis: techniques such as questionnaires and interviews. 'Methodology' has a more philosophical meaning and usually refers to the approach or paradigm that underpins the research". That is to say, it is a research strategy which shows how research can be conducted through explaining and interpreting ontological and epistemological principles (Sarantakes, 1993, 1998, 2005, p.30). This may indicate that any research needs a plan and technique that a researcher will follow in order to develop his/her research. Methodology as defined by Dawson, (2009) is the philosophy that guides the research. Whereas, methods are concerned with specific techniques that researchers use in a study (Neuman, 2011, p.2). Consequently, it can be said that these two terms are different from one another though methodology according to some researchers such as Dawson, (2009) has a broader meaning than methods.

4.4. Research Philosophy

According to Bryman, (2004, p.11), epistemology means to gain knowledge of the world about the way in which the world can be known to us. Similarly, Hartas, (2010, p.16) and Sarantakos, (2005) argued that epistemology is the methods of knowing and it is the specific beliefs about the nature of knowledge. It refers to the claims made about the methods in which it is possible to gain and achieve knowledge (Bryman, 2004; Sarantakos, 2005; Hartas, 2010, p.16). Easterby-Smith et al., (2012) and Saunders et al., (2012) identify two main philosophies in

conducting social science research, which is the most regularly related paradigms to educational research: positivism and interpretivism.

Burton et al., (2014, p.52), suggest that a positivistic researcher looks for generalisations and the data obtained is generally quantitative; therefore, enabling statistical analysis and it is designed to test the accuracy of the theory (May, 2001, pp.10-11). However, the interpretive philosophy is contrasting to the positivist philosophy (see Bryman, 2012) in that interpretivism denies generalization. Luttrell, (2010, p.71) calls this philosophy the social constructionist paradigm where the focus is on the ways that people make sense of the world and determine reality through sharing their experiences by understanding and describing the inquiry context.

DeMarrais & Lapan, (2004, p. 175) indicate, that the essence of this philosophy (subjectivism) is that: knowledge is viewed as cultural and has many forms, which make it subjective; data is regarded as dependent on the relationship between the researcher and the respondent who is the only instrument of data collection. The scientific methods are considered as social constructs and research is not restricted to a set of scientific rules but rather it follows what researchers do. However, the positivist's view is that facts can be gained from direct practice or observation they do not believe in unseen or theoretical entities (see Walliman, 2005, p. 203). Positivism believes that all genuine knowledge can be gained by experience and can be developed through observation.

Moreover, the social world can be studied in the same way as the natural world (Mertens, 1998), and "the methodological procedures of natural science may appropriately be applied to social sciences" (Walliman, 2005, p.203). Since the current study employs different methods of data collection and analysis, it can consequently be classified under the first tradition (interpretivism) as the researcher in this study is influenced by the literature on the philosophy of research and in particular by interpretive approaches, because the goal of research within the social sciences, is to produce an understanding of social behaviour.

Therefore, the reason for choosing this philosophy for the current study was that it helped the researcher to explain and explore why things happened from both teachers' and students' view when assessing the English language orally. A qualitative methodology was used in this study to achieve in-depth understanding of the issue of inquiry in terms of collecting evidence about teachers' and students' practices and understanding about the assessment processes. Figure 5 shows the epistemological framework and research design of the current study.

Research

Epistemology: Interpretivist

Methodology: Quantitative and Qualitative

Data Collection Instruments:

- Teacher's Semi-Structured Interview
- Teacher's Questionnaire
- Students' Questionnaire
- Students' Semi-Structured Interview
- Classroom Observation

Data Analysis Approaches:

- Thematic Analysis
- SPSS Program
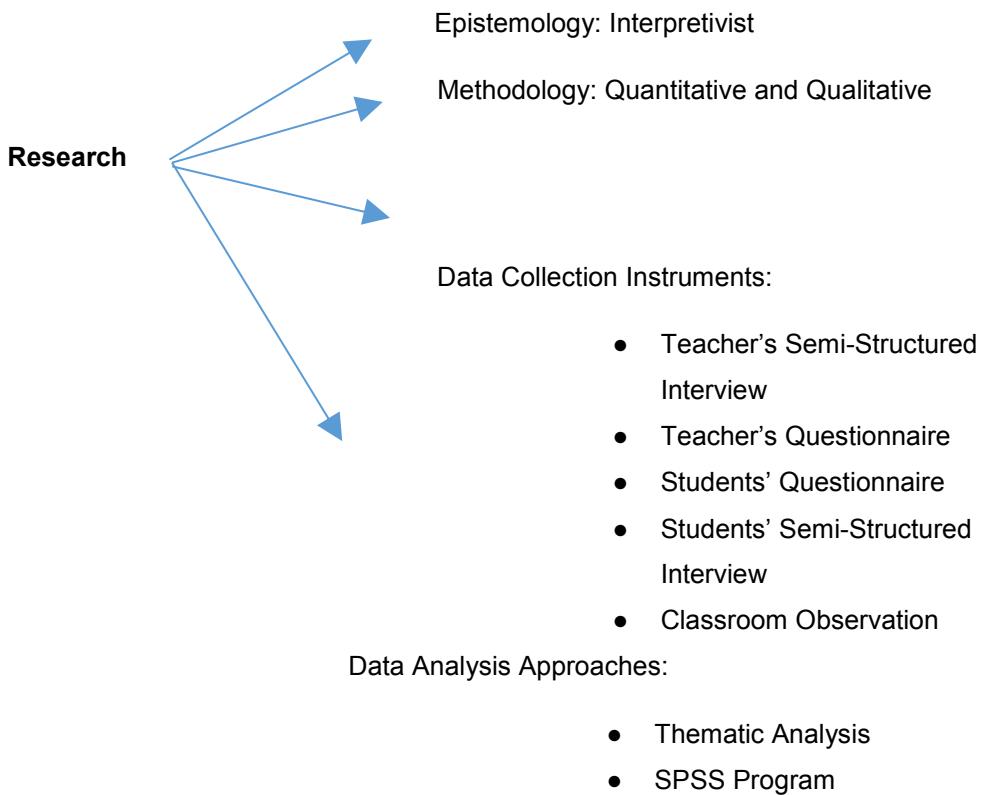
Figure 5: Research Design

4.5. Research methods

The two major types of research approach, which are considered by some researchers to be completely opposed are quantitative and qualitative research. They differ in the nature of the data required and the subsequent methods of data analysis beside the philosophical basis (Williman 2005, p.246). In the current study, quantitative and qualitative research methods were used. Qualitative and quantitative methods are different due to different epistemologies underlying the two types of research purpose. Qualitative research seeks to understand social phenomena while, quantitative research

is carried out to define relationships, effects, and causes (Wiersma, 2000, p.13).

4.5.1 Quantitative Research Methods

Dawson, (2009, p.14) indicates that quantitative research "generates statistics through the use of large-scale survey research, using methods such as questionnaires or structured interviews". Arthur et al., (2012) pointed out that quantitative research is built on the collection of numerical data information and things, which can be counted, and the results are presented in the form of tables, graphs, and charts. Robson, (1993, 2002, and 2011), highlighted that the quantitative pattern has been historically closely connected with positivism. Quantitative research is used to quantify defined variables such as attitudes, opinions, and behaviours from a larger sample population; its data collection methods are much more structured than qualitative data collection methods (Arthur et al., 2012).

According to Kumar, (2014, p.14), a quantitative approach "follows a rigid, structured and predetermined set of procedures to explore; aims to quantify the extent of variation in a phenomenon". One of the features of quantitative method, is that it uses a large-scale survey such as questionnaires or structured interviews. It also has a precise measurement and provides reliable data that can be generalised to other contexts (Dawson, 2009; Saunders et al., 2009).

A quantitative method was selected in this study to address the research questions that surveyed "what" or "how" assessment practices in Libyan secondary schools. Therefore, both quantitative and qualitative methods were considered suitable for the target population involved in this research because the nature of the investigation required such data collection instruments. In addition, both methods could help the researcher to gain a better understanding of the phenomenon under study.

4.5.2. Qualitative Research

Qualitative research in education is different from the quantitative method in that it is based on things that can be described in words and it is presented in the form of description accounts of what people say and do (see Arthur et al., 2012). Atkins& Wallace, (2012, pp.245-6) defined it as, "a description of a broad field of research which encompasses diverse approaches and theoretical understanding, some of which are complementary and some of which are contrasting but all of which seek to understand rather than prove or measure". Qualitative methods, which are used in the research in hand, are concerned with individuals' subjective opinions and experiences and the qualitative analysis is considered interpretive which means that the outcome is the result of the researcher's interpretation of the data. This indicates as Creswell, (2012, p.537) states that, "the researcher assesses reality subjectively through his or her lens" which possibly makes it more flexible in its response to new openings that may occur in the research processes.

In sum, social scientists often differentiate between quantitative and qualitative research because data gained from qualitative method usually take the form of rich descriptions and exact statements that are provided by the participants. It is designed to explore the meaning that people attach to their experiences. However, in quantitative research, data are transformed into numbers (Kumar, 2014; Creswell, 2014).

4.5.3. Mixed Methods

Creswell, (2014); Punch, (2005) pointed out that mixed methods is an approach to inquiry that involves using both quantitative and qualitative methods in a research project. Mixed methods can be a powerful tool in research science that help researchers to achieve more understanding about the issues under investigation than would be possible by using only one method (Arthur et al., 2012, p.147). The following figure (6) shows mixed methods adopted in the current study.

More detail about the purpose of using mixed methods is explained in the following subsection:
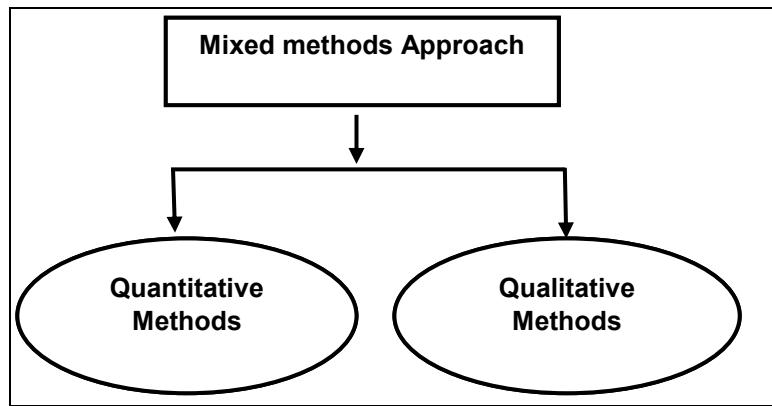
Figure 6: Mixed Methods Adopted

4.5.3.1. Rationale for the choice of the multi-method approach

This section sheds lights on the purposes of using mixed methods in conducting research. Mixed methods is defined in this study as a research approach or methodology, which is used to integrate or combine both quantitative and qualitative research. Researchers such as Greene, (2007), Creswell, (2014), Kumar, (2014) stated that mixed methods research, is more than collecting qualitative data from multiple forms of qualitative evidence such as observations and interviews or multiple types of quantitative evidence such as surveys and analytic tests. It involves the intentional collection of both quantitative and qualitative data and the combination of the strengths of each to answer research questions. In mixed methods studies, researchers intentionally integrate or combine the qualitative data in the form of texts or descriptions with the quantitative data in the form of numeric information.

This integration of quantitative and qualitative data maximizes the strengths and minimizes the weaknesses of each type of data and it can be achieved by reporting results together in a discussion section of a study. This helps researchers to compare qualitative data with quantitative data through the use of tables or figures that display both quantitative and qualitative results (Dawson, 2009; Creswell, 2014). Generally, quantitative data provides an overview of opinions and information or examine relationships among variables to yield numeric data that can be analyzed statistically (Greene, 2007; Creswell, 2014), and qualitative data permits researchers to explore these in greater depth. It uses

methods of data collection such as in-depth interviews and observation which provide detailed information about context and use the expressions of participants through quotes (Greene, 2007).

There are several reasons for using mixed methods in a research. Kumar, (2014) indicated that using mixed methods may help researchers to view problems from multiple perspectives and may enhance and enrich the meaning of a single perspective. It increases validity, confidence, and credibility of results (Creswell, 2014). It can also present a greater diversity of views and provides stronger inferences. Using mixed method can reduce biases of utilizing a specific method; it can broaden the interpretation and allows better assessment of the generality of the explanations (Luttrell, 2010, pp.284-85) and fill the gaps that could occur if only quantitative or qualitative methods were used on their own (Greene, 2007).

Hence, mixed methods were appropriate in this study to reach its goals, as the major aim was to describe teachers' assessment practices in Libyan secondary schools. In addition, this methodology aids in being more focused and getting in depth facts about the issue of interest. Therefore, the researcher used more than one method in order to understand the relationship between the teachers' classroom practice and their knowledge about teaching and assessing speaking skills. Further, by employing the multi-method approach, the researcher in this study would be able to identify areas of similarity and perhaps differences (Altrichter, 2008, p.147). It was beneficial in making a connection between the participants' practice and perceptions that can be helpful for providing a useful dialectic for the discussion of the research findings (see Bryman, 2004, p.15). Consequently, much educational research adopts a combination of methods, in order to provide meaningful and trustful knowledge (see Verma & Mallick, 1999).

4.5.3.2. Limitation of Mixed Methods

Although using multi-method can be more useful in conducting research, it also has drawbacks. Some of the disadvantages of using mixed methods that Kumar, (2014) listed are: involving more data, which means more work and resources, requiring additional and diverse skills, contacting two study populations and resolving disagreements in data. Some of the other arguments against using

mixed method approach in research as Creswell, (2014) points out is that they take up more resources than single method studies; they provide no help if the wrong questions are asked; their use requires a competent design which should be relevant to the research question; and that they need skilled researchers. Conducting mixed methods research is not easy because it is time-consuming. In addition, researchers are often trained in only one form of inquiry while mixed methods research requires researchers to know both forms of data. Further, it "complicates the procedures of research and requires clear presentation if the reader is going to be able to sort out the different procedures" (Creswell, 2007, p. 10). Consequently, Creswell (2014) stresses the importance of the researcher being skilled in the use of both methods as some researchers are not necessarily familiar with both methodologies.

4.5.3.3. Triangulation

Triangulation refers to the application and combination of several research methods in the study of the same phenomenon. It is a powerful technique that facilitates validation of data through cross verification from two or more sources. Using this technique helps to represent different perspectives to explore a given phenomenon and usually results in greater confidence in the findings and overcomes the limitations of the use of a single method (Cohen et al., 2007; Sarantakos, 2005). The significance of triangulation lies in the fact that it can overcome the deficiencies of using a single source and facilitate the progress of the study where one procedure serves as a stepping-stone for the other. In addition, gathering data from multiple sources could provide conclusions with more credibility than if the researcher is limited to one method. It can also increase the value of research data and hence increases knowledge (Denscombe, 2007; Sarantakos, 2005).

In the current study, the researcher adopted a methodological triangulation because "Methodological triangulation is the one used most frequently and the one that possibly has the most to offer" (Cohen et al., 2007, p.115). This technique offered the opportunity to employ three different data collection instruments, namely; a questionnaire, classroom observations and semi-structured interviews, to obtain detailed and in-depth answers to the research

questions. Each method represented a different perspective and provided important insights that explore the undertaken phenomenon. It can be concluded that triangulation used in the current research verified the validity of the information that was collected (Baumfield et al., 2013, p. 63) and increased the validity of the results.

4.6. Accessibility and Ethical Issues

Ethical issues typically refer to the strategy or to the set of values used for conducting the study. Ethics are considered the rules that differentiate between what are known as right or wrong and are broader and more informal than the laws and rules, which govern most societies. Hence, it is important for the researcher to follow the ethical norms because ethical standards promote the values as trust and respect that are required for conducting social research. In order for researchers to be successful in the process of collecting data, it sometimes requires them to be skilful and be able to deal with social issues effectively (Wenger, 2002, p. 273). Therefore, each researcher should be aware of factors that might affect any research tools and might occur at any stage of their research (Bell 2005), as they relate to the people with whom the researcher conducts his/her investigation (Bryman, 2001; Wenger, 2002, p. 273; Newby, 2012, p.358).

In the study in hand, the researcher took into consideration all the ethical issues to avoid any problems or difficulties (Cohen, et al., 2007, p.51). The researcher was aware that conducting research in schools can cause trouble or disruption to their systems or plans and gaining the official approval for entering schools or for meeting their teaching staff members could not be an easy matter for any researcher (Cohen et al., 2007; Creswell, 2008) as it was important to account for respecting individuals (Cohen et al., 2000) as well as sites (Creswell, 2008). It was also important that individuals should give their informed consent before they were involved in data collection (Cohen et al., 2000; Creswell, 2008; & Bryman, 2008).

Therefore, formal procedures were followed to approve this process. This process started in the UK when the supervisor who guided this study issued a letter stating

the time for data collection (see appendix L). This letter was sent to the sponsor of this research (The State of Libya, Cultural Affairs in London).The sponsor issued another letter addressed to the office of the Intermediate (Secondary) Education of the region to allow the researcher to carry out data collection legally and to offer their help and support for the researcher. These two letters were beneficial for legalising the process of gaining the permission to enter the selected schools and to meet the teachers.

After gaining the official approval to enter the schools, the second step was getting the informed consent of the teachers and students themselves before starting the first stage of data collection (Cohen et al., 2000; Creswell, 2008). Accounting for accessibility was an influential factor for applying a purposive method for selecting the target schools of this study (see sections 4.11 & 4.12). This selection allowed for accessing the schools and the teachers easily. The researcher established a good relationship with the respondents and emphasised that the obtained data will be confidential. The main purpose of the study was explained and discussed during the meeting with the subjects because participants "should be aware of and understand the purpose of the research. They should know why they particularly have been chosen" (Newby, 2010, p.357). They also should know how their information will be used. Therefore, the participants were asked through statements acknowledging their effort and appreciating the value of the data they would provide to be as honest and accurate as possible (Gass & Mackey, 2007). They were clearly informed that it was their right to refuse or withdraw at any time (Cohen et al., 2000).The researcher asked for the participants' permission to be recorded during their interviews and observations although some of them did not agree to be recorded (see section 4.9.6), which forced the researcher to document the data by note taking instead (Cohen et al., 2000). Moreover, in order to minimise the effect of the observer 's paradox, the researcher created a safe and positive atmosphere using facial expressions such as smiling, eye contact and careful listening in which subjects felt at ease (Cohen, et al., 2007).

4.7. TOOLS FOR COLLECTING DATA

4.7.1. Questionnaires

The questionnaire was used in the current study as a tool for data collection because it has probably been the most commonly used data collection tool in social research. This is confirmed by Elton- Chalcraft et al., (2008, p.76) who mentioned that, "One of the attractions of questionnaires is the large number of responses in a standard form you can get apparently easily". It was used to elicit information to triangulate other instruments, namely semi-structured observations and semi-structured interviews.

Questionnaires are used in this research to help the researcher save time because they can be easily distributed and are easy to analyse. "The main use of the questionnaire in classroom research is to obtain quantitative responses to specific predetermined questions" Hopkins, (2008, p.118). In addition, questionnaires enable researchers to receive responses without having to talk to every respondent. Although questionnaires are a very flexible tool, they need to be used carefully so that they achieve the requirement of a particular piece of research (Willman, 2011).

4.7.2. Advantages and Disadvantages of Questionnaires

The advantages of the questionnaires over interviews, as Cohen et al., (2011) indicate, are that: questionnaires tended to be more reliable; it was more economical in terms of time and money; it was possible to be mailed; and because it was anonymous, it encouraged more honesty (although this is not guaranteed). Still, Cohen et al., (2011) argue that interviews can be effective and efficient and accurate data will be obtained if the interviewer is skilful and does his or her job well and the respondent is sincere and well-motivated. Dörnyei, (2010, p.6) indicates some advantages and disadvantages of questionnaires. He highlights their multi-purpose and adaptable use that is; they can be used with a variety of people in a variety of situations dealing with a variety of topics. By employing a questionnaire, the researcher would be able to; obtain a huge amount of data from a large sample with an economy in time, effort, and expense. She can also

explore the types and frequencies of assessment practice used by the sample (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 331).

However, one of the limitations that threaten the reliability and validity of questionnaire data, if the questionnaires are poorly constructed. Dörnyei, (2010) mentions some of the main problem sources in questionnaires are the simplicity of the questions, and the short time those respondents spend working on a questionnaire resulting in superficiality of answers. In addition, some respondents lack the ability to read correctly (especially those with limited L2 proficiency), while there is no opportunity to correct the respondents if they misread or misinterpret questions. Moreover, Wiersma, (2000, p.175) mentioned some of the drawbacks of questionnaires and stated that the validity of the research which contains questionnaires depends on the number of respondents who return the questionnaire, and the quality of completeness of data which might not be representative of the group intended to be surveyed. Consequently, it might introduce the possibility of bias. One other disadvantage of the questionnaire is that the researcher may face difficulties in gaining the required response from the complete sample. Furthermore, people may not be motivated to answer and complete questionnaires and may give answers, which do not reflect their real opinion (see Brown, 2001; Walliman, 2005, p. 284; Abdul-Rahman, 2011).

4.7.3. Validity and reliability of questionnaires

Cohen et al., (2007, 2011) stated that validity is considered an essential aspect and vital requirement for both quantitative and qualitative research. It concerns whether the tools employed measure what they are supposed to measure. Gray, (2014) points out some aspects that might threaten the questionnaire's validity such as the wording of the questions it contains irrelevant questions, a poor sequencing of questions or unclear structure or the way questionnaire designed.

More to the point, some other researchers such as Kumar, (2014), Dawson, (2009) advised researchers not to use vague questions and explain that questionnaires need to be as short as possible with a mix of question formats, starting with easy questions. In addition, researchers should avoid using words with emotional connotations that might cause offence, embarrassment, sadness,

anger or frustration. Further, Bell, (2005) and Dornyei, (2003) emphasised that simplicity and clarity should be provided to all statements and repeated items, double negative questions should be avoided.

The questionnaire used in the current study was checked for content validity by academics' views (the two supervisors who guided this research) and by other two academics from the School of Education during an annual research review (Bryman, 2008; Cohen et al., 2000; Gass & Mackey, 2007). Experts' views were also, obtained from eleven Libyan colleagues who were studying for their MA and PhD degrees in the UK; as some of these colleagues had already conducted research in similar schools by using similar methods of research, and their teaching experience ranged from 3 years to 25 years in TEFL. In addition, three EAP teachers in Sunderland University at the time of piloting the questionnaire were also involved in this process (see subsections 4.13.1 & 4.13.3).

Many valuable comments and views were given and considered. On the other hand, internal validity, was ensured by using simple language and well-worded items to minimise any possible confusion or ambiguity. Further, the questionnaire was translated into an Arabic version and was revised by academic translators which helped for more understanding of all the items of the questionnaire as it can be helpful for researchers administering questionnaires in the participants' native language (Gass and Mackey, 2007, p, 162).

4.7.4. Constructing the Questionnaire

Questionnaire as a tool for data collection can be seen as a suitable instrument in the current study to obtain data from a large sample. It is used to triangulate other instruments, namely semi-structured observations and semi-structured interviews. The first step in designing a questionnaire was to have clear research questions that helped the researcher to focus her attention to form questions or statements that further answer the research questions of the investigation. In the current study, the researcher made use of the following: utilising the researcher's experience as a teacher of EFL, also consulting experts and experienced people in research to seek their views and opinions on questionnaires as recommended by Cohen et al., (2007, p. 342). Moreover, literature relevant to assessment was

reviewed before constructing the questionnaires, as the basic principles and practices of assessments processes were described.

A questionnaire composed of 38 close-ended questions was constructed and administered among fifty Libyan EFL teachers randomly selected from six secondary schools in Janzour city. The researcher put in considerations in constructing the questionnaires using a simple language for designing the items of the questionnaire. In addition, to the items constructed by the researcher, the questionnaire included other items adopted from questionnaires used in previous studies, which are listed below. These choices were due to their importance in investigating assessment as well as their suitability in the present research.

- Items   17, 25, 29 32, 33, and 35 were adopted from Shihiba (2011) questionnaire.
- Items   15, 18, 19, 20, 22, and, 31 were adopted from Dalala (2014) questionnaire.
- Items   1,2,3,4,5, 6 ,7,8, 9,10,11,12, 13, 14, 16, 21, 23, 24,26, 27, 28, 30, 31,36, 37 and 38 were constructed by the researcher as a result of the literature review as well as her own experience of the research context.

The teachers' questionnaire consisted of three sections. It started with the cover letter, which contained the school and the name of the university to which the researcher belongs; the aims of the questionnaire, and some notes to provide the participants with as much information and instructions to help them complete it. The first demographic section was used for gathering information about the teachers including the total years of teaching English and the place of graduation. The second section of the questionnaire included the main close-ended questions which were designed to get information about the issues of the investigation, and it was divided into five parts. The first part (11 statements) was designed to describe the assessment processes teachers employ.

The second part (7 statements) described the conceptions of assessment, the third part (6 statements) described the role of the teacher, the fourth part (8 statements) focused on the importance of assessment and the last part (6 statements) described the difficulties in assessment. The items of the

questionnaire were constructed in statements, in order to achieve the study's aims and objectives. The Likert scale was adopted as a rating scale and an extra scale 'often' was added to become a 6-point Likert-scale, (always, usually, often, sometimes, rarely, and never). The reason for doing so was to make the difference between the items more obvious. In addition, the extra rating 'often' was added in order to encourage the participants to think more deeply about their choices rather than to simply choose the option in the middle. Further, in the second section and for the same reasons another scale 'slightly disagree' was also added. According to Gass & Mackey, (2007, p. 152) the data provided through this scale "can be easily quantified and analysed". This design could offer the teachers the opportunity for selecting the statements, which match their perceptions and beliefs about assessment practice (Orafi & Borg, 2009). In the third section of the questionnaire, teachers were asked if they would be interested in participating in the follow-up interviews and the researcher appreciated the respondents by ending the questionnaire with a statement thanking them for their participation in the study (Gass & Mackey, 2007).

4.8. Interviews

Research interviews are among the most effective methods in gaining access to participants' views and perceptions towards various matters in education and other sciences. It is one of the main data collection in qualitative research (Punch, 2005, pp.168-9). A research interview is a "purposeful conversation between two or more people requiring the interviewer to establish rapport, to ask concise and unambiguous questions and to listen attentively" (Saunders et al. 2012, p. 680). There are three main types of the interviews, which tend to be used in social research; unstructured interview, semi-structured and structured interview (see Dawson, 2002; Easterby-Smith et al., 2012 and Robson, 2011).

Semi-structured interview as a tool of data collection is the most common type that is used in qualitative social research (Dawson, 2009). The aim of the semi-structured interview is to cover a core of issues that needed to be investigated. It is an informal grouping of matters and queries that the interviewer can ask in various ways to different respondents (Freebody, 2003, p.133). A thorough

understanding of the teachers' perceptions of the assessment processes requires an investigation of their beliefs and opinions of assessment main principles and practices. This can be achieved through interviewing them to find out the related issues. Semi-structured interview "fits between the questionnaire (where there is no freedom to deviate) and the evolving interview (which has known goals but not necessarily any known or expected end points). It is more invasive than a questionnaire" (Newby, 2010, p.340).

Therefore, teachers' semi-structured interviews were chosen for this study. The researcher wanted to understand more information related to the issue by asking some questions for more clarification. Accordingly, semi-structured interview guides helped the researcher to focus on the subjects' discussion without limiting them to a specific layout. This autonomy may assist interviewers to adapt their questions to the interview context/situation, and to the respondents. **"Interviewing language learners about the way they use strategies can be very productive and an excellent way of complementing a questionnaire" (Macaro, 2001, p.56). In the current study, an interview schedule was developed with reference to the research questions in order to lead the interview (see appendix C). The questions were designed to elicit information for confirming the data, gathered through the questionnaire and to explain further the new emerged issues. According to Cohen et al., (2000, p. 275) using open-ended questions can be an effective strategy that helps the researcher to probe deeply into the teachers' ideas and perceptions. Therefore, all the questions used in this interview schedule were open-ended questions.

4.8.1. Advantages of Interviews

The interview is important as a mean for collecting data because of "its adaptability. A skilful interviewer can follow up ideas, probe responses and investigate motives and feelings" (see Bell, 2010, p.161). There are many advantages of using interviews to get access to respondents' viewpoints. Using interviews helps the researcher to swiftly gain large amounts of interesting information relevant to the phenomenon under investigation which may not be achieved through the use of other techniques such as questionnaires or

observation alone (Neil et al., 2014, p.13). More to the point, the interaction between interviewees can be effective in raising various issues and can help in developing the dialogue between the interviewer and the participants. Thus, interviews are interactions that help investigators to explore the understanding and knowledge of other people about a researched topic.

Additionally, it is a tool by which researchers discover and record what he or she thinks and feels about an issue and what significance or meaning it might have (Arthur et al., 2012, p.170). Some researchers such as Cohen et al., (2011) emphasised that the researcher needs to be skilful and consider any issues which might arise during interviewing. Wiersma, (2000, p.250), advises researchers "to be flexible and ready to respond to whatever in the situation will produce useful information". Cohen et al., (2011, p.421) also highlight that the interviewer should avoid being judgmental bearing in mind that the interview is a social, interactive meeting, not just a data collection exercise.

4.8.2. Limitations of Interviews

Interviews are an important source of qualitative data that gain an understanding of the participants' thoughts and intentions (Creswell, 2003). It has limitations, however, can be affected by some factors. One of these factors is that conducting an interview requires skilful researchers who manage to avoid any kind of bias. The issues of reliability and consistency of the data from the interview can be in doubt, due to the impact of the interviewer presence on the interviewees' responses (Denscombe, 2007). These drawbacks are confirmed by Newby, (2010, p.342) who argued that although semi-structured interview helps the researcher to ask additional questions which produce data that facilitate awareness of the issue investigated better, it is time-consuming. Further, the interviewer needs to be trained and skilful to elicit the information needed for his/her study. In addition, it needs effort and costs money. Moreover, conducting an interview depends on the accessibility of individuals, the cost, and the amount of time available. "Interviewing is not very easy to learn as, it depends more on developing an approach that helps to build a relationship with the interviewee than one learning a set of techniques" (Altrichter et al., 2008, p.132). One other

drawback of the interview is that it is considered the hardest tool for collecting data, although, it is so rich and contains so much for the researcher to engage with (Baumfield et al., 2013, p.149).

4.8.3. Validity and Reliability in Interviews

To achieve validity in interviews is "to minimize the amount of bias as much as possible" (Cohen et al., 2011, p.204). Some of the features of validity in qualitative research are; the principle source of data is the natural setting; the key tool of research is the researcher (who is part of the researched world) rather than the research instrument. The open-ended interviews enable participants to prove their way of understanding the situation. This indicated the need for the interviewer to be clever and be able to deal with any unexpected issues which might be raised. It is also, necessary for the interviewer to be aware that one suitable sequence of questions for one respondent might be less suitable for another (ibid). In the case of structured and semi-structured interviews, Gray (2014) states, that validity can be gained when ensuring that the question content focuses on the research objectives and the interviewer effect is avoided. Furthermore, when providing guidance or clarification, the interviewer should not influence the respondent's answer.

Therefore, in the current study, the researcher's role was restricted to conducting the interviews appropriately and trying hard to avoid any interference or explanation that might lead the interviewees to give certain answers. The researcher's main role was how to encourage the participants to be more active and more comfortable in their responses. In this study, validity and reliability of interviews were tested out through the pilot study by asking the respondents, after the interview whether, the questions were clearly understood and whether they were appropriate to gain rich and useful data. Further, the reliability of the interviews data was approached through consideration of the interview questions and the adoption of the triangulation technique.

Thus, participants' feedback about misunderstandings or ambiguities during the pilot study helped the researcher to ensure issues of validity and reliability (see subsections 4.13.2 & 4.13.4). Validity in qualitative research can be achieved

through "the honesty, depth, richness, and scope of data achieved, the participants approached, [and] the extent of triangulation"(Cohen et al., 2007, p.133).

4.8.4. Interview Sample Size

The interview sample is a small group from the target population from whom the researcher could gain information related to his/her study. Researchers such as Bryman, (2008) argued that the sample size is selected from the basic population, which is Libyan secondary school students and their teachers who were teaching English language in the target schools in Janzour city. The schools were categorized as public ones, belonging to the government, and where teaching English is compulsory to all students from the first year until the third year. In this respect, Bryman, (2008, p.168) claimed that "the researcher may want to sample from a university, cities, regions, firms etc.". Because of the importance of sampling techniques in any study, participants must be carefully selected. They must be able to communicate and willing to take part in the intended research. According to Cohen, et al., (2007, p.115) little benefit might be gained if the random sample lack the knowledge and are unable to provide comments on matters of interest to the researcher where he can learn a great deal about issues of importance to the purpose of the study.

This view was considered when selecting the participants of the current study and as a result a purposive sampling strategy was employed in this study. This kind of sampling deals with specific purposes and small populations. After checking all of the questionnaires, it was decided which of the teachers would be observed and interviewed. Teachers who emphasised their interest to participate in the study were contacted in order to arrange for the interviews. Each teacher was initially informed about the nature of the study and that it consisted of two further rounds of data collection, namely classroom observation and a tape-recorded interview to be conducted with each teacher individually. An appropriate sample was then identified that could represent the characteristics of the population, including male and female participants and more and less experienced teachers. Twelve teachers were chosen from six schools. The other

sample who was interviewed was 12 third-year secondary school students who were studying in the same schools. The choice of the final secondary year was because such students are supposed to be able to communicate and respond in English after having studied English for at least six years at preparatory and secondary levels (see section 4.16.1) for more details.

4.8.5. Power Relation in Interviews

Interviewing people would indeed demand a lot of techniques and diplomacy steps in order for the interviewee to be able to express his /her thoughts and views freely. Further, people may be sensitive and prefer not to be interviewed, especially when they may feel that they are being interviewed by a university staff member while they are only students (Sarantakos, 2005). These factors may affect the interviewees' voluntary participation and may give unreal information due to the unequal power relationship between the interviewer and the interviewees. The researcher put into consideration such issues and tried to create friendly relationships with the interviewees through a social environment in which all the interviewees felt safe and comfortable. Interviewees were supported and were made to feel relaxed and at ease by creating a positive atmosphere in order to gain rich and honest data.

In addition, the researcher used her body language to confirm that she was interested in what they were expressing. Hughes, (1996, p. 173) confirmed that "Body language plays a significant role in interviews" and "…friendly smiles are important to allay any fears of a forthcoming inquisition". Consequently, the researcher in this study intended to be more familiar with the participants through visiting the schools many times before collecting the factual data so that they get accustomed to her presence as confirmed by Mitchell & Jolley, (2004, p. 155) "Once participants are used to you, they may forget that you are there and revert back to normal behaviour".

4.8.6. Interviews and Ethical Issues

As interviewing people is not an easy task and might differ in terms of mood, behaviour, attitudes, beliefs, experience or traditions, ethicals issues are considered as important rules that researchers are concerned with, and require

special consideration (see section 4.6). Consequently, the researcher in the current research paid much attention to these issues when conducting her interviews to avoid any ethical problems. All the interviews were recorded and kept in a safe place. Further, strategies were adopted to accomplish her task successfully and when she conducted the semi-structured interviews, she followed these steps:

- Before starting the interview, each participant was asked whether he/she was happy to participate and was informed that they can withdraw or stop at any time. Further, they were told about how long the interview would approximately take because they might be planning to do other things later.

- The researcher acted normally and informally to encourage the interviewees to feel relaxed. The researcher started the interview by thanking the interviewee for her/his participation in the study. Then the researcher clarified the purpose of the interview and asked whether they preferred to conduct the interview in English or Arabic in order to avoid any misunderstandings.

- In order to make the participants more comfortable and active in their participation, issues of confidentiality were reassured, and it was confirmed that their names would not be attached to the recordings, and their contributions would not be accessed by anyone except the researcher.

- The researcher showed and expressed attention and curiosity to all the interviewees by using facial expressions such as smiling, eye contact, careful listening, and nods. That was to give more opportunity to the interviewees to express themselves in depth and to make them feel that what they said was important.

- At the end of the interview, the researcher thanked the interviewee for his/her participation and again assured them that all the records are anonymous. In addition, their participation was highly appreciated and the researcher confirmed that it is valuable for my study. This might encourage them to participate in other studies in future.

- Finally, the researcher transcribed the interviews while the events were still fresh in my mind.

4.9. Observation

Elton- Chalcraft et al., (2008, p. 96) defined observation as a method, which is used "for recording behaviours that occur at a given time under a certain set of circumstances". Kumar, (2014) indicated that there are two main types of observation: participant observation and non-participant observation. Participant observation is when a researcher participates in the activities of the group being observed while non-participant observation is when the researcher does not get involved in the activities of the group and remains a passive observer watching and listening and drawing conclusions.

In the current study, non-participant observation using audio-recording and note-taking tools was utilised in collecting data. The rationale behind observation was to look at the teachers' behaviour and what is going on inside the classroom more closely along with capturing any missed information from interviews and questionnaires. Observation was an important tool and could produce clear information in terms of the evaluative behaviour of people (Murry &Lawrence, 2000, p.139). It is not only important in classroom research but also more generally in supporting the process of school development (Hopkins, 2002, p.69). We use observation because "direct observation of people's actions, behaviour and attitude is an alternative to asking them about it" (Newby, 2010, p.286).

Therefore, observations could be an effective instrument in the current study to obtain as much information as possible about the phenomena, which was aimed to be observed and was a selective way of watching and listening to it as it takes place (Kumar, 2014, p.173). Observation should be recorded and carefully identified in terms of when, where, and under what conditions it was made (Wiersma, 2000, p.248). Consequently, all the observations in the research in hand were recorded and transcribed. The feature that differentiates observations as a research process was that it offered the researcher the opportunity to gather 'live' data from naturally occurring social situations (Cohen et al., 2011, p. 456). Further, it "can support both specific purposes, as well as the more general aspiration of teacher and school development" (Hopkins, 2002, p.73).

4.9.1. Rational for Using Unstructured Observation

Denscombe, (2010, p. 204) mentions some advantages of observations as follows; through observing the researcher can record what people do with direct evidence of the eye and he/she can observe the participants' social attitudes in a natural situation, as well as, observing what actually happens for a certain purpose. Observation can also, provide considerable accurate of data in short time; it excludes any bias from the personal background of the observer. In addition, it provides data, which is ready for analysis, and it should be reliable in that two or more observers should record similar data.

Hence, the purpose of the observations in the current study was to see whether the comments made by the teachers about assessment exactly occur in the classroom and to ensure that the perceptions and reality match. During the observation, the researcher followed the naturalistic inquiry approach and acted as a fly on the wall avoiding any influence on the instruction and interaction (McDonough et al., 2013). According to McDonough et al., (2013) learning does not always take place through what teachers teach or how much they have planned the lesson. However, a carefully planned lesson sometimes can restrict rather than help students in their learning as interaction which occurred inside the classroom cannot be prepared and it can occur without any preparation. This kind of interaction can determine the learning opportunities that students get. This kind of interaction, which involves both teacher and learners, requires both teacher and student to manage things together that help in shaping the environment of the classroom.

The co-operation between the teacher and the learners includes what opportunities can be allowed for each one of them, e.g. what / who and when to speak. Hence, in the current study, it is important to observe the classroom, to find out to what extent the students are offered the opportunity to speak and involve in the learning process. In addition, through observation, we can find out what materials are used to assess students' oral communication and in what manner they are used in the classroom. However, the researcher in this study did not depend only on observation, as the research interpretation may or may not

be completely correct and needs another instrument to support the explanation. As emphasised by Corbin & Strauss, (2015, p.41), it is beneficial to combine observation with interview or leave open the possibility to verify interpretations with participants".

4.9.2. Limitations of Unstructured Observation

Observation is a useful method of collecting a wide range of data, which might not be possible through a questionnaire or an interview however, it is more time consuming; besides, it needs to observe the phenomena over a period of time to obtain a reliable data. This is confirmed by Walliman, (2001, p. 242) who claimed that "much time can be wasted waiting for things to happen, or so much happens at once that it is impossible to observe it all and record it".

Furthermore, Kumar, (2014) highlighted that the awareness of being observed, may lead people to change their behaviour. For example, teachers may change their behaviour because they are being observed, resulting in observations that do not reflect typical instruction. Furthermore, there is the possibility of observer prejudice which may threaten the verification of the observations. It can be also argued that various observers may probably result in different interpretations from observation as taking detailed notes when observing may make the observer miss some of the interaction and depending only on recording might be uncertain (ibid).

4.10. Population of Sampling

The population is an entire set or universe of people, objects or events of concern to a research study from which a sample is drawn (Cohen, 2007). The target population refers to a subset of the wider population who share the phenomenon under investigation. They are the group that researchers would ideally like to generalise their findings and it should be identified after the research determined his/her objectives (Bell, 2005; Larson-Hall, 2010). In this study, the wider population refers to all secondary school students who learn English language as a compulsory subject and EFL teachers who teach English language in Libyan secondary schools. The target population refers to the sub-set which includes

one hundred and eighty secondary school students and fifty EFL teachers who were teaching English classes in secondary schools in Janzour city.

The participants were male and female teachers and students. All participants were Libyan and their native language is Arabic. The teachers were graduated from Higher Institutes for preparing teachers or Colleges of Arts or Colleges of Education in Universities. Those particular schools were chosen because many considerations may influence the sample selection such as: Firstly, the accessibility for the researcher, which "is a key issue and researchers need to make sure that access to their target samples is permitted and practicable" (Cohen et al., 2007, p.109), and the "ease in accessing the potential respondents" (Kumar, 2014, p. 228). Secondly, the good relationship with some people in charge of the schools helped the researcher to gain access to the target samples easily. The researcher contacted the Local Authority to get the necessity letters of consent, and written permissions for conducting the research was gained (see appendix L). The sample selection was restricted to 3rd year secondary school students in six schools out of more than twenty schools in Janzoor city.

4.11. Sampling

Social scientists are rarely able to study all the people, places and events in which they are interested in because it is impractical (Wilson, 2009, p. 139). Therefore, they use sampling. A sample is only a part or group, which represents the whole population. It is a subset of the population. Using sampling is a fundamental strategy for research project (Hartas, 2010, p.60). The sample needs to be selected randomly in order to minimize and eliminate bias (Freebody, 2003), and "good practice is strongly associated with random or probability sampling" (Bryman, 2008, p.162).

Sampling as Hartas, (2010, p.277) puts it, is "used to allow evaluators to make generalization from the sample to the population". Therefore, researchers attempt to collect information from a smaller group due to many reasons. These reasons can be "factors of expense, time and accessibility, it is not always possible or practical to obtain measures from a population" (Freebody, 2003, p.130). Hence, it is important for the researcher to determine the size of the sample and select

as large as possible because "the larger the sample, the less the potential error is that the sample will be different from the population" (Creswell, 2012, p.146). However, Bryman, (2008) emphasised the trustworthiness for reporting all the issues related to the research design and implementation rather than dependence on large samples. Further, he considered obtaining high response rates from smaller samples as more practical than involving larger samples.

Gray, (2014) and Denscombe, (2007, p.13) identified two main approaches or procedures of sampling that can be used by social researchers. The first is known as 'probability sampling' which involves selecting random samples of subjects from a given population that represents the total number of possible elements as part of the study and the second as 'non-probability sampling', where the selection of participants in a study is not random. It is conducted without knowledge about whether; the participants in the sample are representative of the whole population. Probability sampling includes; simple random sampling, stratified sampling, and cluster sampling, while non-probability sampling includes convenience sampling, quota sampling and purposive sampling. The following figure 7 shows the common sampling techniques as suggested by Saunders, et al., (2009, p.213).
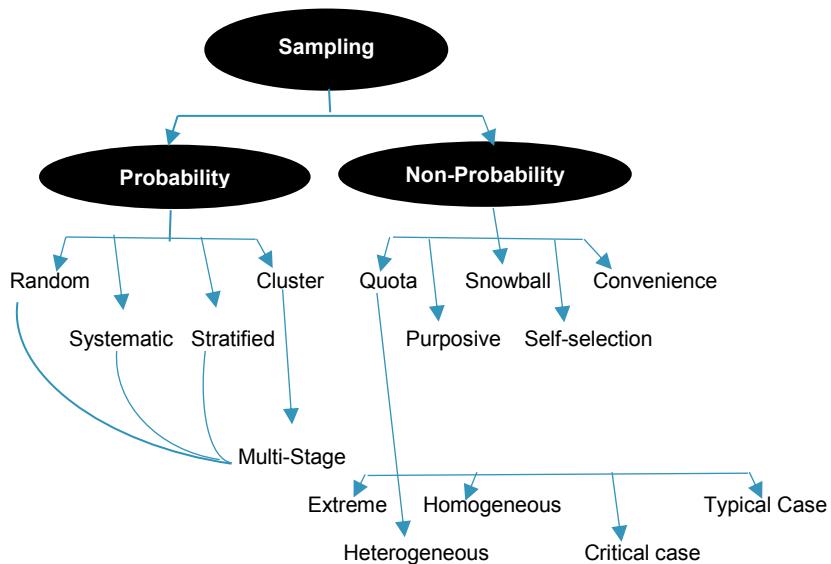
Figure 7: The common sampling techniques as suggested by Saunders, et al. (2009, p.213)

In the current study, self-selection sampling and purposive sampling techniques were employed to select participants for the questionnaire and interviews. These two sampling techniques are discussed in detail in subsection (4.16.1) below.

4.12. COLLECTING DATA AND THE PILOT STUDY

4.13. Pilot Study Process

A pilot study as described by Gall et al., (2007, p.56) is a "small-scale testing of the procedures that you plan to use in the main study, and revising the procedures based on what the testing reveals". Wiersma and Jurs, (2009), highlighted that the pilot study should be done with individuals similar to the intended participants, as the purpose of it, is to avoid any poorly prepared items, ambiguity or confusion. The pilot study can be beneficial for the researcher in that it can increase the validity and reliability of the instruments of data collection (Cohen, 2007). Furthermore, the feedback gained might help the researcher to adapt and refine the instruments to avoid any vagueness or misunderstandings arising. A pilot study is done before running a larger study (Bernard, 2013) and as soon as the measurement instrument is evaluated to be satisfactory, the researcher can begin collecting data (Wiersma & Jurs, 2009).

Consequently, since validity is a significant and useful strategy to be used in any social research, the researcher in the current study piloted the instruments to see whether they were accurate enough to answer the research questions. Hence, the structure of question items has been checked and simple and clear language has been used to ensure that my data collection tools have internal validity.

4.13.1. Teachers' Questionnaires

To ensure the validity and the reliability of the tools for collecting data which were used in this investigation, both the quantitative and qualitative data were tested. Cohen et al., (2007, p. 158) advised that it is important for questionnaires to be piloted before conducting the main study and refine their contents. Therefore, the teacher's questionnaire in the current research was tested in a pilot study before it was distributed to the teachers. The research ensured that much attention was

given to the questionnaire content validity as it aimed to find out the perceptions and beliefs of teachers towards the assessment practices.

In addition, informal interviews with teachers were conducted to discuss issues and to gain useful feedback about questions of the questionnaire, in order to identify any ambiguities that might find in the statements of it. Additional items were added according to the researcher's own experience as a second language teacher and learner, in order to make the instrument more suitable and comprehensive for the participants. According to the feedback obtained, some items of the questionnaire were modified and some others added (See appendix I).

4.13.2. Teachers' Interview Schedule

According to Berg (2009, p. 119), there are two steps that the researcher can consider for testing the reliability of the interview schedules before conducting the main study. The first step involves a serious analysis of the schedule by people familiar with the topic that needed to be investigated and the second step involves conducting some practice interviews. Therefore, the researcher pre-tested the interview schedule by revising the items to ensure that they answer the research questions of the study, then approved by the supervisors who guided this research. In addition, six semi-structured interviews were conducted and practiced. Six teachers volunteered to be interviewed; accordingly, the researcher tried to build a good rapport before the interviews took place, which encourages them to express their thoughts and opinions about assessment processes they use. Therefore, validity and reliability of interviews were tested out through the pilot study by asking the participants, after the interview, whether the questions were clearly understood, and whether they were suitable to gain rich and useful data. Their feedback was helpful as it helped the researcher to make changes and modify some interview items to eliminate any confusions. Accordingly, some questions have been modified (see appendix J).

4.13.3. Students' Questionnaire

As students' questionnaire was designed to explore and identify students' views and perceptions about assessment practice and was constructed in a way that

would provide valuable data for the research questions. Much attention was given to its content validity during the pilot study. The questionnaire was checked for content validity by the two supervisors who guided this research and by two other academics from the School of Education during an annual research review. This questionnaire was also revised by two colleagues who are PhD students studying in the UK by the time this questionnaire was being constructed.

According to the feedback gained from students' questionnaire, some items were changed in order to achieve reliable findings for the topic being studied. The researcher modified the wording of some of these selected items in order to be more easily comprehensible to the participants, as some of the originals were quite academic and complex (see appendix I).

4.13.4. Students' Interview

It was also important to revise and check the students' interview questions. Therefore, it was tested to ensure whether the questions are clear and understandable. Accordingly, there has also been some changes in the student's interview items, some questions are refined and modified (see appendix J).

4.14.5. Unstructured Observation

Regarding the observation, before running any observations, the research supervisor suggested that she would consult the teacher who is responsible for the EAP courses (English for Academic Purposes) at the University of Sunderland. I emailed her and she was willing to co-operate in my study, therefore, we prepared to attend and observe some oral lessons in some classes.

The first observation took place at 11.15 am on Monday the 18th July 2015 in room 103 in Forster Building. I tried to conduct the primarily direct personal observation to focus on what the teacher actually does when s/he assess students during oral activities, what practices he/she apply and students' reaction towards these processes. Hence, I tried to focus on the actions, which related directly to my study for the purpose of feasibility. I began to observe and record according to what criteria the teacher assesses and how s/he provides the

feedback to students. I tried to concentrate on how students work inside the classroom during speaking lesson.

Therefore, interesting insights and ideas for the research were generated which was beneficial for the researcher because various deficiencies were found and they needed to be modified. More new items were added so that the research tools would be more valid and effective to answer the research questions. Some points have been considered after the pilot study such as, practicing how to break down any barriers between the researcher, the teachers, and the students which help in reducing any negative impact of my presence.

Secondly, it was helpful to practise recording and avoid any unexpected out of balance sections in the study. Finally, the researcher tried to ensure whether what teachers say during the interviews reflected and employed inside the classroom. In other words, did teachers do what they say, besides, what was exactly going on during assessing oral activities. Although, the pilot data was gained from a small sample it was beneficial in that the researcher realized that it is better to analyse data collected from the observations and interviews immediately in order to remember as much information as possible.

4.15. COLLECTING DATA AND THE MAIN STUDY

The aim of the current study was to investigate the assessment processes Libyan secondary school teachers employ when they assess their students' learning in Janzour city. The following subsections offer a detailed explanations about the procedures followed in collecting the data for this investigation.

4.16. The Process of Data Collection

The researcher went to Libya to collect data about the assessment practices Libyan secondary school teachers employ when they assess their students' communicative competence. The first step taken after arriving in Libya was to gain the education authority's permission to access schools, meet teachers and students. Cohen et al., (2007, p.109) ensured that "In research, accessibility is a key issue and researchers need to make sure that access to their target samples is permitted and practicable". A formal letter was required from my university to

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facilitate my access to my samples. Therefore, I handed the letter, which I had brought from my director of study (see appendix L). The secretary of Libyan Education committee in Janzour was cooperative and expressed his wish to help. A day later, a permission letter to visit schools, meet teachers and students was received (see appendix L).

Janzour was chosen because of its accessibility for the researcher, who has been a teacher of English in Janzour faculty of education and lives in that area in where many secondary schools are located. Therefore, the researcher is familiar with the place and has many friends who could help in her research. Bryman, (2004, p. 297) insisted that "Use friends, contacts, colleagues, academics to help you gain access". The data of this study was collected in a variety of ways. A triangulation method, such as classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, a questionnaire for teachers and a questionnaire for students was used for data collection in the current study so that data from one type of source can be checked against data from another (see section 4.5.3 & subsection 4.5.3.1).

While collecting the data, the researcher faced many problems and issues that will be mentioned shortly. The second step taken in my study was to approach the headmaster/headmistress of the schools to explain the objectives of the research and what help was needed from them. In fact, most of them were very helpful. I was introduced to the English language teachers of each school. The teachers were given a clear picture about the study and the aim of classroom observations, semi-structured interviews and the questionnaires. Later, the researcher tried to make daily visits to the schools in order to encourage and stimulate the students and the teachers to take part in my study. During these meetings, the purpose and the aim of the study were explained to find out whether they were willing to participate and take part in my research. As soon as the guarantee of anonymity and the possibility of making available the results of the study were offered, the subjects showed their agreement and the timetable for visiting classes was arranged.

Two stages were followed to gather the data; the first stage lasting one and a half month (December 2015 and January 2016), the second stage also one and a half month, (February to March).

Table 1: Time Matrix of Data Collection

December 2015 & January 2016	The questionnaires for both teachers and students were distributed and 12 teachers at 6 different secondary schools were observed
February & March 2016	The same 12 teachers were interviewed

In fact, the researcher faced many difficulties while conducting her data. One of these difficulties is that because of the war and the political instability, the road between where I live and two of the schools I needed to visit, remained closed for two days; this consumed time from the researcher. I tried to postpone three interviews to the next days. One other problem was that during the time of collecting data my mother passed away and I tried to overcome my sadness to carry on gathering the data. Finding a convenient and appropriate place for the interviews was another problem encountered by the researcher. Later, this problem was sorted out with the help of the headmasters/headmistress and some of the teachers. Further, three days before I came back to the UK my son who is 19 years old suddenly suffered from a fever and an immediate surgery to remove his appendix was carried out. The researcher was planning to travel to the UK on the 20th of March but because the situation in Libya was not settled down yet, as any problems might raise unexpectedly with closing the airport, the researcher returned one week earlier.

4.16.1. The Sample of Participants

In social science, it is important to select the sample properly as it is not possible to observe the whole population. Therefore, selecting the right sample helps researchers to obtain valid and accurate results. Many considerations may influence the sample selection in social research such as the accessibility for the researcher, and the "judgement that the person has extensive knowledge about the episode, event or situation of interest and how typical the case is of a category

of individuals" (Kumar, 2014, p. 228). These issues were considered by the researcher in the research in hand.

Sample selection for the current study was based on the fact that the researcher had access to the six schools because she lives in that area and she has a good relationship with some staff who could assist her in conducting the research (Cohen et al., 2007). In addition, time and cost were influential factors for the decision about the sample size in this study. Therefore, a purposive selection of research contexts (regions/schools) can ease the process of obtaining the official permission for accessing research sites (Cohen et al., 2011).Through this selection, it may be also possible for researchers to receive significant support and assistance for executing their researches. For collecting quantitative data, questionnaires were given by the researcher in order to ensure that they were distributed in the best way to represent the target population (see section 4.2). The target population were third-year secondary school students and their teachers who were teaching them English.

The questionnaire was distributed to 180 students with an equal balance of level and gender. The participants were selected using a stratified random sampling technique. Cohen et al., (2007, p. 112) stated that a "stratified sample is a useful blend of randomisation and categorisation, thereby, enabling both a quantitative and qualitative piece of research to be undertaken". The reason behind choosing this target population was because third year secondary students have been studying English language for more than six years and they were supposed to understand the questionnaire items and able to communicate in the English language. Another questionnaire was also administered to 50 teachers. Sarantakos, (2005) argued that a stratified sample is employed when there is a need to represent all groups of the target population in the sample, as in this study. Distributing the questionnaire started immediately after the permission for entering the schools was formally obtained from the Committee of Education.

All the head-teachers were helpful and cooperative. In each school, full explanations about the nature and the aims of the study were provided to the head-teacher and to one of the teachers who was nominated to distribute and collect the questionnaires. Enough copies of both versions of the questionnaire

(English and Arabic) were left with these volunteers to offer them to their colleagues. These volunteers were asked to recommend their colleagues to read the covering letter in order to understand the nature and the aims of the research. The head-teachers and those volunteered teachers were also informed about the nature of the second method of data collection (interviews) and were asked to encourage at least one teacher from each school to participate in the interview. The teachers were allowed to take the questionnaires to their homes as this would offer them more time and "may possibly lead to more data" (Gass & Mackey, 2007, p. 161). The high response rate (100%) in this study indicates that good timing and purposive selection of contexts where it is possible for researchers to depend on people they know in administering questionnaires can significantly increase the response rate of their participants. Achieving this high rate could be also related to the researcher's good relationship with many of the stakeholders in the area. Cohen et al., (2007, p.224) believed that the researcher's status and prestige can be an influential factor for persuading the participants to return their questionnaires. The copies returned consisted of five Arabic versions and forty-five English versions.

For qualitative data, 12 teachers were interviewed using the semi-structured interview guide. These were selected by using a snowball sample. It was intended to use a purposeful sample by choosing participants whose responses to the questionnaire were found to be interesting and who could provide important information. However, various difficulties were faced in contacting them as the questionnaire was anonymous. As a result, a non-probability sampling, self-selection, (see section 4.12) was used. The participants who provided their names in the questionnaire were selected as the starting point for the sample for the interviews and observations (Cohen, 2007, p. 114). An appropriate sample was then identified that could statistically represent the characteristics of the population, including male and female participants and more and less experienced staff. Furthermore, their background information data also guided the selection of the participants for observation and interview. Twelve teachers were chosen from six schools. The interviews were set up when the participants contacted indicated they were willing to be interviewed.

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In this study, it was intended to observe and interview fifteen teachers; however, the researcher was satisfied with twelve. After 12 interviews, no new data was revealed. Therefore, the researcher decided not to continue expanding the sample size as the level of saturation was achieved. This means that no more observations and interviews were needed (Douglas, 2003). Hence, the sample size was determined by considerations of theoretical saturation. This occurs when "no new or relevant data seems to emerge regarding a category" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 212). The teachers were Arabic native speakers and from the same social, cultural and religious backgrounds holding Teachers' Institute Certificates in Teaching English Language or Bachelor Degrees (BA) in Education or Arts. Students involved in the practical study were those at the same schools who were studying English at third-year secondary level and their age was eighteen years. The same teachers who were participants in the study in hand taught them.

The same process of the teachers' sample was followed in selecting the required students' sample for the interview. Therefore, a sample of 12 students from the different classes were yielded to be interviewed by the researcher. Furthermore, after the samples of teachers and students were selected, their participation in the study was voluntary. The researcher decided to choose her sample as follows: in the observations and the semi-structured interviews, the sample was 12 teachers, 6 males and 6 females which represented 27.52% of the participants from the whole target population who voluntarily participated, while the whole target sample was involved in the teachers' questionnaires. Although, the gender of participants was not equal, the researcher tried to make a balance to achieve a diversity views. The sample of the students were 4 males and 8 females who also voluntary participated.

This study focuses on six secondary schools in Libya which means that there are limits to the degree to which the findings can be generalised. However, considering the similarities, problems and learning environment among the Libyan secondary schools, the findings of this study may not be generalised to all but "could provide a springboard for further research or allow links to be forged with existing findings in an area" (Bryman, 2004, p.100). Thus, it is important to

appreciate that data collected in this way, although interesting, is not representative of the whole study population.

Tables of random numbers at each step of the sampling processes were used as it is shown in the following table:

Table 2: The whole population and the randomised samples within the 6 schools

Total number of schools in city	Number of English teachers at 6 schools	The random sample of the teachers for the interviews	The number of the teachers answering the questionnaire	Number of students at 6 schools	The random sample of the students answering the questionnaire	The random sample of the students for the interviews
20	50	12	50	660	180	12

4.16.2. Questionnaires

The questionnaires were used as a support instrument to gain extra information from the participants. Therefore, a questionnaire was distributed to 50 English teachers. In fact, the researcher followed the same ethical approach that she has done in the observations and in semi-structured interviews, to gain the subjects' agreement. The researcher explained the aims and the significance of her study in a covering letter and handed the questionnaires to the subjects. They were asked to read the covering letter, which explained the aims of the study before signing their consent forms (see appendices A&L).

Those teachers whose teaching experience ranged from 2 to 10 years were labelled as group 'A' and referred to as 'less experienced', and those who had a teaching experience more than 10 year were labelled as group 'B' and referred to as 'experienced teachers'. Another students' questionnaire was distributed to 180 participants with an equal balance of level and gender (see appendix E). Similarly, in each class, I handed out the students' questionnaire personally. This was done in order for me to be able to inform the students about the investigation and guarantee their anonymity. They were also asked to read the covering letter which explained the aims of the study before signing their consent forms (see appendix J). A translated copy of the questions was provided also with each questionnaire (see appendix F). All the students who participated in my investigation answered the questionnaire voluntarily and individually. All the

subjects returned their questionnaires complete. Then, examining and analysing the data provided in these questionnaires started immediately.

4.16.3. Researcher's Role as Observer

As classroom observation was considered the main data- collection tool, because it shows clearly how participants act and how they behave inside their classrooms during English lessons, therefore, the researcher did her best to minimize any difficulties encountered during observing the target samples. The researcher acted naturally and informally by smiling and communicating with the teachers and students during the break time to allow the researcher to have informal and friendly relationships with teachers and their students. This step was also taken in order to let participants perform naturally, and to avoid any unnatural behaviour from the subjects, as observing people might lead them to change their behaviour as noted by Kumar (2014). The researcher was successful in building a good rapport with the participants in order to let them perform naturally and to gain their permission and approval to be audio-recorded.

During the observations, the researcher acted as a non-participant observer who was trying to find out what was going on inside the observed classrooms relying on recording and field notes to gain the required data. The researcher acted as an impartial observer. Her aim was to observe what assessment processes teachers at secondary school use when they assess communicative competence. The classroom observations allowed me to gain live, insider views of reality. It provided evidence of what teachers did and how they behaved when students communicate orally and how teachers assess their students in oral activities, besides what criteria they consider while assessing them.

Meanwhile, the observations enhanced my understanding of the assessment practices employed by teachers and described and interpreted them as they occurred. The researcher considered that teachers and students' gestures were important, so the researcher wrote down all those movements and facial expressions observed in terms of what teachers did and how they behave during oral activities by using note-taking during English lessons. For safety reasons, I took special care of recording and keeping the data. The transcriptions were

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made shortly after the recordings when everything was still fresh in the researcher's memory. I also kept a diary in which I recorded notes related to each observation and my first impressions of what was going on in the classes. All the participants were given numbers instead of their real names (see appendix S).

The observations took place during the first term of the school year 2015-16. Each participating teacher was observed for three lessons and recordings were made while they were teaching third-year students. Although, observations could be subjective and subjectivity could not be avoided (Cohen et al., 2000), the researcher's decision to utilise classroom-observation as a main instrument for gathering information relied heavily on her belief that direct observation gave her the opportunity to observe the issue as it appears in the real situation. The researcher watched what was happening and recorded events on the spot. The researcher has done her best to avoid subjectivity in this study in order to present a more realistic picture of what was going on inside the class during oral activities.

4.16.4. Conducting the Interviews

The semi-structured interviews were conducted with the same subjects who were observed in their classes. The researcher started the semi-structured interviews with the teachers after the classroom observations finished. The first step in conducting the interviews was contacting all the volunteers to arrange for the time and the place for each interview. It was not easy to fit in the times that suit all the interviewees as a conflict in their options was experienced. As most of the Libyan secondary school teachers are female and, in many schools, there were no male teachers, the majority 66% of the sample teachers were females. In fact, I got advantages of this situation. This facilitates my role as an interviewer as well as an observer, in that; I could meet the teachers at any time and at any place. Hence, the interviews and the observations were more accessible.

Careful attention was given to the interview ethical issues. At the beginning of each interview, the researcher started by introducing the purpose and the aim of her research, then emphasised the confidentiality of the information, which would be given by the participants. All of the interviewees were reminded of their right to withdraw or stop the interview at any time. In order to facilitate the smooth

operation of the interviews, every interviewee was asked to choose the time and the place of the interview beside the language of communication that she/he preferred (English, Arabic). Before we met for the interview, I asked for their approval of recording the interviews, which they all accepted. I also guaranteed their anonymity. Recording equipment was used, in order for me to be able to fully concentrate on the interviewees. It also enabled me to quote the teachers in the presentation of the results. Each interview lasted approximately fifty-five minutes. The researcher did her best to explain any point that might not be understood by the interviewee.

In addition, all the interviews were conducted in an informal manner to encourage the subjects to participate more actively. Of the 12 interviewees, four teachers were confident enough to conduct their interviews in English. However, the other eight interviewees seemed to be unable to express their ideas fluently or clearly in English. In these situations, they were encouraged to use Arabic to convey what they could not express in English. Learning from this experience, the rest of the interviewees were encouraged to conduct their interviews in Arabic.

In fact, giving freedom to the participants to use their native language helped the researcher to obtain more flexibility and motivated the subjects to express their thoughts easily. Eight of the interviews were conducted in Arabic and they were transcribed and translated into English by the researcher before being checked by an experienced translator to achieve accuracy. The other four interviews were carried out in English. The researcher started the interviews by asking some demographic questions about qualifications, place of graduation, and teaching experience. This step helped develop a good relationship between the researcher and the interviewees (Berg, 2009, p. 113).

Later, to make sure that the recording had worked properly, the researcher checked the responses after each interview. In the presentation of the results from the interviews, the interviewed teachers, are presented by numbers instead of their names. The following table 3 shows the interview sample.

Table 3: Teachers' Interview Sample

Female/Male	Experience		Place of Graduation	
6 Female 6 Male	Less Experienced (10 or less) (A)	Experienced (10+ yrs.) (B)	Teacher Training	Arts
12	6	6	4	8

The sample of the teachers' interview composed of four teachers who graduated from colleges of teacher training and eight teachers who graduated from colleges of arts. The six male teachers out of nine teachers who wrote their names on the questionnaire and showed their interest in participating in the interview were selected. The reason for selecting equal male and female teachers was to make a balance between these teachers. Appendix (R) shows the date and how much time each interview lasted. The sample of students' interview contained of eight female students and four male students. Although, teachers' and students' sample was not equal in terms of gender, the researcher tried to select similar percentage to gain various views and more trustworthy data.

The following table shows the students' interview sample:

Table 4: Students' Interview Sample

Total number of males at 6 schools	Total number of females at 6 schools	Schools	Sample of Males	Sample of Females	Total	Total number for the interview	Total number of students at 6 schools
251	409	1	1	1	2		660
		2	0	2	2		
		3	1	1	2		
		4	1	1	2		
		5	0	2	2		
		6	1	1	2	12	

4.17. METHODS OF DATA ANALYSIS

It is important for the researcher to plan how to choose a suitable method for analysing the quantitative and the qualitative data that s/he collected (Cohen et al., 2007). In the research in hand, two different methods were employed to analyse the data collected from the questionnaires, observations, and interviews.

The quantitative methods were used to help the researcher to explain what is happening and the qualitative data was helpful in discovering why this thing is happening. Further, the qualitative analysis is concerned with a deep understanding of the phenomena whereas quantitative analysis is used to measure collected data to yield statistical outcomes. Cohen et al., (2007) suggested that presenting various data streams help researchers "to provide a collective answer to the research questions" (448). More details about analysing both quantitative and qualitative data in the following subsections:

4.17.1. Quantitative Data Analysis Process

This section introduces the process used in analysing the quantitative data. In the research in hand, the quantitative data analysis started after making sure that all of the questionnaire responses were complete and free of mistakes. It was organised and reviewed according to the research questions. There were two questionnaires (A) and (B).Questionnaire (A) was designed for third-year secondary students and questionnaire (B) was designed for teachers, who teach the English language at these schools (see Appendices, A & B). Both of these questionnaires were administered at six secondary schools. Then Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software was used to analyse the data because this software is considered useful in analysing a large amount of data in a short time and with less effort (Cohen et al., 2011; Bryman, 2008).

To simplify the process of entering the data onto the computer, the data was checked and coded (Sarantakos, 2005). This process of clustering data made the process of analysis clear and efficient. Although the present researcher took part in training-sessions on the use of this software, an expert statistician was consulted in order to ensure that the data was used accurately and tests were used precisely.

4.17.2. Questionnaire Clustering and Raw Data

Within the questionnaire, five major groups of assessment practices, were identified. These were: importance of assessment, assessment processes, conceptions of assessment, teachers' role and difficulties in assessment. These groups were divided in a further step into a number of subgroups. Each subgroup

was made up of several statements. Appendix O shows the five main groups of assessment practices. The teachers' questionnaire included 38 statements and the students' questionnaire comprised 30 statements. The view of teachers was asked on each statement on a 6-point Likert type scale where 1= (Never), 2 = (Rarely), 3 = (Sometimes), 4 = (Often), 5 = (Usually) and 6 = (Always). For the subgroups, the average was calculated using the teachers' responses for each statement. The reason behind adding the extra item (often) to the 5-point Likert-scale was making teachers think more deeply in their choices rather than to sticking to the one in the middle. Students' view was also required on each statement on a 6-point Likert type scale where 1= (Strongly Disagree), 2= (Disagree), 3= (Slightly Disagree), 4= (Partly Agree), 5= (Agree), and 6= (Strongly Agree).This has previously been discussed in section 4.8.3.

In the current study parametric and non-parametric statistical tests were utilized during the analysis process. The literature states that parametric and non-parametric tests can be used to measure attitudes on the six Likert point ordinal scale that was used in the current study to rate the degree to which respondents agree or disagree with the statements in the questionnaire (Bryman, 2004). The Cronbach Alpha Test was used to check the internal consistency of the questionnaire items. The independent t-test, which is a parametric statistical test was carried out to explore the types and frequencies of assessment practice was used. It was also utilized to investigate the possible relationships between the teachers' and students' perceptions concerning assessment process. There are different types of *t*-tests available in SPSS. The independent sample t-test is used when you want to compare the mean score for two different groups of participants. In addition, this test shows significant differences. If the value in the Sig. (2-tailed) column is equal or less than .05 this means that there is a significant difference in the mean score on the dependent variables for each of the two groups. On the other hand, if the value is above .05 then there is no significant difference between the groups (Bryman, 2004; Sarantakos, 2005). In addition, the Mann-Whitney U test, which is a non-parametric test was used to confirm the results from the Independent sample t test and to investigate the significance. In addition, in this study, the mode, a value that occurs most often and the median,

which is the "middle" value in the list of numbers values were also used (Bryman, 2004). More details about the analyses of the Likert scale are presented in chapter five section 5.3.

4.17.3. Qualitative Data Analysis

Initially, the researcher considered using Grounded Theory, particularly Charmaz's (2006) version. However, the researcher realized that she was making claims to have used a grounded theory approach but what emerged was thematic analysis. There have been a number of commentaries arguing that qualitative researchers are increasingly describing their analytical approach as a grounded theory, yet, what they are actually using could be described as a thematic analysis. This is because thematic analysis shares common analytic processes similar with that of grounded theory (Thorne, 2000, Suddaby, 2006). The following section illustrates the similarities and the differences between thematic analysis and grounded theory:

Thematic analysis Vs Grounded Theory

Thematic analysis is a widely used method of analysis in qualitative research. It is one of the most common forms of analysis in qualitative research. This method emphasizes examining and recording patterns (or themes) within data. It is based on the same relativist and interpretivist concerns as a grounded theory approach in that descriptions, explanations and relationships are categorised and subsequently explored and refined to be applied to participants, cases and contexts, and to develop a narrative explanation, or theory, that can describe the phenomena.

However, a thematic analysis, is different from a grounded theory in that it aims to summarise data into themes that are then explained rather than necessarily developing a novel theory to describe the findings (Ryan and Bernard, 2000). Further, a thematic analysis is unlike a grounded theory because it is essentially independent of theory and can, therefore, be applied across a range of theoretical and epistemological approaches. Thus, it is a process for encoding qualitative information, rather than a theoretically informed model for research and analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Whereas, grounded theory consists of gathering

qualitative data and, at the same time working out theories and hypotheses and concepts in relation to the data being collected (ibid).

Similar to grounded theory, the process of thematic analysis begins with identifying initial 'themes' from participants' accounts. Once these initial patterns are identified, the next step is to categorise all data that relate to these patterns and produce codes and thereby refine the themes. After explaining the patterns and the related codes changed into sub-themes each pattern, code and theme needs to be explained from all perspectives. The patterns are then explained on and related codes sorted into sub-themes. In contrast, thematic analysis is just defined as an analytic method, rather than a methodology which most other qualitative approaches such as 'Grounded Theory' are (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Grounded Theory is a methodology for developing theory that is grounded in data and it can be derived inductively in that it is an inductive process where data is integrated and patterned by itself (Cohen et al., 2011).

In summary, thematic analysis is a search for themes that emerge as being important to the description of the phenomenon. These emerging themes then become categories for analysis (Cohen et al., 2011; Ryan and Bernard, 2000). According to Cohen et al., (2011) thematic analysis is performed through the process of coding in six phases to create established, meaningful patterns. These phases are: familiarization with data, generating initial codes, searching for themes among codes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing and reporting written data. In addition, this method emphasized organization and rich description of the data and focused on examining themes within data. It consisted of reading transcripts, identifying possible themes comparing and contrasting themes. It also went beyond counting phrases or words in a text and moved on to identifying implicit and explicit ideas within the data (Bryman, 2004; Mehmetoglu & Altinay, 2004). Moreover, thematic analysis allows for categories or themes to emerge from the data such as repeating ideas; indigenous terms, shifts in the topic; and similarities and differences.

Like most research methods, this process of data analysis can occur in two primary ways inductively or deductively. Analysis of the assessment process

transcripts used a deductive approach which tends to be less descriptive overall as analysis was limited to the preconceived frames, based on the list of themes identified from the literature. My epistemology as an interpretivist accepts that knowledge is not static, but is always emerging and transforming; it is interpreted by both observer and participant. The inductive (interview transcript) and deductive (observation transcript) approach were used to produce the codes, which helped to offer a set of strategies and assumptions that came from the literature review. The researcher also maintained to understand the data through the use of codes and themes where the process of analysis was an interaction between the researcher and the data in order to present a meaningful interpretation (Brayman, 2008; Walliman, 2001), and the "intention is to move from description to explanation" (Cohen et al., 2011, p.539). Hence, I acknowledge that I did not start with a blank mind I do have assumptions and general view of assessment literature but not in regard to this population in this context.

To conclude, the reason why initially the researcher thought that she had used Grounded Theory is that thematic analysis involves analytic processes common to most forms of qualitative research such as Grounded Theory, and it can be applied without some of the potentially bewildering theoretical knowledge essential to many other qualitative approaches. Therefore, it was used for the current study as a 'basic' method because of its suitability to a wide range of research interests and theoretical perspectives (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In this study, thematic analysis was viewed as theoretically flexible because the search and examination of patterning across language does not require adherence to any particular theory of language, or explanatory meaning framework for human beings, experiences or practices. Further, it can be used with large or small data-sets to produce data-driven or theory-driven analyses (ibid). The process of thematic analysis in this research was as follows:

4.17.4. Steps in the analysis of qualitative data

Thematic analysis is one of the most common forms of analysis in qualitative research. It emphasizes pinpointing, examining, and recording patterns or themes within data (Cohen et al., 2011; and Robson, 2002). Thematic analysis

focuses on identifiable themes and patterns of talk and aims to generate descriptions of strategies and behaviours (Braun and Clarke, 2006). In this study, both audio data from the direct observation and the semi-structured interview, were transcribed and they were analysed using inductive thematic analyses. Familiarisation with the data is common to all forms of qualitative analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Accordingly, the first step in analysing qualitative data in the current study was becoming intimately familiar with the data; reading and re-reading the data (and listening to audio-recorded data). In qualitative research, coding is "an integral part of the analysis, involving sifting through the data, making sense of it and categorising it in various ways" (Darlington & Scott, 2002, p.145). More details about the qualitative data analysis steps in the current study were as the follows:

- Initially, the researcher listened carefully to the recording many times in order to familiarise herself with the data and to make sure of the transcriptions.

- The second step was reading the transcription line by line to prove the accuracy of each transcription and to be able to highlight the categories that emerged from the data. During the first reading, notes of the main issues were made in order to gain a sense of the various themes embedded in the data and to promote open coding and identify any new information. This allows themes to emerge from the data rather than searching for pre-defined themes.

- Data were separated and broken down, in order to reconstruct it in meaningful concepts and patterns.

Within the process of open coding, the data were examined without any limitation or restriction in their scope so that all the data that might refer to a common usage of assessment process by the research participants were coded and highlighted (see appendix M). Different colours were used to distinguish between the concepts identified and how and why assessment processes were used. During the open coding stage, the researcher needs to ask questions and explanations of the data, such as: 'How does this category relate to the study?' 'Why has this category been chosen?' and 'what category does this incident indicate or what a

particular piece of data indicated? The reason for asking such questions was to prevent the researcher getting lost in the data and to keep the analysis process on the right track; also, to confirm the generation of codes that relate to other codes (Walliman, 2001, p.263). Moreover, the researcher constantly read and revised the interview transcripts to make sure that every possibility which might lead to determining new patterns was coded as some codes were created at the first reading and others arose in the second or third. The researcher did her best to be subjective and to avoid any personal prejudice.

- After the themes began to emerge by organising items relating to similar themes into categories, categories were modified, developed and new ones were allowed to emerge. The process 'Axial' or focused coding represented the second stage of the process of coding. It was concerned with reviewing and filtering or refining the codes obtained from the process of open coding. The emerging concepts from the 12 interview transcriptions were put together and similarities and differences were explored by comparing and contrasting the information and discarding and deleting the repeated categories. This procedure, resulted in producing a picture about what assessment process secondary school teachers use and how and why these practices were used (see appendix N).

- The categories obtained from all of the transcriptions were closely examined and connected by grouping the related ones together to develop the core or central categories. Focus was on the core categories related to the main study in order to find answers to the research questions, and then concepts were generated while developing the analysis some of these concepts were changed (see appendix O). To emphasise the anonymity, which is required in social research, transcriptions did not use the participants' real names. The researcher kept all the copies of the original material in a safe place to avoid any unexpected circumstances.

Finally, the name, definition and supporting data were re-examined for the final construction of each theme by using all the material related to it. Then, each theme's description was reported and it was supported by a few quotations from the original transcript to help communicate its meaning to the reader.

4.17.5. Memo writing

According to Walliman, (2001), Rubin & Babbie, (2009) memos are notes that a researcher writes during collecting his/her data and throughout the analysis of the data. Writing memos were used to record the verbal and nonverbal behaviour of teachers and students in classrooms, and used in the analysis of the data. Charmaz, (2006, p. 72) described memo writing as, a necessary method that promotes the analysis of the data and codes in research early stages. Therefore, throughout the process of data collection and analysis, short comments and notes were written in order to help the researcher to be on   track, and to enrich the collection of her data as "Compiling **memos** is a good way to explore links between data and to record and develop intuitions and ideas" (Walliman, 2001, p.264).

In the current study, memo writing was also used to provide basic contextual information, such as date, time, place and other information about the context of any relevant event or behaviour. In addition, the researcher used it to describe the classroom setting, such as classroom layout, seats and desks arrangement and number of students. This provides a general picture of the classroom setting. In sum, memo writing was used as a complement to the audio recording in order to gain as much data as possible to answer the research questions.

4.18. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This chapter has outlined the methodological part of the current research. It has described the methods which have been used in this study, namely semi-structured observations, semi-structured interviews, and questionnaires. This chapter has also described the participants and the steps taken for collecting data. In addition, the methodology issues such as validity and reliability have been discussed. This chapter has dealt with the use of the mixed methods for gathering data, and how important this method was for comparing and complementing the study findings. Ethical issues in the current research process and piloting the instruments have also been explained with special emphasis on the benefits of piloting the instruments before conducting the main study. The questionnaires and procedures of data analysis related to the SPSS software

package were discussed. This chapter has also dealt with the methods of data analysis in observations and semi-structured interviews based on the grounded theory style of qualitative data analysis.

The next chapter summarises and presents the results of the quantitative data (teachers' and students' questionnaire).

CHAPTER FIVE: QUANTITATIVE DATA RESULTS

5.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the analysis and results of questionnaires (teachers' questionnaire and students' questionnaire). The teachers' questionnaire was employed as a means of supporting the classroom observation and the semi-structured interview in order to achieve methodological triangulation. The incorporation of these three methods helped the researcher to find answers to the research questions (see sections1.4 & 7.5.). The methodological process of data analysis was discussed in the previous chapter, and the results of this analysis are presented in two chapters. The data obtained through the quantitative data analysis process is reported in Chapter five while the qualitative results are presented in chapter six. Both chapters will be discussed in more detail in chapter seven. The first section presents the results of the teachers' questionnaire.

5.2. TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

The teachers' questionnaire was analysed quantitatively in order to give numbers, figures and percentages, which will be used in comparing and contrasting between the items within the questionnaire, and within the classroom observations and the semi-structured interviews. The teachers' questionnaire was used to answer research questions 1, 2 and 3 while the students' questionnaire was used to answer question 2 and 3 only (see section 1.4). It is important to choose the right statistical technique that produces an accurate conclusion about the study findings. Therefore, the process of data analysis in the current study went through a number of steps, started by entering the data onto the computer and ended with descriptive analysis of the findings obtained.

5.2.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF THE PARTICIPANTS

5.2.1.1 Teachers' Gender

Before commencing the actual process of data analysis, it can be pointed out from Figure (8) below that the female teachers who participated in this

questionnaire were 33 while male teachers who participated in the same questionnaire were 17 teachers from the whole sample, which shows that 66% of the participants who teach English at secondary schools were females. This difference between male and female teachers who teach at secondary schools might be related to social and religious considerations, which considered that teaching is seen as an appropriate occupation for women in Libya as confirmed by Shihiba (2011).
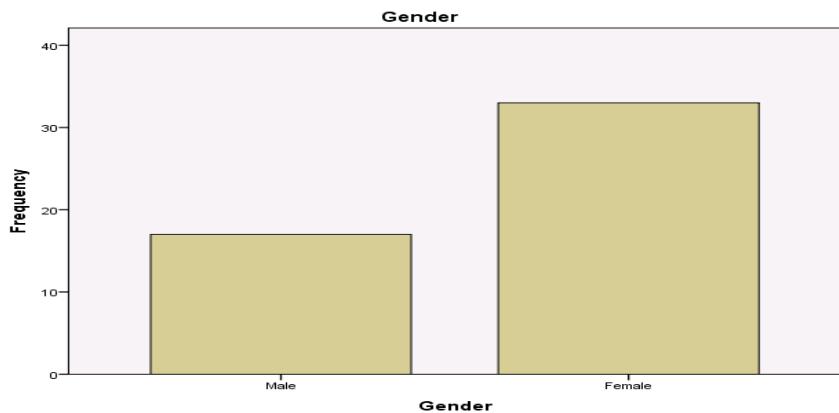
Figure 8: Teachers' Gender for the questionnaire

Figure (8) shows the number of the participants classified by gender. Amongst fifty participants, seventeen teachers were male (34%), and thirty-three were female (66%). This suggests that the number of female teachers who answered the questionnaire exceeds male teachers in general.

5.2.1.2. Teachers' Experience

Table (5) illustrates the six groups of the teachers who participated in the current study. Group 1 has an experience from one year to five years 18%, and teachers' experience from six to ten represents 40%. The third group participants with an experience from eleven until fifteen were 16%, and the fourth group from sixteen years' experience up to twenty were 8%. While the other two groups who have experiences from twenty-one to twenty-five and from twenty-six and over represent 14% and 4% respectively. The last four groups are considered as experienced teachers in this study.

Table 5: Teachers' Experience

Participants Experience	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
1-5	9	18.0	18.0
6-10	20	40.0	40.0
11-15	8	16.0	16.0
16-20	4	8.0	8.0
21-25	7	14.0	14.0
26+	2	4.0	4.0
Total	50	100.0	100.0

5.3. Analysis of the Likert Scales

There has been a debate between researchers about treating a Likert Scale as interval scales. Two different types of Likert Scale analyses are proposed by different groups of researchers who (Allen and Seaman, 2007; Boud and Molloy, 2013) argue that it is not appropriate to use mean and standard deviation for descriptive statistics in ordinal scale responses. This is because using means are often considered of limited value therefore, a frequency distribution of responses was likely preferred. Others believed in the equivalence between each value in the Likert scales (Cohen et al., 2011), and have argued that the median and frequencies (percentages of responses in each category) should be used as the measure of central tendency for Likert scale data. Further, the Mann-Whitney U test should be used for analysis instead of parametric tests which require interval data. Cooper, (2011) also suggested that we can describe the ordinal data by using frequencies or percentages of responses in each category on the Likert Scale.

Therefore, based on what many researchers have weighed in on this debate, in the current study, even though the responses from the students and teachers were categorised in rank order, the intervals between values could not be presumed to be equal (Cooper, 2011) because the Likert scale was treated as ordinal data measurement. In this case, it was suggested by Cooper, (2011); Cohen et al., (2011) using frequencies or percentages of responses in each category on the Likert Scale. The research in hand used both percentages and mode (Bryman, 2004). The responses were categorised into two categories as part of the data interpretation. The first category referring to 'agree' includes of

strongly agree, agree, partly agree. The second category referring to 'disagree' consists of slightly disagree, disagree, and strongly disagree.

In this study, as it was mentioned earlier parametric and non-parametric statistical tests were used to analyse the Likert Scale data. The independent sample t-test, which is a parametric statistical test was carried out to explore the types and frequencies of assessment practice used. It was also utilized to investigate the possible relationships between the teachers' and students' perceptions concerning the assessment process. In addition, the Mann-Whitney U test, which is a non-parametric test, was used to confirm the results from the Independent sample t test and to test for significance.

5.4. DATA RESULTS

In the following sub-sections, the frequency of the teachers' responses to statements of the questionnaire are presented, to show those statements that were mostly agreed on, and those with less agreement percentage. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for processing the quantitative data obtained as it is widely used in social research (Cohen et al, 2007, p. 501). In this study, both percentages and mode have been used based on the number of teachers and students who responded to each item. The teachers' questionnaire questions were grouped into five categories: a) Assessment techniques, b) Conceptions of assessment, c) The importance of Assessment d) Teachers' role, and e) Difficulties in assessment.

To make this interpretation and analysis clear and easier, all responses for 'Always', 'Usually', and 'Often' were combined and referred to as agreed, and all responses for 'Sometimes', 'Rarely' and 'Never' were combined, and referred to as disagreed. The same process was followed for the responses 'Strongly Agree', 'Agee', 'Partly Agree', 'Disagree', 'Strongly Disagree' and 'Slightly Disagree'. All these are shown in the last two columns in the tables (6, 7, 8 & 9). The research questions to be answered are:

1. What are the assessment processes Libyan teachers use at secondary schools in assessing students' oral communication?
2. What are:

A. Teachers' perceptions towards these processes?

B. Students' perceptions towards these processes?

3. What are:

A. The similarities between teachers' and students' perceptions?

B. The differences between teachers' and students' perceptions?

5.5. RESEARCH QUESTION ONE

What are the assessment processes Libyan teachers use at secondary schools in assessing students' oral communication?

Keys for Tables 6-10

M1=Median   M2=Mode

5.5.1. The importance of Assessment

The answers to the questionnaire questions regarding the statements that relating to the views that the teachers held under the category of the importance of assessment revealed various responses as illustrated in table (6).

Table 6: Teachers' frequency of responses to the importance of assessment

item No in the Ques	Teachers' Questionnaire Statements	M 1	M 2	Count	Always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total A	Total D
14	students' participation in assessment gives them self-confidence	5	2	C	16	12	7	4	10	1	35	15
				%	32	24	14	8	20	2	70	30
23	assessment is a part of the learning process	5	6	C	15	13	7	8	4	3	35	15
				%	30	26	14	16	8	6	70	30
24	assessment helps students to become more responsible for their own learning'	5	5	C	11	16	7	7	9	0	34	16
				%	22	32	14	14	18	0	68	32
25	assessing students at the end of each speaking course enables teachers identify students' strengths and weaknesses	5	5	C	11	16	7	7	9	0	34	16
				%	22	32	14	14	18	0	68	32
26	assessment enables students to understand what they can do to improve their weakness in speaking	2	2	C	1	6	5	13	21	4	12	38
				%	2	12	10	26	42	8	24	76
27	Collecting information about students' achievement helps teachers to modify their instructions	5	6	C	19	11	2	8	3	7	32	18
				%	38	22	4	16	6	14	64	36
33		4	4	C	12	11	19	7	1	0	42	8

	Peer and group activities provide good opportunities for language practice.			%	24	22	38	14	2	0	84	16
34	assessment guides students to check their learning progress towards their objectives	5	2	C	16	12	0	4	17	1	32	18
				%	32	24	0	8	34	2	64	36

Statement 14 namely, '*students' participation in assessment gives them self-confidence',* 32% rated 'Always, 24% reported 'Usually', 14 rated 'Often' and 8% rated Sometimes, while 20%, 2% rated 'Rarely' and 'Never' respectively. Overall teachers were positive towards the statement. For statement 23 *'assessment is a part of the learning process',* 30% of the teachers reported 'Always', 26% rated 'Usually' and 14%, 16% recorded 'Often' and 'Sometimes' respectively. While just 8% of the respondents rated 'Rarely' and 6% rated 'Never'. The teachers were positive towards this statement. For statement 24 namely, *'assessment helps students to become more responsible for their own learning',* 22% of the teachers responded 'Always', 32% rated 'Usually' and the same rate 7% for both 'Often' and 'Sometimes'. Only 18% reported 'Rarely'. Overall teachers were in agreement with this statement. For statement 25 *'assessing students at the end of each speaking course enables teachers identify students' strengths and weaknesses',* 22% of the teachers rated 'Always', 32% reported 'Usually', 14% responded often and 'Sometimes', while 18% rated 'Rarely'. The teachers were very positive and agreed with this statement.

Statement 26 'assessment *enables students to understand what they can do to improve their weakness in speaking*', only 26% of the teachers rated 'Always', 42% reported 'Usually', 8% recorded 'Often' and 12% rated 'Sometimes', while 10% recorded 'Rarely' and 2% responded 'Never'. For statement 27 '*Collecting information about students' achievement helps teachers to modify their instructions',* 38% rated 'Always', 22% responded 'Usually', only 4% recorded 'Often' and 16% rated 'Sometimes', while 6% responded 'Rarely' and 14% recorded 'Never'. The teachers were in agreement with this statement.

For statement 33 namely, *'Peer and group activities provide good opportunities for language practice',* 24% of the teachers stated 'Strongly Agree', 22% rated 'Agree' and 38% responded 'Partly Agree', while 14% responded 'Slightly Disagree' and only 2% recorded 'Disagree'. Overall, the teachers were positive

towards this statement. Statement 34 namely '*assessment guides students to check their learning progress towards their objectives'*, 32% rated 'Always', 24% reported 'Usually' and 8% rated sometimes, while 34%, 2% rated 'Rarely' and 'Never' respectively. Overall teachers were positive towards this statement.

5.5.2. The Frequencies and Percentages of Teachers' Responses to Assessment processes

To determine the assessment processes implemented by the teachers in assessing students' performance, descriptive statistics have been calculated based on the number of teachers who answered each statement. Table (7) illustrated the accounts and percentages of teachers' responses.

Table 7: Teachers' frequency of responses to assessment processes

Item no in the ques.	Teachers' Questionnaire Statements	M 1	M 2	*Count*	Always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total A	Total D
1	I collect information about my students to assess their oral communication	4	5	C	11	13	6	8	11	1	30	20
				%	22	26	12	16	22	2	60	40
2	I encourage my students to speak even if they commit errors	5	2	C	14	13	1	4	14	4	28	22
				%	28	26	2	8	28	8	56	44
3	I give my students the chance to practise peer assessment	4	6	C	17	8	1	6	6	12	26	24
				%	34	16	2	12	12	24	52	48
4	I give every student the chance to participate in self-assessment	5	2	C	14	13	1	4	14	4	28	22
				%	28	26	2	8	28	8	56	44
5	I give summative grades after providing my feedback	5	5	C	12	18	3	0	14	3	33	17
				%	24	36	6	0	28	6	66	34
6	I assess students' Pronunciation	4	4	C	12	7	17	5	9	0	36	14
				%	24	14	34	10	18	0	72	28
7	I depend only on summative assessment to know the level of my students understanding	2	1	C	0	1	12	0	15	22	13	37
				%	0	2	24	0	30	44	26	74
8	I choose the technique which is/are related to the course objectives	4	3	C	14	6	6	16	7	1	26	24
				%	28	12	12	32	14	2	52	48
9	I ask my students to assess their own work comparing to criteria and/or standard	5	6	C	16	11	4	1	14	4	31	19
				%	32	22	8	2	28	8	62	38
10	I do all assessment by myself	2	2	C	0	9	1	3	19	18	10	40
				%	0	18	2	6	38	36	20	80
11	I ask my students to assess each other's work(peer assessment)	5	5	C	11	16	7	7	9	0	34	16
				%	22	32	14	14	18	0	68	32
31	I ask my students to provide feedback on their own work	4	5	C	17	8	1	6	6	12	26	24
				%	34	16	2	12	12	24	52	48

Regarding item, no 1 '*I collect information about my students to assess their oral communication'.* The findings of the teachers' questionnaire responses revealed that 22% of the teachers reported 'Always', 26% of the teachers rated it 'Usually', 12% recorded 'Often', and 16% reported 'Sometimes". While 22% and 2% rated 'Rarely' and 'Never' respectively. Overall, the teachers were positive towards this statement. Both male and female teachers were concerned with employing assessment. For statement 2 '*I encourage my students to speak even if they commit errors',* 28% of the teachers reported 'Always'*,* 26% 'Usually', and only 2% responded 'Often'. The scale 'Sometimes' and 'Never' was the same 8%, while 28% recorded rarely. Overall, the teachers were very positive towards this statement. Statement 3, *'I give my students the chance to practise peer assessment',* 34% reported 'Always', and 16% of the teachers rated 'Usually', 2% recorded 'Often', and 12% responded 'Sometimes' and 'Rarely', while 24% rated 'Never'. Over all the teachers were positive towards the statement. For statement 4, '*I give every student the chance to participate in self-assessment',* 28% of the teachers rated 'Always', 26% reported 'Usually' and only 2% rated 'Often', 28% 'Rarely'. Both the scales sometimes and never were the same 8%. The teachers were in agreement with this statement. In statement 5 namely, '*I give summative grades after providing my feedback',* 24% of the teachers rated 'Always', 36% reported 'Usually', 28% rated 'Rarely' while both the scales 'Never' and 'Often' were the same and rated 6%. Overall, the teachers were positive towards the statement. For statement 6 '*I assess students' pronunciation',* 24% responded 'Always', 14% of the teachers recorded 'Usually', 34% rated 'Often' and 10% responded 'Sometimes' whereas 18% rated 'Rarely' and none of the teachers 0% recorded 'Never'. The teachers were in agreement with the statement. For statement 7 '*I depend only on summative assessment to know the level of my students understanding',* 44% of the teachers rated 'Never', 30% reported 'Rarely' and 24% said often while only 2% reported 'Usually'. The teachers' responses were negative towards the statement. Statement 8 namely, *'I choose the techniques which is/are related to the course objectives',* 28% rated 'Always'*,* both the scale 'Usually' and 'Often' was the same and reported 12%, and 32% of the teachers rated it as 'Sometimes',14% reported 'Rarely' and only 2% responded 'Never'. Overall, the teachers agreed equally with this statement.

For statement 9 namely, *'I ask my students to assess their own work comparing to criteria and/ or standards',* 32% of the teachers rated 'Always', 22% reported 'Usually' and 28% rated it as 'Rarely'. Only 2% rated 'Sometimes' while both often and 'Never' were the same and recorded 8%. Overall, the teachers were positive towards the statement. Statement 10 '*I do all assessment by myself',* 18% rated 'Usually', only 2% recorded 'Often', 6% rated 'Sometimes' while both 'Rarely' and 'Never' rated 38% and 36% respectively. Overall, the teachers were very negative towards the statement. For statement 11 *'I ask my students to assess each other's work',* 22% of the teachers reported 'Always', 32% rated it 'Usually' and 14% reported 'Often' and 'Sometimes'. While 18% rated 'Rarely'. This indicates that the teachers were positive towards this statement. Statement 31, *'I ask my students to provide feedback on their own work',* 34% of the teachers reported 'Always' and 16% rated 'Usually', just 2% of the teachers responded 'Often', and 12% rated 'Sometimes' while 12% and 24% reported 'Rarely' and 'Never' respectively.

5.5.3. Conceptions of Assessments

Table (8) illustrated the accounts and percentages of teachers' responses to conceptions of assessment statements. It shows the teachers' perceptions towards them.

Table 8: Teachers' frequency of responses to conceptions of assessment

Item no in the Ques.	Teachers' Questionnaire Statements	M1	M2	Count	Always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total A	Total D
12	students like to receive only positive feedback	5	2	C	14	13	1	4	14	4	28	22
				%	28	26	2	8	28	8	56	44
13	providing feedback with grades is demotivating	2	2	C	3	11	1	5	16	14	15	35
				%	6	22	2	10	32	28	30	70
15	providing feedback with grades is motivating	5	6	C	18	13	5	6	6	2	36	14
				%	36	26	10	12	12	4	72	28
16	students put much attention on grades	5	5	C	11	23	7	5	4	0	41	9
				%	22	46	14	10	8	0	82	18
37	Providing corrective feedback during speaking hinders students speaking fluently	5	5	C	7	21	4	6	10	2	32	18
				%	14	42	8	12	20	4	64	36
38	understanding assessment criteria enhances students' involvement in oral communication	4	5	C	4	18	12	6	9	1	34	16
				%	8	36	24	12	18	2	68	32

For statement number 12 '*students like to receive only positive feedback'*, 28% of the teachers reported 'Always', 26% rated 'Usually', 2% reported 'Often' and 28% rated 'Rarely'. While both 'Sometimes' and 'Never' were the same and rated only 8%. Overall, the teachers were very positive towards the statement. Statement 13 namely, '*providing feedback with grades is demotivating'*, only 6% rated 'Always', 22% reported 'Usually', 2% rated 'Often', 10% reported 'Sometimes' and 32%, 28% recorded 'Rarely' and 'Never' respectively. The teachers were very negative towards the statement. This indicates that the teachers believe that grades can be also motivating.

For statement 15 '*providing feedback with grades is motivating'*, 36% rated always, 26% reported 'Usually', 10% recorded 'Often' and 12% reported 'Sometimes', 12% rated 'Rarely', and 4% reported 'Never'. Overall teachers were very positive towards the statement. Statement number16 namely '*students put much attention on grades'*, 22% rated 'Always', 46% responded 'Usually',14% recorded 'Often' and10% responded 'Sometimes' while only 8% rated 'Rarely'. No one reported 'Never'. The teachers were very positive towards this statement.

Statement 37 '*providing corrective feedback during speaking hinders students speaking fluently'*, 42% of the teachers reported 'Agree', 14% rated 'Strongly Agree'. 8% & 12% rated it 'Partly Agree' and 'Slightly Agree' respectively. While 20% rated 'Disagree' and only 4% reported 'Strongly Disagree'. Overall teachers were in agreement with this statement. In statement 38 '*understanding assessment criteria enhances students' involvement in oral communication'*, 8% recorded 'Strongly Agree', 36% reported 'Agree' and 24% of the teachers reported 'Partly Agree' while 12% responded 'Slightly Disagree', 18% rated 'Disagree' and just 2% rated it 'Strongly Disagree'. This indicates that the teachers were positive towards this statement.

5.5.4. Teachers' Role and Assessment

Table (9) presents the frequency of the teachers' responses to the statements of the questionnaire, which describe the main principles, and practices of the

teachers' roles. These frequencies were calculated as in the previous sections in order to find out teachers' perceptions towards these statements.

Table 9: Teachers' frequency of Responses to the teachers' role

Item No in the Ques.	Teachers' Questionnaire Statements	M1	M2	Count	Always	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total A	Total D
17	The teacher should supplement the textbook with extra materials to satisfy students 'different needs	4	4	C	9	8	12	10	11	0	29	21
				%	18	16	24	20	22	0	58	42
21	my students do not participate in the assessment process	2	1	C	0	0	8	0	21	21	8	42
				%	0	0	16	0	42	42	16	84
28	paying more attention to accuracy rather than fluency during oral activities is helpful to students	5	6	C	18	13	8	4	3	4	39	11
				%	36	26	16	8	6	8	78	22
32	teacher's role is to transmit knowledge through explanations and giving examples	2	2	C	1	5	1	14	22	7	7	43
				%	2	10	2	28	44	14	14	86
35	teacher's role is to facilitate and guide students' learning	5	5	C	6	21	16	2	4	1	43	7
				%	12	42	32	4	8	2	86	14
36	paying more attention to fluency rather than accuracy during oral activities is more helpful	2	2	C	3	11	1	5	16	14	15	35
				%	6	22	2	10	32	28	30	70

For statement 17 '*the teacher should supplement the textbook with extra materials to satisfy students' different needs',* 18% of the teachers rated 'Always', 16% reported 'Usually', 24% recorded 'Often' and 20% 'Sometimes' and 22% reported 'Rarely'. None of the respondents rated 'Never'. The teachers were positive towards this statement. For statement 21 namely, '*my students do not participate in the assessment processes'*, 16% of the teachers reported 'Often' while 42% of the teachers rated for both 'Rarely' and 'Never'. The teachers were very negative towards this statement.

Statement 28 namely, '*paying more attention to accuracy rather than fluency during oral activities is helpful to students',* 36% of the teachers rated 'Always', 26% reported 'Usually,16% recorded 'Often' and only 8% rated 'Sometimes', while 6% of the teachers responded 'Rarely and 8% reported 'Never'. Teachers were positive towards this statement. For statement 32 namely, '*the teacher's*

role is to transmit knowledge through explanations and giving examples', 10% of the teachers agree with this statement, 2% rated it as 'Strongly Agree' and 'Partly Agree', while 28% reported 'Slightly Disagree', 44% responded 'Disagree', and 14% recorded 'Strongly Disagree'. Overall teachers were very negative towards this statement.

Statement 35 *'teacher's role is to facilitate and guide students' learning',* 12% rated strongly agree, 42% responded agree and 32% recorded partly agree. Whereas only 4% rated 'Slightly Disagree', 8%, 2% of the teachers recorded 'Disagree' and 'Strongly Disagree' respectively. The teachers were in agreement with this statement. For statement 36 namely, *'paying more attention to fluency rather than accuracy during oral activities is more helpful',* 28% rated 'Strongly Disagree', 32% reported 'Disagree' and 10% rated 'Slightly Disagree'. Just 2%of the teachers reported 'Partly Agree' with 22%, 6% responded 'Agree' and 'Strongly Disagree' respectively. Overall teachers were very negative towards this statement.

5.5.5. Difficulties in assessment

Table (10) presents the accounts and percentages of the teachers' responses to the seven statements used in the questionnaire to measure the difficulties in assessment. As with the previous tables, to make the interpretations of analysis clearer, the responses are grouped into agreement and disagreement as shown in the last two columns in table10.

Table 10: Teachers' frequency of responses to difficulties in assessment.

tem no in the Ques.	Teachers' Questionnaire Statements	M1	M2	Count	Always	Usually	Often	Someti mes	Rarely	Never	Total A	Total D
18	when students are asked to grade themselves they give themselves grades similar to my grades	2	2	C	0	2	4	11	21	12	6	44
				%	0	4	8	22	42	2 4	12	88
19	when students are asked to grade themselves they give themselves grades which are lower than my grades	4	5	C	1	3	9	19	15	3	13	37
				%	2	6	18	38	30	6	26	74
20	When students are asked to grade themselves they give themselves high grades	2	2	C	20	10	12	8	0	0	42	7
				%	40	20	24	16	0	0	84	16
22	my students' believe that	5	6	C	20	12	10	4	3	1	42	8

	assessment is only the teacher's job			%	40	24	20	8	6	2	84	16
29	it is difficult to monitor students' performance	3	2	C	0	14	4	13	18	1	18	32
	during pair and group work activities			%	0	28	8	26	36	2	36	64
30	students may use their mother tongue for discussion	5	5	C	6	21	16	2	4	1	43	7
	when they work in groups			%	12	42	32	4	8	2	86	14

Statement 18 '*when students are asked to grade themselves they give themselves grades similar to my grades',* only 4% rated 'Usually', 8% reported 'Often' and 22% of the teachers rated 'Sometimes' while 42% of the teachers rated 'Rarely' and 24% reported 'Never'. Overall teachers were very negative towards the statement. For statement 19 namely, '*when students are asked to grade themselves grades they give themselves grades which are lower than my grades',* only 2% of the teachers rated 'Always', 6% rated 'Usually', 18% reported 'Often' and 38% rated 'Sometimes' while 30%of the teachers reported 'Rarely' and 6% rated 'Never'. Teachers were very positive towards the statement. Statement 20 '*when teachers are asked to grade themselves they give themselves high grades',* 40% rated 'Always', 20% reported 'Usually', and 24% rated 'Often' while 16% rated 'Sometimes' and none of the respondents reported either 'Rarely' or 'Never'. The teachers were very positive towards the statement.

For statement 22 '*my students' believe that assessment is only the teacher's job',* 40% of the teachers recorded 'Always', 24% reported 'Usually', 20% rated 'Often' 8% rated 'Sometimes', and 6%, 2% reported 'Rarely' and 'Never' respectively. Overall, the teachers were in agreement with this statement. Statement 29 '*it is difficult to monitor students' performance during pair and group work activities',* 28 % rated 'Usually', 8% of the teachers responded 'Often', and 26% recorded 'Sometimes' while 36% rated 'Rarely' and 2% responded 'Never'. For statement 30 '*students may use their mother tongue for discussion when they work in groups',* 12% of the teachers rated 'Always' 42% reported 'Usually' and 32% responded 'Often'. Only 4% rated 'Sometimes', 8% rarely and 2% responded 'Never'. The teachers were very positive towards this statement.

5.5.6. Summary of the Main Findings of Teachers' Questionnaire

The analysis of teachers' questionnaire highlighted numerous results that are relevant to the research questions. The process of data analysis began by exploring the types and frequencies of the importance of assessment. It revealed that assessment is significant and considered as a part of the learning process by 70% of the teachers. The teachers reported that assessment guides students to check their learning progress towards their objectives and helps teachers to modify their instruction according to their students' needs. 76% of the teachers reported that assessment enables students to understand what they can do to improve their weakness in speaking. The analysis showed that teachers did not depend only on summative assessment and 84% of them considered peer and group activities as a good language practice. The results also revealed that 72% of the teachers assess students' pronunciation and 66% of them provide grades after providing their feedback to students.

The results indicated that 78% of the teachers considered that paying more attention to accuracy rather than fluency when they assess students' communicative competence more helpful for students. In addition, the analysis of the teachers' questionnaire showed that 72% of the teachers believed that providing feedback with grades is motivating and 84% of them believe that students put much attention on grades. Further analysis revealed that 64% of the teachers believed that providing corrective feedback during speaking hinders students speaking fluently and 68% of the teachers considered that understanding assessment criteria enhances students' involvement in oral communication. Teachers' questionnaire analysis also revealed that 86% of the teachers believed that teacher's role is to facilitate and guide students' learning.

Finally, the results showed some difficulties that affected teachers' assessment process as perceived by the teachers. 84% of the teachers reported that students consider assessment is only the teacher's job. In addition, 86% referred to the difficulties in assessment as the inability of students to provide a reliable grade to their work. Other challenges which teachers mentioned were the extensive use

of the mother tongue by their students as reported by 86% of the teachers (see table 10). All these findings will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.

5.6. RESEARCH QUESTION TWO

What are:

> **A**. *The teachers' perceptions towards these processes?*
>
> **B.** *The students' perceptions towards these processes?*

In the above subsections (5.5.1; 5.5.2; 5.5.3; 5.5.4 and 5.5.5) teachers' perceptions concerning assessment practices were presented. In the following subsections, the frequency of students' responses to the statements of the questionnaire will be illustrated to show those statements that were mostly agreed on and those with less agreement percentage. Before commencing the actual process of data results, let us first look at some of the characteristics of students who replied to the questionnaire.

5. 6.1. DATA ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

5.6.2. Students' Gender

Figure (9) below shows the percentage of both male and female students who participated in the questionnaire. 38% who participated in this questionnaire were males while the females who participated in the same questionnaire were 62% from the whole sample. This indicated that the number of female students were more than male students as it is shown on the following figure.
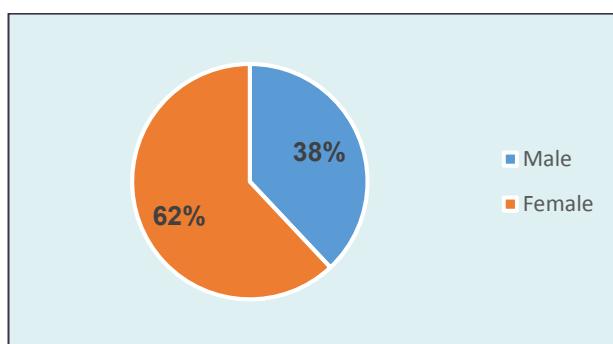
Figure 9: Students' Gender for the questionnaire

5.6.3. Students' Frequency of Responses concerning Importance of Assessment

The following table (11) shows the frequency of the students' responses concerning the category importance of assessment and presents the statements which were preferred by students more than the other statements.

Table 11: Frequency of students' responses concerning the importance of assessment

Item No in the Ques.	Students questionnaire Statements	M 1	M 2	Count	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Partly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total A	Total D
2	Peer assessment is useful in motivating me to communicate in English	4	5	C	3	27	23	50	58	19	127	53
				%	1.7	15	12.8	27.8	32.2	10.6	70.6	29.4
3	I enjoy being assessed by my peers	3	2	C	10	69	17	47	29	8	84	96
				%	5.6	38.3	9.4	26.1	16.1	4.4	46.6	53.4
4	Having to carryout self-assessment encourages me to be an active learner	4	5	C	0	12	26	59	60	23	142	38
				%	0	6.7	14.4	32.8	33.3	12.8	78.8	21.2
5	Assessment helps me to build up my confidence	3	2	C	12	67	15	51	29	6	86	94
				%	6.7	37.2	8.3	28.3	16.1	3.3	47.8	52.2
9	Self-assessment helps me to become more responsible for my own learning	4	5	C	7	12	25	46	89	1	136	44
				%	3.9	6.7	13.9	25.6	49.4	.6	75.6	24.4
11	Peer assessment provides a good chance for classroom interaction	5	5	C	1	10	13	50	78	28	156	24
				%	.6	5.6	7.2	27.8	43.3	15.6	86.4	13.3
13	Peer-assessment provides useful feedback	3	2	C	12	67	15	51	29	6	86	94
				%	6.6	37.2	8.3	28.3	16.1	3.3	47.8	52.2
16	Assessment motivates me to take more control of my learning	3	2	C	13	51	50	50	14	2	66	114
				%	7.2	28.3	27.8	27.8	7.8	1.1	36.7	63.3
19	I prefer to speak in Arabic when I work in oral activities in English lessons	3	2	C	26	62	45	14	20	7	41	139
				%	14.4	34.4	25	7.7	11.1	3.9	22.7	77.3
20	Peer-assessment is useful in encouraging me to communicate in English	4	4	C	11	48	22	49	42	8	99	81
				%	6.1	26.7	12.2	27.2	23.3	4.4	55	45
25	Assessing students at the end of each speaking course helps me to improve my speaking skills	3	4	C	19	45	30	53	26	7	86	94
				%	10.6	25	16.7	29.4	14.4	3.9	47.8	52.2

Statement 2 '*Peer-assessment is useful in motivating me to communicate in English'*, 1.7% of the students rated 'Strongly Disagree' 15% responded

'Disagree' and 12.8% recorded 'Slightly Disagree' while 27.8% responded 'Partly Agree', 32.2% rated 'Agree' and 10.6% rated 'Strongly Agree'. Overall, the students were in agreement with this statement. For statement 3 '*I enjoy being assessed by my peers'.* Only 5.6% of the students rated 'Strongly Disagree', 38.3% reported 'Disagree' and 9.4% responded 'Slightly Disagree' while 26.1% of the students responded 'Partly Agree', 16.1% recorded 'Agree' and only 4.4% rated 'Strongly Agree'. Overall, the students were negative towards the statement*.*

For statement 4, *'Having to carry self-assessment encourages me to be an active learner',* none of the students 0% responded 'Strongly Disagree', 6.7% rated 'Disagree' and 14.4% responded 'Slightly Disagree' while 32.8% recorded 'Partly Agree' and 33.3% 'Agree" and12.8% responded 'Strongly Agree'. The students were very positive towards this statement. In statement 5 *'Assessment helps me to build up my confidence',* 6.7% reported 'Strongly Disagree', 37.2%% rated 'Disagree' and 8.3% responded 'Slightly Disagree' whereas 28.3% rated 'Partly Agree', 16.1% of the students responded 'Agree' and only 3.3% recorded 'Strongly Agree'. Overall, the students were negative towards this statement.

In statement 9 '*Self-assessment helps me to become more responsible for my own learning', 3*.9% of the students rated 'Strongly Disagree', 6.7% reported 'Disagree' and 13.9% responded 'Slightly Disagree' while 25.6% recorded 'Partly Agree' and 49.4 rated 'Agree' only .6% reported 'Strongly Disagree'. Students were in agreement with this statement. In statement 11 *'peer-assessment provides a good chance for classroom interaction'*, only .6% of the students rated 'Strongly Disagree', 5.6% reported 'Disagree' and 7.2% responded 'Slightly Disagree' while 27.8% of the students responded 'Partly Agree', 43.3% recorded 'Agree' and only 15.6% rated 'Strongly Agree'. Overall, the students were positive towards the statement*.* In statement number 13, '*peer-assessment provides useful feedback',* 6.6% of the students rated 'Strongly Disagree', 37.2% responded 'Disagree' and 8.3% recorded 'Slightly Disagree' while 28.3% of the students rated 'Partly Agree', 16.1% reported 'Agree' and only 3.3% rated 'Strongly Agree'*.* Students were positive towards this statement.

In statement 16, '*Assessment motivates me to take more control of my learning'*, 7.2% rated 'Strongly Disagree', 28.3% reported 'Disagree' and 'Slightly Disagree' while 27.8% and 7.8% of the students responded 'Agree' and 'Partly Agree' respectively with only 1.1% recording 'Strongly Disagree'. Overall, the students were positive towards this statement. In statement 19 namely, *'I prefer to speak in Arabic when I work in oral activities in English lessons',* 14.4% rated 'Strongly Disagree', 34.4% reported 'Disagree' and 25% recorded 'Slightly Disagree' while 7.7% responded 'Partly Agree', 11.1% of the students rated 'Agree' and 3.9% recorded 'Strongly Agree'. The students were in disagreement with this statement.

In statement 20 '*Peer-assessment is useful in encouraging me to communicate in English',* 6.1% rated 'Strongly Disagree', 26.7% reported 'Disagree' and 12.2% recorded 'Slightly Disagree' while 27.2% of the students reported 'Partly Agree', 23.3% rated 'Agree' and only 4.4% responded 'Strongly Agree'. Overall, the students were negative towards this statement. In statement 25,'*Assessing students at the end of each speaking course helps me to improve my speaking skills',* 10.6% of the students reported 'Strongly Disagree', 25% rated 'Disagree' and 16.7% responded 'Slightly Disagree' while 29.4% recorded 'Partly Agree', 14.4% responded 'Agree' and just 3.9% rated 'Strongly Agree'. Overall, the students were negative towards the statement.

5.6.4. Students' Frequency of Responses for Assessment Processes

Table (12) presents the frequency of the students' responses to the statements of the questionnaire, which describe the main principles and practices of assessment.

Table 12: Students' frequency of responses to assessment processes

Item No in the Ques.	Students questionnaire Statements	M1	M2	Count	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Partly agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total A	Total D
1	Teacher's written feedback enables me to go back over what I have done in speaking	4	5	C	3	27	23	50	58	19	127	53
				%	1.7	15	12.8	27.8	32.2	10.6	70.5	29.4
6		3	2	C	15	74	17	44	25	5	74	106

#	Statement											
	My English teacher's oral feedback encourages me to speak in English			%	8.3	41.1	9.4	24.4	13.9	2.8	41.1	58.9
8	Teacher's oral feedback enables me to go back over what I have done in speaking English	4	2	C	9	68	12	37	49	5	91	89
				%	5	37.8	6.7	20.6	27.2	2.8	50.6	49.4
10	My teacher's feedback with grades encourages me to enhance my performance	3	2	C	4	89	25	29	30	3	62	118
				%	2.2	49.4	13.9	16.2	16.6	1.6	34.4	65.5
14	Written feedback is better than oral feedback	5	5	C	1	10	13	50	78	28	156	24
				%	.6	5.6	7.2	27.8	43.3	15.6	86.4	13.3
15	I prefer written feedback without grades	5	5	C	1	15	13	49	77	25	151	29
				%	.6	8.3	7.2	27.2	42.8	13.9	83.9	16.1
17	Oral feedback is better than written feedback	3	2	C	1	74	25	31	44	5	80	100
				%	.6	41.1	13.9	17.2	24.4	2.8	44.4	55.6
18	Understanding assessment criteria helps me to involve in oral activities	5	5	C	0	2	6	34	99	39	172	8
				%	0	1.1	3.3	18.9	55	21.7	95.5	4.4
22	providing feedback with grades is motivating	5	5	C	1	10	29	34	79	27	140	40
				%	.6	5.6	16.1	18.9	43.9	15	77.8	22.2
24	I prefer written feedback with grades	4	2	C	11	53	22	44	43	7	94	86
				%	6.1	49.4	12.2	24.4	23.9	3.9	52.2	47.8
26	Collecting information by my teacher about my achievement during speaking course helps me to improve	4	4	C	4	7	16	85	52	16	153	27
				%	2.2	3.9	8.9	47.2	28.9	8.9	85	15

In statement 1 namely, '*Teacher's written feedback enables me to go back over what I have done in speaking*', 1.7% of the students rated 'Strongly Disagree', 15% reported 'Disagree', 12.8% rated 'Slightly Disagree' while 27.8% responded 'Partly Agree' ,32.2% rated it 'Agree' and 10.6% said 'Strongly Agree'. Overall, the students were very positive towards this statement. In statement 6 namely, '*My teacher's oral feedback encourages me to speak in English',* 8.3% of the students reported 'Strongly Disagree', 41.1% rated it 'Disagree' and 9.4% responded 'Slightly Disagree' while 24.4% recorded 'Partly Agree', 13.9% 'Agree' and only 2.8% reported 'Strongly Agree'. Overall students were negative towards this statement. In statement 8 namely, *'teacher's oral feedback enables me to go back over what I have done in speaking English',* 5% rated 'Strongly Disagree', 37.8% responded 'Disagree' and 6.7% recorded 'Slightly Disagree' while 20.6% rated partly 'Agree', 27.2% responded 'Agree' and 2.8% rated 'Strongly Agree'. In statement10 '*My teacher's feedback with grades encourages me to enhance my performance',* only 2.2% rated 'Strongly Disagree', 49.4% reported 'Disagree'

and just 13.9% recorded 'Slightly Disagree' whereas 16.2% reported 'Partly Agree' and 16.6%, 1.6% responded 'Agree' and 'Strongly Agree' respectively. Overall, the respondents were very negative towards this statement. In statement 14 '*written feedback is better than oral feedback',* 0.6% rated 'Strongly Disagree', 5.6% recorded 'Disagree' and 7.2% responded 'Slightly Disagree' while 27.8% of the students rated 'Partly Agree' and 43.3%, 15.6% responded 'Agree' and 'Strongly Agree' respectively. Overall, the respondents were very positive towards this statement.

In statement 15 namely '*I prefer written feedback without grades*', .6% rated 'Strongly Disagree', 8.3% reported 'Disagree', 7.2% rated 'Slightly Disagree' while 27.2% responded 'Partly Agree', 42.8% rated it 'Agree' and 13.9% responded 'Strongly Agree'. Overall, the students were very positive towards this statement. In statement 17 namely, '*Oral feedback is better than written feedback'*, 0.6% rated 'Strongly Disagree', 41.1% responded 'Disagree' and 13.9% recorded 'Slightly Disagree' while 17.2% rated 'Partly Agree', 24.4% responded 'Agree' and 2.8% rated 'Strongly Agree'. The students were in disagreement with this statement. In statement 18 namely, '*Understanding the assessment criteria helps me to involve in oral activities'*, 0% responded 'Strongly Disagree', 1.1% rated 'Disagree' and 3.3% reported 'Slightly Disagree' while 18.9% recorded 'Partly Agree', 55% rated 'Agree' and 21.7% reported 'Strongly Agree'. Overall, the students were very positive towards this statement.

In statement 22 namely, '*providing feedback with grades is motivating',* .6% rated 'Strongly Disagree', 5.6% responded 'Disagree' and 16.1% rated 'Slightly Disagree' while 18.9% recorded 'Partly Agree', 43.9% rated 'Agree' and 15% responded 'Strongly Agree'. The students were positive towards this statement. In statement 24, '*I prefer written feedback with grades'*, 6.1% of the students reported 'Strongly Disagree', 49.4% responded 'Disagree' and 12.2% rated 'Slightly Disagree', 24.4% of the students recorded 'Partly Agree', 23.9% rated 'Agree' and just 3.9% responded 'Strongly Agree'. The students were in agreement with this statement. In statement 26 '*Collecting information by my teacher about my achievement during speaking course helps me to improve'*, 2.2% rated 'Strongly Disagree', 3.9% responded 'Disagree' and 8.9% recorded

'Slightly Disagree' while 47.2% rated 'Partly Agree', 28.9% responded 'Agree' and 8.9% of the students responded 'Strongly Agree'. Overall, the students were positive towards this statement.

5.6.5. Students' Frequency of Responses for Teacher's Role

Table (13) presents the statements in the questionnaire that describe the teacher's role and shows the frequency of the students' responses.

Table 13: Students' frequency of responses for the teacher's role

Item No in the Ques.	Students questionnaire Statements	M 1	M 2	Count	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Partly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total A	Total D
7	The teacher's role is to transmit knowledge through explanations and examples	3	2	C	21	60	51	35	11	2	48	132
				%	11.7	33.3	28.3	19.4	6.1	1.1	26.7	73.3
12	Assessment is the teacher's job	5	5	C	1	10	13	50	78	28	156	24
				%	.6	5.6	7.2	27.7	43.3	15.6	86.7	13.3
21	the teacher should supplement the textbook with extra materials to satisfy students' different needs	4	4	C	0	0	10	22	70	78	170	10
				%	0	0	5.5	12.2	38.8	43.3	94.4	5.5
23	All teachers who have taught me oral communication use the same assessment techniques	4	4	C	9	23	38	66	41	3	110	70
				%	5	12.8	21.1	36.7	22.8	1.7	61.2	38.8
27	Teacher's role is to facilitate and guide student's learning	5	5	C	5	8	17	30	91	29	150	30
				%	2.8	4.4	9.4	16.7	50.6	16.1	83.4	16.6

In statement7 '*the teacher's role is to transmit knowledge through explanations and examples'*,11.7% of the students rated 'Strongly Disagree', 33.3% reported 'Disagree' and 28.3% rated 'Slightly Disagree' while 19.4% responded 'Partly Agree' 6.1% and 1.1% recorded 'Agree' and 'Strongly Agree' respectively. The students were negative towards this statement. In statement 12 namely, *'assessment is the teacher's job',* just .6% reported 'Strongly Disagree', 5.6% rated 'Disagree' and 7.2% recorded 'Slightly Disagree' whereas 27.7% responded 'Partly Agree' and 43.3%, 15.6% recorded 'Agree' and 'Strongly Agree' respectively. Overall, the students were in agreement with this statement.

In statement 21, '*The teacher should supplement the textbook with extra materials to satisfy students 'different needs',* none of the students reported either 'Disagree' or 'Strongly Disagree', 5.5% responded 'Slightly Disagree' while 12.2% rated 'Partly Agree', 38.8% responded 'Agree' and 43.3% rated 'Strongly Agree'. The students were very positive towards this statement. In statement 23 '*All teachers who have taught me oral communication use the same assessment techniques'*, 5% responded 'Strongly Disagree', 12.8% rated 'Disagree' and 21.1% rated 'Slightly Disagree' while 36.7% reported 'Partly Agree', 22.8% recorded their agreement and 1.7% rated 'Strongly Agree'. Overall, the students were in agreement with this statement. In statement 27 '*teacher's role is to facilitate and guide student's learning'*, just 2.8%, 4.4% and 9.4% responded 'Strongly Disagree', 'Disagree' and 'Slightly Disagree' respectively while 16.7% responded 'Partly Agree', 50.6% rated 'Agree' and 16.1% rated 'Strongly Agree'. Overall, the students were very positive towards this statement.

5.6.6. Students' Frequency of Responses for Difficulties in Assessment

Table (14) presents the statements in the questionnaire that describe the difficulties in assessment and shows the frequency of the students' responses.

Table 14: Students' frequency of responses for the difficulties in assessment

Item No in the Ques.	Students questionnaire Statements	M 1	M 2	Count	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagre	Partly Agree	Agree	Strongl y Agree	Total A	Total D
28	Teacher's oral assessment affects me when I speak in English	5	5	C	1	10	13	50	78	28	156	24
				%	.6	5.6	7.2	27.8	43.3	15.6	86.6	13.4
29	It becomes difficult when my teacher corrects me while I am still speaking	5	5	C	0	11	8	75	58	28	161	19
				%	0	6.1	4.4	41.7	32.2	15.6	89.5	10.5
30	How I am assessed could be changed	5	5	C	2	15	8	23	127	5	155	25
				%	1.7	8.3	4.4	12.8	70	2.8	86.2	13.8

In statement 28 '*the teacher's oral assessment affects me when I speak in English'*, .6% rated strongly disagree, 5.6% rated disagree and 7.2% responded 'Slightly Disagree' while 27.8% rated 'Partly Agree', 43.3% and 15.6% of the students reported 'Agree' and 'Strongly Agree' respectively. Overall, the students

were positive towards this statement. Statement 29 '*it becomes difficult when my teacher corrects me while I am still speaking',* 0% of the students rated 'Strongly Disagree', 6.1% responded 'Disagree' and 4.4% 'Slightly Disagree' while 41.7% rated 'Partly Agree', 32.2% responded 'Agree' and 15.6% recorded 'Strongly Agree'. Overall, the students were in agreement with this statement.

Statement 30 '*How I am assessed could be changed',* 1.7% of the students recorded 'Strongly Disagree', 8.3% rated 'Disagree' and 4.4% rated 'Slightly Disagree', 12.8% rated 'Partly Agree', 70% and 2.8% responded 'Agree' and 'Strongly Agree' respectively. The students were in agreement with this statement.

5.7. RESEARCH QUESTION THREE

What are:

> ***A***. *The similarities between teachers' and students' perceptions?*
> ***B.*** *The differences between teachers' and students' perceptions?*

5.7.1. Comparison and Contrast

This section compares teachers' and students' results of the responses to some items in the two questionnaires. Further, it shows the highest and the lowest average mean for both teachers' and students' answers to the questionnaires. The process of comparing both teachers' and students' perceptions concerning assessment practice will be explained in more detail in chapter 6 and then it will be integrated and clarified in the discussion Chapter 7.

As it was explained in section 4.17.1, parametric and non-parametric statistical tests were used to analyse the questionnaire items. The similarities and the differences are illustrated in the following figures:
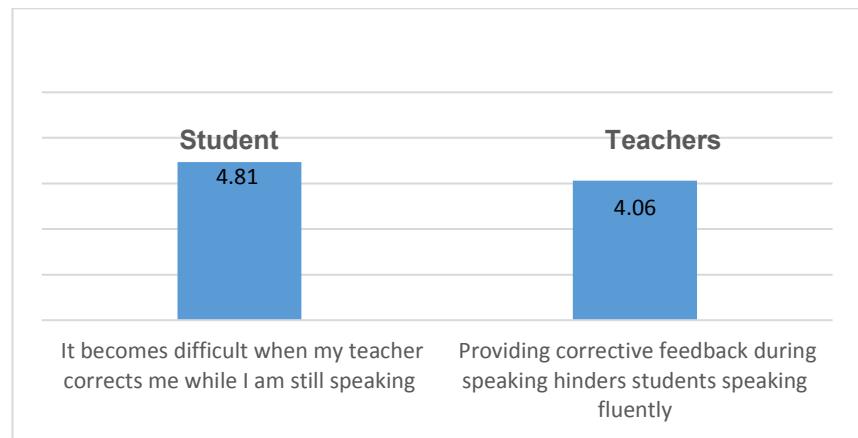
Figure 10: Comparison of the Averages for Statements 29 & 37

The average rating given for statement 29 in figure (10) '*It becomes difficult when my teacher corrects me while I am still speaking'* by the students was 4.81 while the average rating for statement 37 'Providing *corrective feedback during speaking hinders students speaking fluently'* by teachers was 4.06.

The independent-sample T-test for both statements comparing the scores between teachers and students illustrated that there was a statistical significant difference between them. That is, the score concerned with students' views was (M =4.8056, SD =1.11914) and teachers (M = 4.0600, SD =1.51738); t = 3.836, -3.238; p = 0.002 (<0.05). Results of the above statements indicated a violation of the assumption of equality of variance. So, a confirmation Mann-Whitney U test confirmed a significant difference U=3309.000, z=-3.033, p=.002. Furthermore, from the frequency analysis 89.5% of the students rated statement 29 either 'Agree', 'Slightly Agree' or 'Strongly Agree' while the corresponding percent for statement 37 was 64%. See tables (7 and 13).

The average rating given for statement 27 in Figure (11) '*Teacher's role is to facilitate student's learning'* by the students was 4.56 while the average rating for statement 35 '*Teacher's role is to facilitate and guide students' learning'* by the teachers was 4.4.

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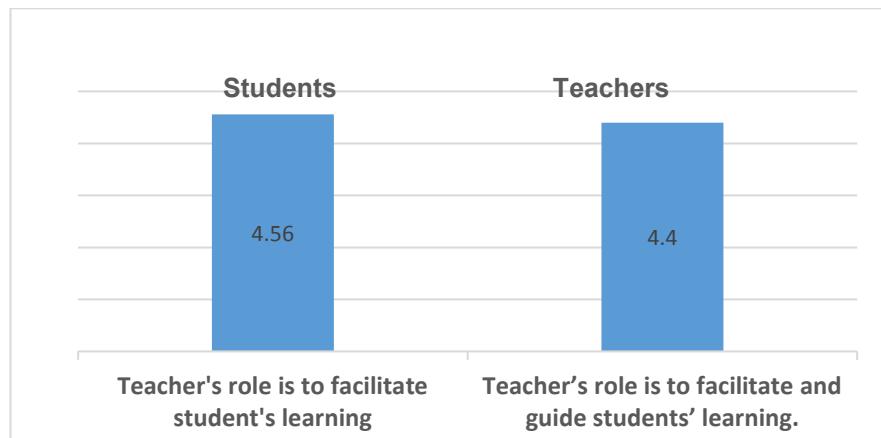
Figure 11: Comparison of the Averages for Statements 27 & 35

The independent-sample T-test result for the statements 27 & 35, which was concerned with teachers' and students' views towards the role of the teacher indicated that there is no significant difference between both groups with a t value of -878 and a p value of 0.383 (<0.05). Results of the above statements from the Mann-Whitney U test showed the assumption of equality of variance with a U=4010.0; z=-1.260 and p =0.208(<0.05).

The average rating given for statement 18 in Figure 12 '*Understanding assessment criteria helps me to involve in oral activities',* by the students was 4.93 while the average rating for statement 38 '*Understanding the assessment criteria enhances students' involvement in oral activities'* by the teachers was 3.98.
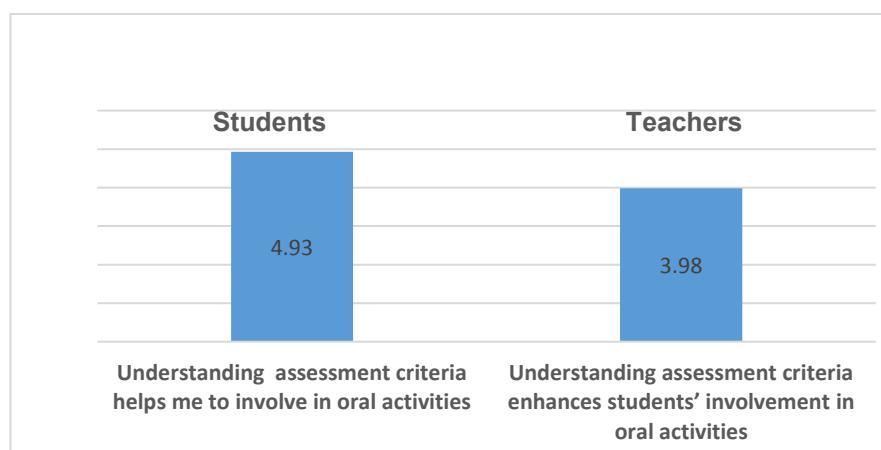
Figure 12: Comparison of the Averages for statements 18 & 38

The average for statement 38 is smaller than the average of statement 18. Furthermore, from the frequency analysis 95.5% of the students rated statement 18 'Partly Agree', 'Agree' or 'Strongly Agree' while the corresponding percent for statement 38 was 68%. The independent-sample T-test for both statements illustrated that there was a statistical significant difference between them. That is, the score concerned with students' views about understanding assessment criteria was (M =4.9278, SD =.79826) and teachers (M = 3.9800, SD =1.31692); t = 6.345, -4.848; p = 0.000 (<0.05). The results of the above statements from the Mann-Whitney U test confirmed a significant difference U=2628.000, z=-4.868, p=.000(<0.05). This showed that students were more concerned with the need for explicit assessment criteria.

The average rating given for statement 5 in Figure 13 '*Assessment helps me to build up my confidence*' by the students was 3.2 while the average rating for statement 14 '*Students' participation in assessment gives them self-confident*' by the teachers was 4.06. The average for statement 5 is smaller and significantly different from the average of statement14.The independent-sample T-test for both statements to compare the scores between teachers and students illustrated that there was a statistical significant difference between them. That is, the scores concerned with students' views was (M = 3.20, SD =1.355) and teachers (M = 4.06, SD = 1.789); t = -3.686, -3.157; p = 0.002 (<0.05).
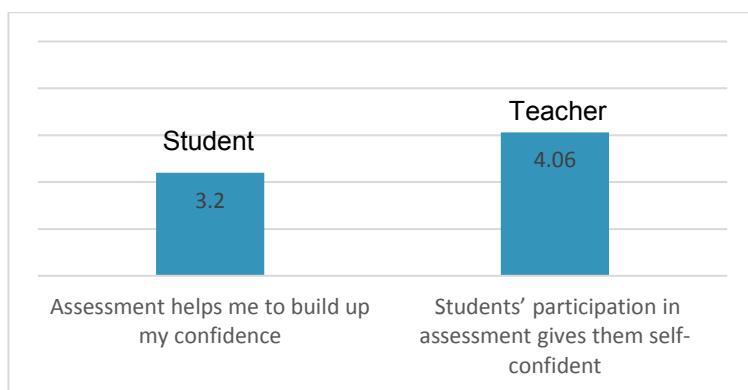
Figure 13: Comparison of the Averages for statements 5& 14

A confirmation Mann-Whitney U test indicated a violation of the assumption of equality U=3128.500, z = -3.411, p=.001(<0.05).There is strong evidence to suggest that the frequency of teachers' response is significantly different.

The average rating for statement 7 '*The teacher's role is to transmit knowledge through explanations and examples'* by the students was 2.78 while the average rating for statement 32' *The teacher's role is to transmit knowledge through explanations and giving examples'* by the teachers was 2.56.
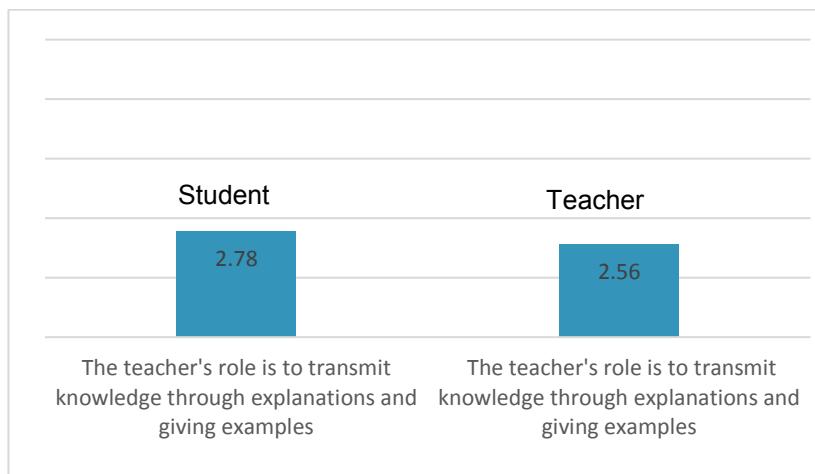
Figure 14: Comparison of the Averages for statements, and statement 7 &32

Even though the average for statement 7 is bigger, it is not significantly different from the average of statement 32. The independent-sample T-test for both statements showed that there was no statistical significant difference between them. That is, the score concerned with students' views was (M = 2.78, SD = 1.140) and teachers (M = 2.56, SD = 1.198); t = 1.212, 1.178; p = 0.-242 (<0.05).

The results from the Mann-Whitney U test confirmed this with U= 3877.500, z= -1.554 and p=.120. In other words, the students and the teachers have similar views on the two statements.

The average rating given for statement 9 in Figure 15 '*Self-assessment helps me to become more responsible for my own learning' by students* was 4.12 while the average rating given for statement 24 *'Assessment helps students to become more responsible for their own learning'* by the teachers was 4.26.
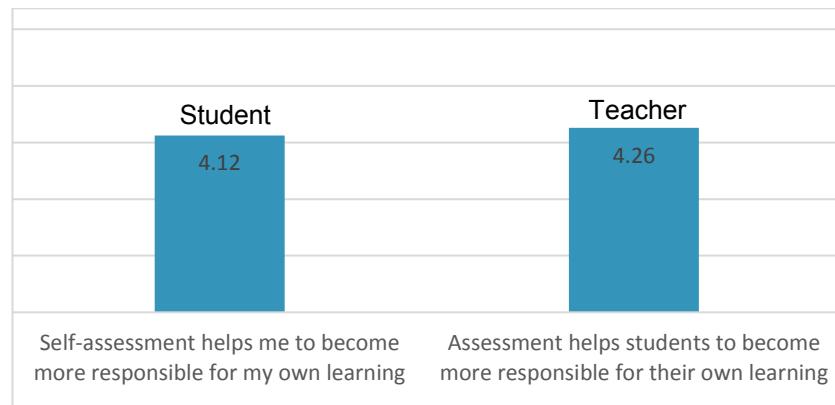
Figure 15: Comparison of the Averages for Statements 9 &24

The average for statement 9 is smaller than the average of statement 24. Even though the average for statement 24 is bigger, it is not significantly different from the average of statement 9. That is, the score concerned with students' views was (M = 4.12, SD = 1.125) and teachers (M = 4.26, SD = 1.426); t = -750, -656; p= 0.-514 (<0.05). So a confirmation Mann-Whitney U test confirmed no significant difference U=4067.000, z= -1.103 and p=.270. In other words, the students and the teachers were equal.

In the following Figure 16 the average rating for statement12 '*Assessment is the teacher's job' by* the students was 4.54 while the average rating for statement, 22 '*My students believe that assessment is only the teacher's job' by* the teachers was 4.78.
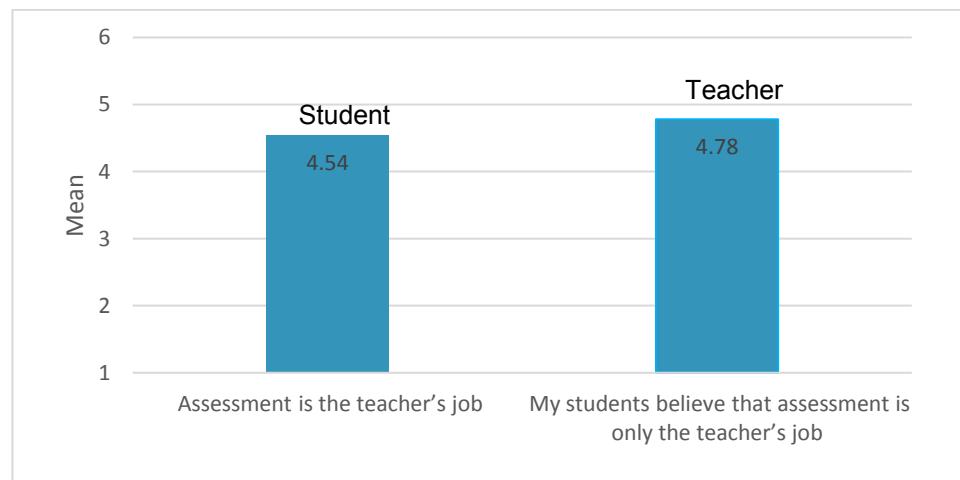
Figure 16: Comparison of the Averages for Statements 12 &22

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The independent-sample T-test showed that the score concerned with students' views (M = 4.54, SD = 1.053) and teachers (M = 4.78, SD = 1.329); t = -1.317, -1.156; p = 0.-252 (<0.05). The confirmation Mann-Whitney U test illustrated no significant difference U=3745.500, z=-1.897 and p value=.058. The students and the teachers have similar views on the two statements.

The average rating given for statement 19 in Figure 17 '*I prefer to speak in Arabic when I work in oral activities in English lessons' by students* was 3.31 while the average rating given for statement, 30 *'Students may use their mother tongue for discussion when they work in groups'* by the teachers was 4.4.
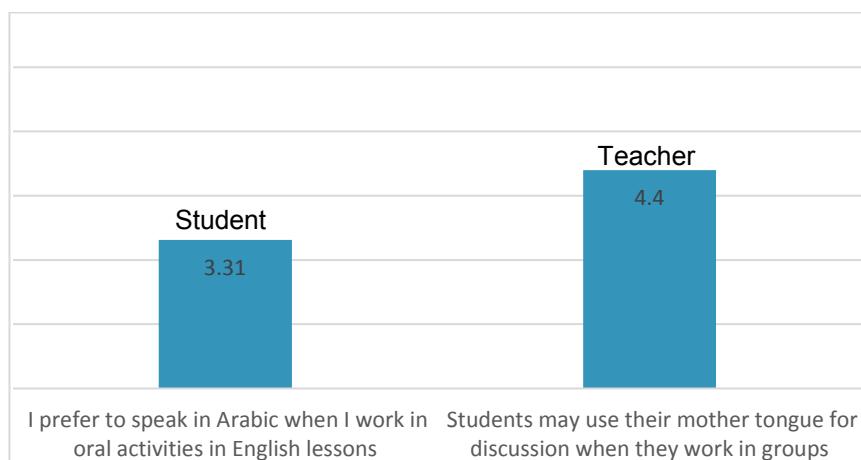
Figure 17: Comparison of the Averages for statements 19 & 30

The independent- sample T-test showed the score concerned with students' views (M = 3.31, SD = 1.182) and teachers (M = 4.4, SD = 1.143); t = -5.832, -5.945; p = 0.000 (<0.05). Results from the Mann-Whitney U test indicated a violation of the assumption of equality with U=2247.500, z=-5.600 and p value=.000. In other words, the average for statement 19 was smaller and significantly different from the average of statement 30. There is enough evidence to suggest that the teachers were more positive towards the statement than the students were.

The average rating for statement 21 in Figure18 '*The teacher should supplement the textbook with extra materials to satisfy students 'different needs' by* the students was 4.84 while the average rating for statement 17 *'The teacher should*

supplement the textbook with extra materials to satisfy students 'different needs' by the students was 3.5.
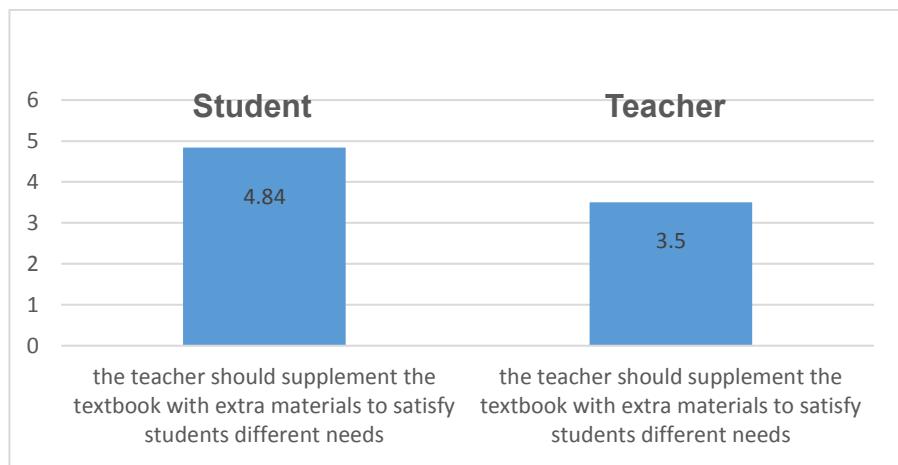
Figure 18: Comparison of the Averages for statements21 &17

The average rating for statement 21 was bigger and significantly different from the average of statement 17. The independent sample T-test showed the score concerned with students' views (M = 4.84, SD = 1.319) and teachers (M = 3.5, SD = .723); t = 8.142, -11.155; p = 0.000 (<0.05). The Mann-Whitney U test confirmed this result U=1508.500, z=-7.508 and p value=.000. There is enough evidence beyond the 5% chance to suggest that the students were more positive than the teachers towards this statement. In other words, students considered that supplying the textbook with extra different materials to satisfy students' needs as a very necessary issue.

The average rating given for statement 22 '*Providing feedback with grades is motivating',* by the students was 4.24 while the average rating for statement 15 '*Providing feedback with grades is motivating'* by the teachers was 4.12. The average for statement 15 was bigger from the average of statement 22.
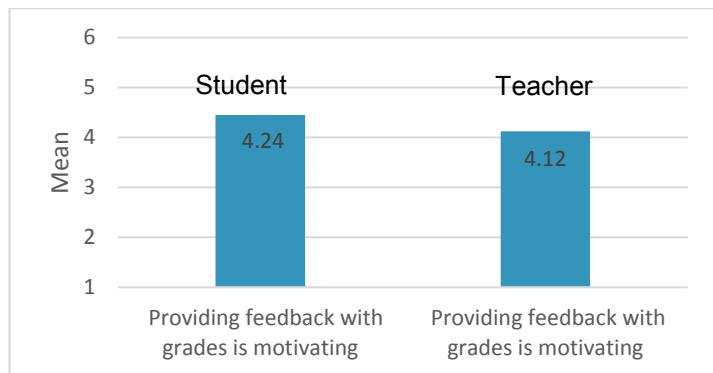
Figure 19: Comparison of the Averages between Statements 22 & 15

The independent sample T-test showed the score concerned with students' views (M = 4.24, SD = 1.462) and teachers (M = 4.12, SD = 1.769); t = .485, -.436; p = 0.664 (<0.05). A confirmation Mann-Whitney U test indicated the assumption of equality U=3573.000, z=-2.283 and p=.022. There is not enough evidence to suggest that the students were more positive than the teachers towards this statement.

The average rating given for statement 25 '*Assessing students at the end of each speaking course helps me to improve my speaking skills*' by the students was 3.24 while the average rating given for statement 25 '*Assessing students at the end of each speaking course enables teachers identify students' strengths and weaknesses*' by the teachers was 4.7.
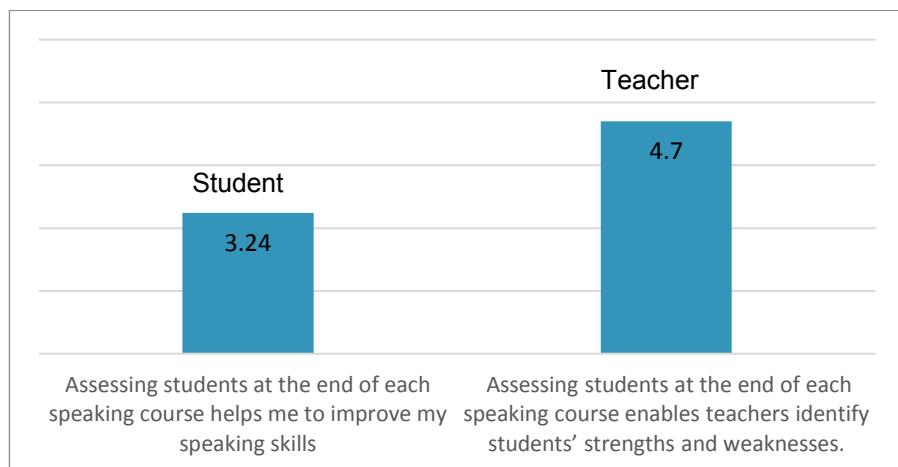
Figure 20: Comparison of the Averages between Statements 25&25

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The average for statement 25 by students was smaller and significantly different from the average of statement 25 by teachers. The Independent sample *t* test showed that the score concerned with students' views (M = 3.24, SD = 1.359) and teachers (M = 4.7, SD = 1.147); t = -6.942, -7.638; p = 0.000 (<0.05). The confirmation Mann-Whitney U test showed a violation of the assumption of equality of variance U=1846.000, z=-6.514 and p=. 000. There is enough evidence to suggest that the teachers were more positive than the students towards this statement.

5.7.2. Summary of the Differences between Teachers' and Students' Questionnaire Data Analysis

This chapter has discussed the questionnaire clusters, raw data, respondents' characteristics and the assessment of the questionnaire's reliability. The process of data analysis began by exploring the types and frequencies of assessment process used. Then, an investigation of the relationships between the students' and teachers' perceptions concerning the use of assessment practice and the results was presented in tables and figures. The questionnaires were analysed through conducting descriptive statistics tests (Independent-Sample T-test & Mann-Whitney U test). The results concluded that there were some similarities as well as some differences between them, regarding their perceptions towards assessment practices. There was a statistically significant difference in scores between teachers and students in some statements of the questionnaire as it has been shown in the above figures. For example, students considered that understanding assessment criteria was essential and it got the highest rate in the students' questionnaire as shown in Figure 12. Further, students believed that supplementing the textbook with extra materials to satisfy students' needs was also very important. It got the second higher score between the students than teachers as shown in Figure 18. The lowest score for students' questionnaire was for statement 7 '*The teacher's role is to transmit knowledge through explanations and examples* with a mean rank 2.78, (see Figure 14). Whereas, the highest score for teachers was for statement 22 '*My students believe that assessment is only the teacher's job' with a mean rank* 4.78 and the lowest score for teachers'

questionnaire was for statement 17 '*My students do not participate in the assessment processes* with a mean rank 1.74.

5.7.3. TRIANGULATION OF THE MAIN FINDINGS

To obtain detailed and in-depth answers to the research questions, the researcher adopted a methodological triangulation because this technique usually results in greater confidence in the findings and overcomes the limitations of the use of a single method (Cohen et al., 2007). The findings gained from the quantitative data showed that 72% of the teachers and 77.8% of the students were positive towards grades as a motivated process that pushes students to work harder. This is confirmed by qualitative data results as half of the teachers and many more students (9 out of 12) reported that students put much attention on grades.

The data from the teachers' and students' questionnaire also seemed to confirm the findings from semi-structured-interviews. More precisely, the teachers' and students' interview showed that (7 out of 12) of the teachers and (11 out of 12) of the students emphasised that understanding assessment criteria was very supportive. The teachers' and students' questionnaire confirmed this result and showed that 68% of the teachers and a higher percentage of students 95.5% reported the significance of understanding assessment criteria.

The following chapter presents the results of observations and the teachers' and students' interviews.

CHAPTER SIX
QUALITATIVE DATA RESULTS

6.1. INTRODUTION

In this chapter, the data collected by qualitative instruments, the direct-classroom observations and semi-structured interviews will be analysed. In order to achieve the target goals in my analysis, thematic analysis has been adopted (see subsection 4.17.2). Data was collected over more than three months (see section 4.16.) and table (1).This chapter presents the analysis of data collected from 12 teachers' and 12 students' interviews and 12 observations conducted with EFL Libyan teachers. The classroom observations carried out was the first step, and then semi-structured interviews followed the observations. Each teacher was observed three times in order to acclimatise the class to the researcher's presence and to give the opportunity to choose those in which assessing oral communication took place. All the observations and the semi-structured interviews were taped and transcribed (see appendices P & R).

In the process stages of analysing classroom observation, the researcher considered the teachers' nonverbal communication during assessing oral communication. Those movements and facial expressions are important in the way that teachers assess their students' English oral production. Using qualitative data offered deep understanding of the issues involved and helped to triangulate the findings with those from the analysis of the quantitative data. Throughout the observation, the themes and sub-themes were elicited in order to answer the research question 1 '*What assessment processes Libyan teachers at secondary schools use in assessing students' oral communication*'?

However, the qualitative data results of this study on its own cannot be generalised because of the special war context in Libya and because it was gathered from a small sample of volunteering teachers and students, which may not reflect the whole population in the context of the study. However, the researcher used the quantitative data to support and reconcile the qualitative data

whereas much of the qualitative data can also be generalised as the outcome was the same in a lot of cases.

6.2. ANALYSIS OF THE FINDINGS OBTAINED

The aim of analysing qualitative data was to gain more in-depth explanations and interpretations about teachers' assessment practice. In addition, it was aimed to find out about teachers' and students' beliefs towards these processes. It has been argued by Ritchie & Spencer, (2002, p.306) that qualitative methods are useful "in providing insights, explanations and theories of social behaviour". To exemplify the findings and consolidate the analysis, some of the participants' real contributions have been quoted. It should be noted that the number of teachers involved in classroom observation and semi-structured interviews represents 24 % of the total number 50 (see sub section 4.16.1 and Table 3).

The aim of this investigation was to achieve as much understanding as possible about assessment processes teachers employ when they assess students' learning. Consequently, the analysis in this study is exploratory in nature. Themes and categories were generated in several stages of initial coding, axial coding and selective coding (see subsection 4.17.3). All themes and the codes selected have been analysed using the same procedures. The merged categories were revised and refined to avoid repetition by combining related data. The coding used helped the researcher to classify the data into categories, which related to teachers' practice and perceptions of the assessment practice.

6.3. RESEARCH QUESTION ONE

What are the assessment processes Libyan teachers use at secondary schools in assessing students' oral communication?

In order to be able to compare the data containing numerous issues and to be more manageable, the analytic process started with what has been observed and what the teachers actually did inside the classrooms (teachers' practice); it then, followed by what the teachers' perceptions and understandings towards these practices and processes employed were.

6.3.1. Classroom Interaction

This section aims to identify and describe the overall patterns of classroom organisation and of classroom interaction based on the analysis of lessons. The observed classes consist of 25 to 30 students in each class. The classes did not have any equipment such as computers or overhead projectors. The students usually sit in rows facing the whiteboard with the teachers mostly implementing a traditional method of teaching whereby instruction is led by them. However, a few teachers infrequently implemented cooperative teaching, which helped students to work in pairs and sometimes in groups as discussed previously (see section 3.5.5).

According to the observed classes, most of the classroom interaction was led and dominated by the teachers. The teachers controlled most of the patterns of communication in the observed classrooms, mainly through restricting or allowing learners' interaction. Teachers were controlling the process of teaching and assessing their students, by facilitating or hindering the learning opportunities. In addition, most of the questions used by the majority of the teachers in the observed classes are those of display questions, which required short responses from students. It was noticeable that the structure of the interaction in the observed classes were represented by the IRF sequence. This means that 'I' refers to teacher initiation, 'R' refers to the student response, and 'F' refers to follow-up and teacher feedback. The following extract was taken from T 3 a male teacher with 9 years' experience as an example of an IRF sequence:

I: T: What do you think of the word "confident"?

R: S: It is an adjective

F: T: Excellent, we can use adjectives to describe someone or something….

This might indicate that when teachers start the lesson by oral questioning, it provides an opportunity for the teacher to check students' understanding. It also encourages students to involve and respond which, in turn, changes the classroom environment from teacher-centred to interactive challenging one as stated by Avis et al., (2010, p.127). This process of assessing students' learning

also encourages students to practise the language and interact with their teacher. However, this practice does not give great chance for students to negotiate for meaning (see section 3.5.3). The effective questioning procedure is the one that motivates students to provide full answers (Ur, 2012, p.230). It was also noticeable that most of the teachers communicated using English language, which indicates that the students were getting comprehensible input in English from their teachers, far beyond rehearsal of textbook language.

Few of the observed teachers were encouraging students to work and interact with each other to practise the language inside the classroom through implementing activities such as; problem solving and role-play. Nevertheless, students usually prefer to use their mother tongue (Arabic language), when communicating with each other especially when working either in pairs or in groups. Although the new Libyan textbook emphasises the cooperative learning through employing activities that help students to be active, it was noticeable that not all the teachers employed this strategy. This might relate to teachers' lack of understanding of how to manage these activities properly, which can negatively affect the implementation of them.

6.3.2. Assessing Accuracy and Fluency

The aim of this section is to explore whether accuracy or fluency received more focus when teachers assessed their students' communicative competence, or whether they employed a proper balance between them in the observed classrooms. Generally, it has been observed, that only five out of twelve observed teachers tended to assess students by focusing on how they communicated fluently and ignored the grammatical errors during oral activities, which might indicate that those teachers were trying to support their students to be confident. However, the other seven teachers assessed their students' communicative competence by focusing more on accuracy at the expense of fluency.

The following is an extract, which was taken from the female teacher 8 with 18 years' experience and gave the students a reading text task asking them some questions related to that text. In order to assess her students' learning, she tended to focus more on their ability to communicate fluently. The words, which

pronounced incorrectly by the students and ignored by the teacher were written in bold.

Lesson 8. (Reading).

T: Who can read text A?

S: Me teacher, me please

T: Yes, you (pointing to the student who was sitting in the middle row).

S: My family always on the **mofe** (move). We have arrived at some **cafes** (caves) where we will sleep tonight, so we do not need to make a shelter with stones, skins and branches.

T: Thank you, next,

It was evident from the above activity that teacher 8's focus on fluency seemed to be appropriate, since the students' errors do not risk the understanding of their meaning which might indicate that the teacher was likely to provide opportunities for students to practise the spontaneous production of the target language.

However, teacher 9, who was a female teacher with 6 years' experience, was observed assessing her students' understanding by focusing more on producing accurate language. The teacher gave the students a speaking task where she wrote a list of vocabulary on the board related to the topic (prepare to give advice). In order to help the students come up with ideas, the teacher asked them to compose and write short sentences using the given vocabulary. Later, as a process of assessment, she asked them one by one to read aloud what they had written.

T. 9: How do you give an advice using the words on the board?
(Five students raised their hands). Please teacher, please teacher
SA: You should drive (slow) when you pass … (the teacher stopped the student to correct the error)
T. 9: Slowly, not slow, who is next?
SB: Don't dropped litter.
T.9: Drop, not dropped. (Correcting the error immediately by pronouncing the word correctly and explaining the grammatical rule for this word).

From the above activity, it can be noticed that teacher 9 did not provide students with any chance to practise assessing their work or even correct their errors and her main concern was how to produce the language free of errors rather than communicating fluently. Generally, the majority of the observed teachers tended to pay more attention in their assessing to how students produce accurate and correct sentences rather than promoting students' ability to communicate even with committed mistakes.

6.3.3. ASSESSMENT PROCESSES

Applying tests and short quizzes

Some of the observed teachers were using these practices to check their students' understanding. T2, T8, T10 and T12 were observed using quizzing processes in their classes. They were observed applying activities such as filling in the gaps and multiple-choice questions. For example, T10 was observed giving a 'filling in the gaps' activity. The teacher asked their students to complete the conversation with words from the box. She wrote eight words inside a box on the board. The teacher asked her students to choose the best word and fill in the gaps as illustrated in the following extract:

exciting   set   called   about   written   by   character   recommend
A. Hi, Khalid, what are you reading?
B. Actually, I've just finished it. It's ( )...'The Bleeding of the stone'.
A. I've never heard of it. Who's it ( )...?
B. Ibrahim Al-Koni.
A. So, what is it ( )…? Stones?
B. Not exactly. It's about the effect humans have on the natural world. Really. It's ( )…in the desert in Libya.

As it can be seen from the extract, the teacher tried to check her students' understanding of whether they can use the new words that they have recently learned. Later, when they finished working on the activity, the teacher provided the students with an opportunity to practise the conversation orally by inviting students to converse in pairs. T 12 was also observed using a multiple-choice

activity to check their students' understanding of the three types of (if) conditional sentences. He asked his students to complete the conversation on the textbook. Before starting that, he wrote one incomplete sentence on the board and asked the students to complete it to check whether they remember the rule; they were able to complete the task. It can be assumed that the teachers utilized these practices informally to evaluate the level of students' understanding, and what they had achieved. Further, the teachers' process also aimed to encourage the students to practise communicating in the target language.

Self-assessment

During classroom observation, the researcher observed that three male and female teachers T2, T11 and T8 gave a chance to the students who commit errors while communicating orally, to self-correct. This might assume that they did that in order to let the students have the opportunity to practise and rethink how to assess and correct their mistakes. According to many researchers, self-assessment is a learning activity that helps and encourages students to take part in the learning process (Roberts, 2006; Black & Wiliam, 1989; Taras, 2005; Broadfoot, 2007). This can be noticed from the following extract, which was taken from male teacher number 8 with twenty-four years' experience in order to illustrate a self-assessment form that was used by the teacher.

S: Yesterday I play football with friends

T: Yesterday you...?

S: have played…?

T: No, not quite. Yesterday, that means…?

S: Hmmm, yesterday, uh, yesterday I played football.

T: Well done, again please.

S: Yesterday I played football with my friends.

Teacher 11 who was a female and had 17 years' experience was also, observed using this practice of assessment in her mixed class. She was standing in front of the class and tried to provide an opportunity for the student to correct himself as indicated in the following extract:

S1: Please Miss, please Miss

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T: Yes, Salem

S: Can I read, please?

T: yes, Ok

*S1: **/bislogists/ saa,***

T: (the teacher was using her body language to draw the student attention that he was pronouncing the word incorrectly) Psy…

*S: (trying to correct himself) Psychologists and**/psee/ sislogist/ sosi***

T: No, (with a smile) psychologists and…

S: and sociologists are interested in information of this sort because it helps to understand how people live nowadays.

T: (talking to the student) read the whole sentence again, please

S: Psychologists and sociologists are interested in information of this sort because it helps to understand how people live nowadays.

T: V. good

Self-correction was also observed in T 2 class as a process to encourage the students to overcome the difficulty that they faced while producing oral language by themselves and try to correct their errors. The following extract illustrates how the teacher employed self-assessment.

*S: Many people believe that **la,laf laughter** is good for our health, so two **suntest sy syn***

T: scientists

*S: did an **exprai expr expreement experiment** to test this idea.*

T: OK, continue

*S: They asked a group of 20 students to help them. First the scientists **mes meshoord***

T: measured

*S: the levels of disease-fighting **antbodees antibodies** in each student's blood*

T: OK, good

From this extract, it can be understood that the teacher provided a chance for the student to evaluate and correct his work, which in turn, may encourage him to retry his attempt to talk and practise the language. When students get a chance

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to practice self-assessment, it could help them to feel confident and try to overcome the error by trying to correct themselves.

Peer- assessment

Peer assessment is another form of formative assessment that teachers can employ for assessing students' speaking. Through commenting or making judgements upon each other's work, students would be involved in carrying out assessment tasks. This might also change the old traditional views that the teacher is the only one who carries the assessment process. Despite the positive views of the majority of the teachers towards the forms of formative assessment, only a few teachers were observed practicing peer-assessment. The data from the classroom observation revealed that female T 11 and female T 8 were observed using this process as a strategy to provide their students with the opportunity to correct each other and comment on each other's work. The following extract from T 8 class illustrates that:

T: He is an Egyptian. (Asking one of the students to use question tag)
S: Is he?
T: not exactly, that is not correct (asking other students to discuss the rule and provide the right answer)
Ss: Isn't he?
T: Yes, it is correct now. We have explained that when the first part of the sentence is affirmative, the second part is…
Ss: Negative
T: He is an Egyptian, isn't he?
Ss: Yes, isn't he?
T: Brilliant.

Evidently, those students were trying to engage in assessing each other's work and their teacher was facilitating this process. This process of assessment was also observed in female T 11 who was assumed to make the students more active and participate in the oral activity. The teacher was walking around the rows of the classroom desks trying to encourage her students to take part in the activity. For example, she was observed asking her students to work in groups and

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provide their feedback to each other's work. The activity topic that she presented to her students was how to 'suggest questions to continue a conversation'.

She wrote an example on the board: *My older brother is studying medicine*. The second step was asking each group to swap papers with the answers on them, provide their feedback and correct the errors. Later one of each students' group stood and highlighted the errors that they found. This process of assessment was expected to help students to work together and to create a discussion about each group's errors. This might also change students' traditional perceptions that the teacher is always the controller of the assessing and learning process. In addition, this might indicate that students might feel more motivated to improve their work because their peers had assessed it (Black et al., 2003; Harlen, 2013), and they might accept their peers' correction. However, the data analysis from the observed classrooms revealed that giving the chance to classmates to correct each other and work cooperatively was rarely employed and it was only practised by three teachers.

6.3.4. Teacher's Role

To find out how teachers act inside their classrooms, it was important to observe the role of the teacher in an oral communication lesson. From the classroom observation, it was clear that most of the teachers played the role of controller at the beginning of the lesson to present the new topic and give instructions. Then, they either initiated a discussion about the topic chosen or focused on a lesson from the textbook. When they started the discussion, their role changes to facilitators who explained and exemplified the learning process by asking students to respond to the questions and provide them with feedback about their performance. Because accuracy seemed to be the main goal amongst the majority of the teachers, they were strict about correcting every single mistake and they played the role of assessor in most of the stages.

Facilitating is a practice used by few teachers to help students take part in the learning process rather than being dominant in the classroom. From the classroom observation, it can be noticed that female T 12 was trying to simplify the questions by explaining them many times to help students get over the

difficulties. The teacher was observed explaining the words, which she thought might be demanding for students to understand. The following extract was taken from teacher 12 who was talking to the whole class using her body language to clarify the meaning of words and the questions to her class.

T: …air pollution, like fumes and smoke from cars and power stations, affects the atmosphere. Why do you think the condition of our environment is of great concern?

S: Please teacher, me teacher

T: Ok, why do you think scientists are interested in conservation?

S: yes, me teacher, (four students were raising their hands)

T: yes, student at the back, Waleed, yes you

S: they protect the atmosphere. They protect environment.

T: yes, yes, because they want to protect.

S: they want to protect atmosphere and environment

T: yes, they want to protect the environment as far as possible.

With the new methods of teaching and learning, teachers are concerned with encouraging students to be active and share the learning process instead of being passive learners. During the classroom observation, T 3 also played the role of facilitator more than being controller. At the beginning of the lesson, he acted as a controller to maintain kind of discipline, and to present the topic. Then, the teacher tried to involve the students by asking them to discuss the topic in pairs. At this stage, the teacher's role changed to enable students to deal with the topic by providing constructive feedback and support them to talk and practise the language. The teacher was observed walking and talking to each pair and to every student whenever it was possible while they were working, trying to be very close and friendly. Later, the teacher asked some questions about the topic to check his students' understanding. Because fluency seemed to be his priority, he was not strict about assessing every single error and he acted as an assessor only on a few occasions.

However, the results obtained from classroom observation showed that five out of twelve teachers acted as a controller who dominated the process of teaching

and learning. A male T 7 with 2 years' experience tended to maintain control and give information with less emphasis on encouraging students to practise the language. He was observed not paying much attention to students working in pairs or in groups and participating in the classroom activities. It was clear in his selection of tasks that he focused more on correct grammar and accuracy. In other words, this kind of teachers might choose to act as a presenter of knowledge and information because they believe that their role in the class is to teach students how to learn to speak the language without committing any errors and becoming accurate in learning the language might be their priority.

6.3.5. CONCEPTIONS OF ASSESSMENTS

The findings of the data analysis from classroom observations revealed two different types of corrective feedback: positive and negative. The following were different types of teachers' feedback observed during English oral lessons with examples and quotations from the actual data to support the analysis:

'Encouraging' as Feedback

Throughout the classroom observations, three teachers were observed 'encouraging' students when providing class feedback. They were observed not interrupting their students while speaking. This assessment practice was observed in T 5, T 8 and T 3 classes. This appeared to indicate that those teachers were aiming to encourage students to feel more confident. The following extract was taken from a teacher 8 practice:

T: Who can read this text?

S: Me, please, teacher

T: Yes, Fatima (pointing to the student in the first row)

S: Experiments with animals and humans suggest that we are naturally /keers/curious. We enjoy finding things out and exploring the unknown.

T: We are naturally...can you pronounce the word after naturally again

S: Mmm keers …

T: OK, (the teacher smiled and bite her lips to pay student's attention to the pronunciation error), the correct pronunciation for this word is (Curious), (Curious)

S: Curious

T: Excellent, that is correct

It can be understood from this extract that the teacher did not want to interrupt the student while she was speaking. This confirms that the teacher was not only intended to provide the right pronunciation for the word but rather wanted to help the student to carry on speaking and feeling confident. By employing this process of assessment, students are helped to practise using the language in a positive environment.

In contrast, the findings also demonstrated that male teacher number 1 and female teacher number 6 paid less attention to providing students with positive feedback. These teachers used words or gestures of rejection to show that they disagreed with their students' answer, as is described in the following section:

'Rejecting' (no) as Feedback

Some of the teachers observed were using negative feedback as rejecting student's answer. During classroom observation, the researcher observed that six teachers used rejection words or gestures to inform their students that their answers were not correct. As a teacher, I agree with some interviewed teachers that speaking is different from other skills because it is between the speaker and everyone, and it is beyond the confidence. It is needed to be dealt with in a sensitive way.

Rejecting students' answer was one of the practices that was clearly observed and used by four male and female teachers. This process of assessment might hinder students to carry on talking, and minimise students' self-confidence (Brookhart, 2008). It can also frustrate students and make them feel shy and unable to act and perform naturally (Cooper, 2011). It was observed that most of the time those students whose wrong answers were always rejected by their teachers did not try to attempt to correct their errors. The following extract was taken from female teacher 6 with two years' experience.

T: Now you (pointing to a student) and you (pointing to another student)

T: Tell your partner your wishes, and explain your reasons using if conditional (3)

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*S1:   I wish I had **know** it was your birthday.*

T: no, no, not correct, had known not know. (The teacher looked annoyed). Ok you ask (Asking S2 to respond)

S2:   Why?

*S1:   Because if I had known, I **would bought** you a gift.*

T: no, no stop, the second part is not correct, who can correct? Sit down.

*Ss: **would have bought** (three students were trying to provide the correct answer)*

T: yes, I would have bought you a gift, (the teacher explained the grammatical rule)

As it can be noticed from the extract above, the teacher's feedback was negative towards the student's performance, as a result, it was observed that student 1 stopped talking and did not even try to correct herself, which might indicate that this method of learning had minimised students' self-confidence and self-esteem.

'Questioning' as Feedback

In four out of five classes observed, the teachers applied a questioning practice of assessment to check their students' understanding. Using questions as a form of feedback were used by T3, T4, T7 and T12 in their classes in order to evaluate their students learning. This indicated that those teachers were using questions, which they believed helped in trying to find out whether their students achieved the objectives of the task or the activity. The following extract was taken from male teacher number 3 with nine years' experience. The teacher was standing near the board facing the class and he was pointing to the sentence which was written on it.

T3: Now tell me what proposition we can put in this sentence (he is Interested…computers)

S: (of)

T: What?

S: Interested of

T: Interested of computer...but what does the word interested always take? (Talking to the whole class).

Ss: (In) ... interested in computers.

T: Yes, it is correct. He is interested in computers. The preposition is fixed, so you must memorise the two words together.

From the above extract, it was evident that the teacher was intending to check their students' understanding by initiating questions. When the student responded incorrectly, the teacher informed him that there was an error and it needed to be corrected by emphasising more questions. This may help students to pay attention to the errors that they commit. Therefore, the teacher tried to give an opportunity to the students to check the answer by responding in the form of question. This practice might be beneficial for students in that it gives more time for students to think about the correct answer instead of providing the correct answer from the teacher immediately. In addition, this process of assessing gives an extra chance for peer correction.

Although researchers differ in their theoretical perspectives in how feedback can contribute to learning they also emphasise that it can play an important role in improving the learning process. Hedge (2000, p.290) advised teachers to balance negative feedback on errors with positive feedback.

6.3.6. Communication Activities Implemented in Classrooms

Cooperative learning is a core of teaching and learning strategy in the secondary EFL curriculum in Libyan schools where group work is an essential element of successful learning (Orafi, 2008; Abdussalam, 2009). Therefore, this section analyses the classroom observation and investigates how communicative activities were implemented inside the Libyan classrooms.

The findings of qualitative data revealed that three out of twelve teachers were observed employing this strategy in their classroom. For example, one of the female teachers T5 asked her students to work in pairs during role play activity. She asked each pair to choose a topic and exchange the information relating to the chosen topic. She wrote an example of a chosen topic on the board and provided her students with the instructions as follows: '*Imagine that you are going to buy something from a shop*'. She gave each student a specific role to play which indicated that she was intending to discipline her students' behaviour. She

pointed to one student and asked him to act as a buyer who wanted to buy some assumed items from the shop. She chose another student to act as a shop assistant and he had a list of items in his shop with their prices. The teacher asked her students to look at the example on the board and try to do the same. Students were required to choose similar topics and practise them in pairs. Each pair was asked to perform the conversation orally in front of the whole class. The following extract was taken from T5 classroom.

SA: Hello, do you have any sugar?

SB: Yes, I have. How many kilos would you like?

SA: How much does it cost for a kilo?

SA: It is one Dinar for a kilo.

SB: Can I have two kilos, please?

SA: Yes, sure.

The extract above indicates that T 5 was intending to create an environment in which students feel interested in communicating with his/her classmate. It was clear that students became more active and tried to choose as many topics as they could in order to exchange the information. Most of the researchers such as (Doff, 1988; Tsui 2003; McDonough et al., 2013; Harlen, 2016) agree that this kind of activities provide intensive and interesting language practice. Cooperative activities are strategies that have been recently introduced in secondary school textbook by the Libyan Ministry of Education where teachers are encouraged to employ them in the classroom to help their students practise the language.

6.3.7. Code-Switching

As discussed in section 3.5.4 many educationists (Nation, 2003; Nunan & Carter, 2001; Macaro, 2003) assume that the use of the L1 is sometimes inevitable. They argue that it can be beneficial for students learning. However, they stated that excessive dependence on the mother tongue to solve communication problems deprives the students of the opportunities to practise the target language (Lee, 2005). During the classroom observation, teachers and students were investigated to find out to what extent the mother tongue was used in the classroom by both teachers and students and for what purposes. The analysis

considered all classroom talk including when teaching and assessing the speaking skill and when interacting in general inside the classroom.

Teacher's code-switching

It is clear from the observed classes that most of the teachers' use of the mother tongue was limited where they used English as a medium of instruction most of the time during English lessons. The teachers sometimes used code switching in some cases for different purposes. For example, T 3 was observed giving instructions for disciplinary purposes using L1 when he entered into the classroom and after greeting his students in English, he code switched to control his class as illustrated from the following excerpt:

> T3: Good morning
> Ss : Good morning teacher
> T3: Thank you
> T3: OK. Sit down - جلوس   جلوس
> T3: That' enough sit down and stop talking اجلسو——خلاص
> سكوث

The results obtained from the classroom observations showed that T 1, T 4 and T 11 were observed to use L1 when they wanted to facilitate students' learning. This can be confirmed from teacher's 1 class. The teacher wanted students to start practicing a conversation. He wrote six topics on the board and asked students to think of opinions about one of these topics. To check whether his students understood the objectives of the activity, he code switched to L1 in some cases as the following excerpt shows:

> T1: (In Arabic) include question tags in your conversation, please.
> Ss: (In Arabic) is it necessary teacher?   لابد يااستاذ
> T: Do you remember the rule of tag questions? تتد كرو الاسئله المديله
> Ss: (in Arabic) yes, yes ايوه اسئله التاكيد
> T: OK. Start now, work together, you have five minutes to finish.

It can be assumed from the extract above that T1 seemed to make sure that all the students understood how and what to do in the activity provided. This using

of the L1 for that activity could help the students to be sure about the aims of the activity and ensure the teacher that the activity's objectives are clear.

Four other teachers T2, T8, T6, and T10 were observed using L1 to clarify their explanations when they realized that their students were encountering difficulties, either in understanding the objectives of the activity or clarifying some difficult words. They used L1 to help their students comprehend the new words. The following excerpt was taken from teacher' 10 class.

> T10: (pointing to one of the students) Read the text in exercise A please
> S: (Reading the text) 'To work the land there were hoes, sickles and axes, and we can see when people fought their neighbours using spears, swords and daggers'
> Ss: (In Arabic) what are the meaning for (hoes) these words are difficult teacher?
> T: (explaining the meaning in Arabic)   المعازق—المناجل—الرماح--الخناجر

The above excerpt apparently showed that the teacher used this practice to facilitate students' learning. It can be assumed that students would not understand the meaning of the vocabularies without using their mother tongue. It is noticeable that the use of code switching by the teachers was limited and systematic. Four out of twelve teachers did not use L1 in their classes and were communicating most of the time in English which provided students with opportunities to hear rich input of the spoken English. However, the use of code switching into Arabic may promote the language learning process by serving some basic functions, as clarifying some instructions and facilitating some difficulties, which students sometimes encounter (Nation, 2003).

The findings from classroom observation confirmed that four teachers, T7, T5, T1, and T12 were the only teachers who did not use the L1 in their classes. It was clear that the other teachers employed the L1 in different ways and for various purposes when they were teaching and assessing their students.

Students' code-switching

The data from the classroom observations revealed that students' use of L1 was extensive. When students worked on oral activities, they used their mother

tongue to communicate with each other. The students also used L1 when they interacted with their teachers. According to the evidence of the observed classes, students most of the time code switched to their native language for various purposes. For example, students generally used their mother tongue (Arabic) when interacting with their teacher regarding a range of issues during classroom lessons such as; responding to some of the teacher's questions or the need for more clarification. In addition, students used L1 for getting permission from their teacher to do something.

The following extracts show that students employed their mother tongue for answering their teacher's questions, and for clarification from their teacher respectively:

Students' Code-switching – Answering teacher's question

T7: Say, what you think these words mean?

Species   Lifeless

Ss: ميث   انواع

T: yes, correct but can you give another meaning for these words in English?

S1: Types

S2: Kinds

Ss: dead

T: Good thank you.

As it can be noticed from the above excerpt, the teacher tried not to tolerate using L1 and asked students to provide the meaning of the words in English language to help their students practise using English instead. In the following extract, the students did not understand what exactly was needed. The teacher wrote on the board the instructions and two sentences. Therefore, students asked their teacher for more clarification:

Students' Code-switching for more clarification

T6: Work in pairs, like this:

A: Begin with one of these sentences.

B: Reply with You must be…

Ss: (In Arabic) we do not understand teacher)   مفهمناش المطلوب يااسثاد

T6: (Clarifying the objectives of the activity using English language by giving example)

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Although, students responded in Arabic, the teacher tried to provide the students with the clarification they needed using English language. This might indicate that the teacher was aware of the importance of communicating using the target language.

6.4. RESEARCH QUESTION TWO

What are:

A. *Teachers' perceptions towards these processes?*

B. *Students' perceptions towards these processes?*

The data obtained from teachers' semi-structured interviews revealed different views among teachers. The following, is the analysis of the teachers' interviews in order to find out their understanding and beliefs towards the assessment processes they employ in their classrooms in relation to assessing communicative competence.

6.4.1. Teachers' Perceptions about the Importance of Oral Communication

The data collected from semi-structured interviews concerning the importance of speaking skills showed that the majority of the teachers think that speaking is important because it is a means of communication with others (Sauvignon, 1997). The teachers emphasised that students need to learn to communicate using English language for different purposes. They need to convey clear message which is enough for their speech to be understood by the listener (Scales, 2008). One of the teachers T10 explained: '*I always consider that speaking skill is more important than the other skills. I believe that communication is a necessary component for language learning. When students master speaking skills they become able to convey their ideas easily, which in turn encourage them to be active and participate in most of the activities inside the classroom, beside, they feel that they are confident'.*

It is clear that speaking is a desired skill, which the teachers believe that the students need to acquire during the learning process (Fulcher, 2003). One other teacher T1 declared, '*in fact, I always ask my students to use the English language when they communicate with each other, and when they talk with me*

outside the classrooms'. However, few teachers reported that academically speaking skill was considered less important than the other skills. They justified their opinions for different reasons. For example, T 4 explained her opinion during the interview by saying: '*I think students' learning should be built on a correct foundation. I mean at the beginning the structure of the language is more important. With time and practice, the students will develop their speaking skill. If students learn the language incorrectly, no one will understand them easily when they communicate and use the language'*. Another teacher T 11 added '*Umm, learning how to read and write is more important. Students should learn the structure first then they can learn how to speak. No one failed in the exams because he/she does not speak. Speaking is important for conveying students' messages. I always focus on how students produce accurate structure of the language'*.

The analysis of the data from the interview teachers' responses regarding accuracy and fluency revealed that there have been some general characteristics shared between all the teachers about what these two concepts refer to within EFL teaching and learning. A male T 3 with 9 years' experience defined accuracy by stating: '*accuracy refers to grammar, the correct structure of a sentence'*. This response is similar to female teacher 9 with 6 years' experience answer who reported that '*accuracy when students speak grammatically correct. Well, I can say that accuracy is the production of spoken or written language without errors'*. In fact, most of the teachers' responses were similar in that they all consider that accuracy is how students communicate comprehensively using the language without committing grammar errors. One other male T7 with 2 years' experience said that '*accuracy means that teachers focus more on pronunciation and accurate grammar'*.

Regarding the responses to the interview question '*what do you think fluency refers to within the context of EFL speaking assessment'?,* the analysis of data collected during semi-structured interviews showed that most teachers refer to fluency, as the ability to communicate clearly and without hesitation. One of the female teachers with 18 years' experience T8 and another female teacher with 6 years' experience T9 responded respectively, '*fluency is how you communicate*

comprehensively. Actually, fluency is how to pronounce correctly'. In responding to the interview question concerning paying more attention to accuracy rather than fluency during oral activities is helpful to students. Different responses were provided.

Seven out of twelve teachers emphasised that accuracy in learning a language is more important in improving students' learning. One of the teachers T6 reported *'well, as an English teacher I believe that teachers should focus more on the structure of the language, because many students are tended to be English teachers in future'.* The teacher also explained that students need to learn how to construct correct sentences and they should learn to pronounce accurately, so that they can be understood by the listener easily.

The importance of accuracy was also reported by another male teacher T 2 with seven years' experience who stated *'I always assist on learning grammar and pronunciation correctly. I believe that learning a language should be based on correct structure and clear pronunciation. Ha ha, that is my opinion. That is why I usually pay more attention to accuracy rather than fluency during my English lessons'.* However, other teachers had different views, as five out of twelve of the teachers considered that focusing on fluency is more important for students' learning than accuracy. They argue that students need to learn how to communicate orally without hesitation even with making mistakes at least comprehensively (Richard-Amato, 2003). Although, more teachers believe that fluency is more important than accuracy, classroom observations presented in section (6.3.2), showed that the majority of the teachers did not pay much attention to fluency during most lessons. They generally promoted accuracy on the expense of fluency. According to Brown, (2004) teachers usually interpret new ideas through their existing beliefs and knowledge and they modify what they believe will work with their students which, in turn, has a great impact on teaching practices and outcomes inside the classroom.

6.4.2. Teachers' Perceptions of Importance of Assessment

The results obtained from the semi-structured interviews revealed positive attitudes among the majority of the teachers towards the importance of using

various assessment practices including engaging students in the process of checking their learning. The findings showed that the teachers had different view towards the importance of assessment. These beliefs reflected teachers' acceptance that focusing the learning process on students would enhance their learning and promote their autonomy (Taras, 2005; Gardner, 2006).

In this respect, teachers' interview question 7 was concerned with investigating teachers' view about the importance of assessment. The teachers have reported different views about this issue. Generally, most of them believe that assessment helps them to find the strengths and weaknesses of their students and to modify their instructions. However, half of them (6 out of 12) considered that assessment helps in building students' confidence whereas the other half were not enthused towards this notion. Those teachers who believed that assessment could help students to be confident learners explained some advantages of employing various assessment processes. One of the teachers T12 stated that assessment can be interesting process if teachers provide their students with the opportunity to practise it. That is to say working in groups and assessing each other's work helps students to feel active and confident. T4 expressed her view by saying that '*although, the word assessing and evaluating can present a kind of pressure for students but we feel that it is integrated with teaching and learning'.* Therefore, these teachers emphasised that students should practise assessment to become used to this strategy and encourage themselves to participate.

Nevertheless, the other teachers who expressed their dissatisfaction about the impact of assessment justified their views about the reasons behind this. One of the teachers T8 explained *'assessment does not help students to feel confident. I am sure that the majority of our students hate the word assessment. Honestly, it presents tension and pressure'.* Another teacher 6 considered that the current assessment practice did not help students to be confident. She claimed, *'involving students in assessment in Libyan secondary schools requires providing teachers and students with sufficient time, practice and training in order to adapt to it. Our students are used to rely on their teachers' assessment for many years and assessment always makes students and their family anxious and stressed'.*

However, all the teachers reported that the current assessment practice was to some extent reliable. Yet, it did not help in improving the students' learning. Further, they responded that employing alternative practices and strategies needed time and effort beside a lot of training for both teachers and students.

6.4.3. Teachers' Perceptions of Conceptions of Assessment

The following sub-sections provide more details about teachers' opinions of conceptions of assessment. These perceptions reflect teachers' understanding of assessment. The analysis data from teachers' interviews revealed several views. More details will be discovered in the following sub-sections.

Teachers' Perceptions towards Grades

This section represents teachers' perceptions about feedback and grades, which they provide when assessing their students' level of academic achievements. There has been a common perspective between teachers, male and female regarding grade as a feedback. The teachers reported that grade could motivate students to improve their performance. These findings confirmed the findings of both Entwistle, (2009), Oscarson, (2009) and Sadler, (2009) who stated that grades are considered beneficial as a means for improvement. In responding to the interview question '*do you think that providing feedback with grades is demotivating',* teachers provided various responses. The following is an example, which was given by female T11 with 7 years' experience '*during classroom activities, I do not assess my students by providing a grade. In fact, it does not help. Students need to know, what is right and what is wrong, not just marks'.* One other response came from teacher 12 who explained *I always try to avoid providing grades on my students' classroom work or homework, and I only use grade for exams to determine the students' level of achievement.*

Further analysis showed grades can have a negative side on students' learning. The data revealed that most teachers provide grades in exams, either during the course or at the final assessment. Six out of 12 teachers indicated that it is more beneficial for students to be provided with feedback with comments as claimed by a male teacher 5 who stated '*providing only grade does not help students to find out what achievement he/she gained'.* He further explained that some

students feel sensitive if he/she gets low mark and that might influence negatively their performance, therefore, they become demotivated in their learning especially if students see a learning exercise as a competition between them and their classmates. Black et al., (2004) warned of the negative side of grades and confirmed that students will lose interest in learning if they assume that the desired grade will not be gained

This explanation was supported by two other male and female responses with 2 and 12 years' experiences T1 and T10 respectively. They emphasised that most students focus only on how to achieve high marks rather than what needed to be done from them: '*Students like to receive feedback with high grade; they do not pay much attention to what the teachers have written. My students usually like to gain high mark either in their exams or on their homework*'.

In contrast, some other teachers have different point of views regarding providing grade as feedback. For instance, T3 who was a female teacher convinced that providing grade can be useful in students learning and helps students to work harder and improve. In her response, when interviewed, stated that '*grades are very important. I usually provide feedback with grades. I can ensure that when students want a high mark, they will work hard to achieve that goal*'. Similarly, another male teacher with17 years' experience T6 emphasised in her response to the interview question by pointing out that teachers need to be precise and provide students with a reliable grade. She explained that grades were found to be beneficial for students and students consider gaining high grades as a valuable aim. Therefore, she stated that she regularly provides feedback with grades whenever she makes a test or a short quiz. Moreover, teacher 9 pointed out that providing grade to students might affect students negatively as it appears from the following extract:

Q: Do you think that providing feedback with grades help students to improve?
T9: No, I do not think so. I think grades can harm students' learning.
Q: Could you please, explain why?
T9: I mean it might have negative impact on students' learning. Students always pay more attention to grade rather than anything else. I believe that when

students gain low mark that reduce their interests in learning. Certainly, I believe that when teachers avoid the giving of grade and dedicate effort to producing effective comments instead of grades, they will find that students read their comments and use them to improve their work.

Teachers' Perceptions towards Understanding Criteria

With regards to the semi-structured interview question whether understanding assessment criteria helps students to take part in learning and assessing their work, the analysis of the interview data revealed that seven out of twelve of the teachers emphasised that understanding assessment criteria is very helpful, as students will take care of performing their tasks according to the criteria that is being established. For example, one of the teachers, T8 explained her decision for using this principle when assessing her students' oral communication by saying '*I usually help students to understand the criteria'.* She explained that students could discover their strengths and weaknesses, and thus they work to improve their work. The response from this female teacher was also emphasised by some other teachers. T6 confirmed that he employs assessment criteria as an important strategy that creates an appropriate environment that helps students' to be active and find out what it is needed from them.

One other male teacher T1 reported the reason for adopting this process was that '*understanding assessment criteria is very helpful for students' learning. In fact, improvement can take place if students are aware of the criteria'.* Further, a female teacher explained, that when students become aware of the requirements of a good work, it encourages them to get involve in classroom activities. She added that she always evaluates her students based on a criterion. These results emphasised Black et al., (2003); Taras, (2001); Chen, (2008) views that setting explicit criteria helps students to be active learners and assist them in becoming aware of the requirements of good work.

The positive trend of these teachers towards understanding assessment criteria would seem to indicate that teachers believe that understanding criteria can be useful to identify to what extent the students need to work to achieve the goals. Hence, most of the teachers are concerned with encouraging students to

understand the criteria upon which they judge their students' performance. However, some other teachers have different views towards understanding the criteria. Five out of twelve teachers considered that students do not need to understand the criteria. T5 explained that it is not necessary for students to know the criteria. He justified his opinion by explaining that when students learn how to communicate, teachers should encourage them to feel confident rather than being restricted to some specific rules. These responses show that those teachers are concerned more about how to help their students to feel confident and learn how to speak the language through practicing it without paying much consideration and attention to the assessment criteria.

This indicates that these teachers lack of understanding of the significance of setting explicit criteria, and how understanding assessment criteria assist students to achieve their goals. When students become aware of what their teachers are looking for, then they would work to meet their teachers' requirements (Sadler, 1989; Boud, 1995).

Teachers' Perceptions towards Using L1

It is clear from the analysis of the teachers' interviews that nine out of twelve teachers' use of the mother tongue was limited. Most of the teachers expressed their agreement about the importance of using English language as a medium of instruction in oral communication classes. On the other hand, teachers stated that they sometimes cannot avoid using the students' mother tongue. Those teachers who support code switching reported that they occasionally are obligated to use L1 for different reasons. They provided various responses to justify their opinions. One of the teachers claimed that '*we sometimes use L1 for disciplinary purposes'.* This might indicate that these teachers tend to control their classes by using their students' mother tongue.

The analysis of data gained from the interviews with the teachers also revealed that some teachers code switch when they realize that their students face difficulties in understanding some new vocabularies. Further, some other teachers justified their view about using their native language when teaching and assessing students, by giving other reasons. One of the teachers' T6 claimed, '*I*

sometimes find it necessary to code switch especially when I present new grammatical rules. In addition, in order to be accurate and make sure that my students understand these new rules I need to explain them in Arabic'.

Therefore, it is evident that those teachers who prefer sometimes to code switch consider the use of L1 as an important factor, which cannot be ignored and might lead to better learning.

6.4.4. Teachers' Perceptions towards the Role of the Teacher

In their responses to the interview question, '*could you please tell us about the teacher's role in assessment?*", the majority of the teachers emphasised the role of the teacher as a facilitator who should facilitate students' independent learning and should not practise any control over it. In Libyan context, teachers mainly used to rely on traditional approaches of instruction such as explanations and transmitting knowledge. However, seven out of twelve teachers referred to the difference in the level of their students' active participation in classroom activities, because of their adaptation of the facilitation methods in their teaching and learning. One of the teachers T8 reported, '*I do not think that teachers who employ the communicative approach can act just as a controller. We have some activities in the new textbook that require working in groups and in pairs, which need the teacher to change their role to become as a facilitator'.*

This indicated that teachers became aware of the importance of being a facilitator teacher who aids students for making development. These findings agreed with what Black et al., (2003) stated about how teachers' beliefs and views have progressed. Another female teacher with 19 years' experience added that '*the activities in the new curriculum require teachers to provide their students with the opportunities to practise the language through working in pairs and groups'.* This teacher believed that when students work cooperatively teachers to become a guide and a facilitator of students' learning.

It seems to be clear that those teachers were aware that by changing their traditional methods of instruction and sharing students the responsibility of teaching and learning process, would create a positive classroom environment. Moreover, some teachers reported that they would be happy to encourage

students to work together as groups and make a discussion for a constructive purpose even with a lot of noise inside their classrooms. This view corresponds with Richard- Amato, (2003), who emphasised that when students are helped to practise sharing power in the classroom, they will continually work toward becoming autonomous learners and effective communicators.

Nevertheless, four out of twelve teachers seemed to have a lack of knowledge or understanding about the teachers' role as a facilitator which was reflected in their perceptions. For example, a female teacher 1 with 2 years' experience responded, *'I think that teachers are the most important element in the learning and teaching process. I do not think that considering the teacher, as a facilitator is workable or productive in our schools'.* This teacher justified her view by saying that both teachers and students need time to change their perception towards the teacher as a facilitator and not a controller and the main source for presenting knowledge. Another teacher T2 clearly reported his lack of understanding of this notion by reporting:

> Students were used to firm control in the classroom by their teachers. When teachers feel they have no power on the students, I think the whole teaching and learning process will be affected negatively. I mean teachers might not be able to control any disruptive behaviour.

This reflects these teachers' perceptions, which consider that a teachers' role is to control their classes, otherwise teachers will lose their authority. These findings agree with what Sadler, (1989) stated about some teachers who might consider acting as a facilitator undermine the teachers' authority. It also agrees with Breen & LittleJohn's, (2000) perspective which considered that teachers are often used to be dominant of their classrooms. Concerning the interview question, '*are there any changes in the way of assessing your students' oral communication from starting your teaching until now?'*, different responses were reported. The findings of the interview analysis revealed that eight out of twelve interviewed teachers were aware of the importance of changing their methods of teaching and assessing from only a controller to a facilitator and believed in encouraging

students to be active learners during language classes. These teachers reported that they used to practise some methods such as Grammar Translation Method, which concentrates on certain aspects of grammar rather than on students' use of language. They emphasised that their role was a controller and a presenter of knowledge. However, they stated that recently they changed their role to become a facilitator which helped their students to become more active instead of passive learners. It is worth mentioning that most of the tasks and activities included in the new textbooks in Libyan secondary schools have been designed to be carried out communicatively through employing pair and group work strategies (Orafi and Borg, 2009).

In responding to the interview question, '*Could you please tell us what the students' role in assessment is',* nine out of twelve teachers considered that students should take part in their learning. One of the interviewees T4 explained this concept; '*I believe that students' learning will be more effective when they learn how to be an in-depended learner'.* Another teacher T 9 added*, 'students should help each other in doing exercises and learning tasks they should not depend on the teacher for everything'.* The holders of the above beliefs interpreted the role of the students in assessments with regard to the active role that students should play in the learning process. Richards and Rodgers, (2014), Black & Wiliam, (1989) emphasised that students can be successful in their learning by taking responsibility and part in the learning process.

With regard to the interview question '*Do you follow textbook instructions or do you use your own method in teaching and assessing speaking skills?'* , the majority of the teachers responded that they do follow textbook instructions. A female teacher 8 reported '*Yes, I try to follow it. Our textbooks are very rich with activities but teachers just focus on other skills and ignore speaking'.* Similarly, another male teacher 7 reported that the activities which are designed for cooperative learning, help students to make progress and become active although the time for each lesson is not enough. He stated that teachers need to supplement extra activities that relate to Libyan culture and interest students, because some of the activities in the textbook do not motivate students to involve in classroom activities. One other teacher T11 admitted that teachers often

ignored practising speaking skill in their classrooms. He explained that teachers' limited abilities and time for English classes hinder them from focusing on speaking skill. He suggested that teachers can select topics which inspire students and increase their motivation to communicate in the English language. He clarified that when the topic is interesting, students will enjoy communicating and talking about it. Although all the interviewed teachers mentioned that they aim to motivate their students by selecting materials and topics that are interesting to their students, the degree to which they have applied this in their classrooms were different. Only three out of twelve teachers seemed to be more concerned about such techniques.

6.4.5. Teachers' Perceptions of the Assessment Processes

The analysis of the interview data revealed that teachers were different in their perceptions towards assessment process. The majority of the teachers (nine out of twelve) reported that, they believed that students should be involved in the process of learning including their involvement in assessing their work. Others claimed that they just restricted themselves to using summative assessment as they argue that they face various challenges when they tended to employ different assessment practices. However, all of them believed that assessment was necessary and that teachers should follow the appropriate process for assessment to be effective. Some of the teachers reported that assessing speaking skills presents anxiety for students and teachers need to be aware of this fact. For example, T5 explained that two practices might be more helpful:

> - *The observational approach, the student's behaviour is observed, and assessed   unobtrusively.*

> - *The structured approach, the students are asked to perform one or more specific oral communication tasks. His or her performance on the task is then evaluated*

The reasons for doing so, as he stated were; observational practices allowed the teacher to monitor the students' general attitude, thus, observing his/her oral skills in order to have better idea of students' achievement whereas the structured approach allowed the teacher to evaluate the student performance in specific

areas of communication. Further, the teacher explained that *'the first method observational enhances the student ability to express himself /herself without putting himself under the pressure of performing a task, enough space to work without restrictions, and to engage him to work with other students. The second approach gives the students the chance to prepare and perform certain tasks usually of their interest'.*

In this respect, teacher 9 reported that *'teachers can use many practices even in reading exercise, and it defines as speaking exercise, examining the same idea. For example, to assess the pronunciation of your students past simple (eds) ending, which is speaking exercise in reading exercise, teachers can provide students with a task in reading lesson and hence they can assess their student's speaking skills'.* More details about teachers' beliefs about the assessment practice can be found in the following subsections:

Teachers' Perceptions of Utilizing Quizzes

In responding to the interview question, *'Could you please tell us how you gather information about your students to assess their oral communication'* the analysis of data gained from the interviews with the teachers revealed that the majority of them used short quizzes to check their students' level of understanding. Seven out of twelve teachers reported that they use quizzes as a strategy when they want to assess their students. For example, T8 responded that she sometimes utilized short quizzes whenever it was possible as she explained, *'I use quizzes to check whether my students achieve the aims of the activity. In fact, adopting quizzes is very beneficial method for both teachers and students. It makes students active and well prepared and it helps teachers to find out the strengths and weakness area'.*

Another teacher T2 added that *'although we always run of time but we consider that short tests and quizzes can help teachers to assess their students in different areas and in limited time''.* This process was, also used by another teacher T12. This teacher explained his view about adapting short quizzes as a form of formative assessment. He reported *I find this strategy helpful especially for students who are unable to express themselves orally. I mean, I can sometimes*

find out to what extent my students understood the lesson formally. So, I always try to use this practice either at the beginning of each lesson or at the end.

Below is an extract which was taken from different teachers as examples to reflect teachers' perception towards learning and the assessment process they used. The response to the following question in the interview schedule was taken from a female T 12 with twenty-seven years' experience.

Q. What kind of assistance do you provide for students to take part in assessment?
T1: Well, in fact I always try to focus on making students more active.
Q. Could you please explain how?
T1: I try to supply extra materials beside the content of the textbook, which offered more opportunities for students to engage and involve in the learning process. These materials can be practiced when students work in pairs or in groups. Teacher 8 added *I treat my students in a friendly way. I mean I try to build a good relationship with every student. That is because I believe that feeling safe makes students more confident and act naturally.*

Teachers' Perceptions of Self-assessment

From the teachers' semi-structured interview responses to the question, '*Do you think that students learn more effectively when they use self-assessment?*' teachers from both sexes emphasised that self-assessment is considered a necessary step in the learning process and students should be trained to evaluate their work. For instance, one of the male teachers, T 3 with 9 years' experience stated '*Involving students in carrying out self-assessment is a goal, which needs a lot of practice for both teachers and students'.* Another male teacher 5 with twenty-four years' experience explained, '*I believe that practicing self-assessment is an ideal strategy that help students to reflect on their learning. However, both teachers and students' high accountability to the current national examinations does not provide opportunities to employ self-assessment'.* Although gender was not a focus variable and beyond the scope of the current study, some issues related to gender differences have arisen during the interviews and the observation. It was evident that female teachers were more

flexible and more patient; for example, more than five female teachers were using their body language to simplify students' learning. In other words, these teachers were able to look at their classroom's situation with diversity and act accordingly, they were using encouragement signs such as smiling and praising even though students were committing regular mistakes. Further, these teachers' classes seemed to be more motivated than the other classes in that most of the students were active and tried to participate in the classroom activities. It was also clear from the observations that female teachers were more likely to use a facilitator style that emphasizes relating to students as a guide or consultant as opposed to transmitting knowledge. These results confirm Smith's, (2007) and Holmes', (2001) findings which stated that there is a difference between women and men in terms of the ways in which they communicate.

Smith, (2007, p. 5) stated that studies have shown that there is a difference between men and women in the way of communication with others, verbally and non-verbally. The research revealed that some women tend to have more actively facial expressions during interaction and conversation than men, and they are more communicatively supportive by using signs to inform that they are interested and paying attentions in the conversation (Holmes 2001, p. 297).

The data from semi-structured interview showed that teachers find it difficult to practise self-assessment, although, they try to follow all the instructions of the textbooks which emphasised that students are supposed to work either in pairs or in groups, as many activities were designed for this purpose. One of the challenges encountered by teachers when they tend to practise self-assessment was reported by one of the male teachers with twenty-four years' experience T4 as follows: *'In fact, I always try to follow the author of the textbook instructions. However, the assessment criteria for evaluating students' learning depend on an external examination'.* He added that, this contradicts with the textbook instructions, which forces teachers and students to focus on how to finish the curriculum in the limited time and how to prepare for the final exam.

One of the teachersT5 explained that, he always tries to help his students to evaluate their work, as he believed that taking part in the learning process helps

students to experience the teacher's and the student's role as he stated: '*I have been teaching English language in secondary schools more than twenty years. Despite the pressure and tension that are experienced by the examination every year. I always prefer to engage my students in the learning process. I certainly believe that independent learning is a beneficial strategy that helps students to be motivated and self-reflect'*.

On the other hand, the lack of understanding of the principles of formative assessment by some other teachers could be a reason that hindered them from practising self-assessment. Their responses to the interview question contradicted with what was observed. One of the teachers, T1 explained, '*I cannot provide a chance to every student to evaluate his/her work. The time for every lesson is not enough for this strategy. Students are used to see the teacher as the dominator and controller of the classroom. Therefore, I evaluate my students by doing quizzes and exams to know the level of their achievement'*. Another teacher T11 agreed with this view and added, '*I think students at the moment are not able to be independent learners and evaluate their work. In fact, they used to see the teacher as the only person who can assess, examine and do all the teaching and learning processes. It needs years to change teachers and students' beliefs about the new teaching and learning methods'*.

Consequently, teachers who recommended employing self-assessment preferred to adapt their instructions with the new curriculum and the new methods of teaching and learning, which require teachers to share the responsibility of teaching and learning with the learners. These methods of teaching provide the opportunities for students to work cooperatively and practise evaluating their work as active and independent learners.

Teachers' Perceptions of Peer-assessment

In responding to the interview question '*Do you think that students learn more effectively when they use peer assessment?,* the majority of the teachers (nine out of twelve) responded positively towards this notion. For example, one of the female teachers T8 with 18 years 'experience reported, '*actually, I always consider working in groups as a good strategy that every teacher should follow.*

You know, when students work and evaluate each other's work they share ideas and create a discussion which helps them to practise communicating in English'. Another female teacher T4 seemed to be enthusiastic towards using peer assessment. Her response to the interview question relating her view of the importance of employing peer assessment in students' learning was as follows: '*I usually give much attention to group activities, because it has a positive significant influence on students' learning'.*

These teachers reported that peer assessment was important in developing cooperative learning in that students could exchange and discuss feedback with each other. They also stated that when students work together it helps them to interact and discuss their progress with each other (Roberts 2006). This indicated that these teachers believed in the effectiveness of using peer assessment as a process for improving students' learning. However, three out of twelve teachers explained that they sometimes found it difficult to engage their students in group activities because many students lack confidence in their ability to participate in these activities. These teachers also reported different reasons to clarify their views. Most of these reasons were related to the difficulties and challenges that they face when they try to employ formative assessment methods. One of these teachers T11 reported that it was not easy for teachers to employ cooperative activities because the content of the new textbook is beyond many of the students' ability and may be some of the teachers as well.

Another teacher 1 added '*I am sorry to say that most of Libyan teachers do not pay much attention to peer and self-assessment, because I think they believe that this process of assessment is a matter of wasting time and difficult to practise'.* Teachers accepted that formative and peer assessment would improve students' learning. However, they emphasised that they did not practise formative assessment methods because of many constrains and difficulties.

Teachers' Perception towards Employment of Summative Assessment

The results from the interview analysis related to the question '*Could you please tell us how you gather information about your students to assess their oral communication?*' revealed that three out of twelve teachers seemed not to be

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interested in practicing ongoing assessment. These teachers employed summative assessment as a practice in order to find out about their students' level of understanding. They justified their views for using such process instead of employing other forms of assessment for various reasons. One of the teachers who was a female T4 explained that many teachers depend on summative assessment because they lack time and they want to complete the syllabus in the limited time.

This indicates that dealing with how to complete the syllabus in the exact time can be one of the difficulties, which might affect negatively employing other procedures to assess students. Another teacher T9 discussed her beliefs about practicing summative assessment by saying: '*Ok, both teachers and students are used to the traditional method of teaching and assessing. Shifting from teacher-centred to student-centred might be a big challenge. It needs all to work cooperatively. I mean Ministry of education, local authority and everybody who is concerned about teaching and learning'.* Further, the other teacher who was a male teacher 7 with four years' experience considered summative assessment as a reliable method, however, moving from this traditional one to a new assessment method is a challenge that needs more effort and time.

In responding to the interview question '*Do you think that the current assessment practice that used help students to improve in speaking skills?',* the findings of the study revealed, that the majority of the teachers were not satisfied with the assessment process. However, they reported that they were obliged to employ the current assessment practice. They were aware of the importance of providing their students with more chances to assess their own work which was reflected in their emphasis on considering students as the core of the learning process. Additionally, this also can be noticed from their knowledge and understanding of changing their role and method of teaching from instruction to facilitation, which does not contradict with their role as a reliable source of knowledge or as an expert in their subject.

Regarding the interview question about the best process for assessing students '*in an ideal world how you could see the oral assessment process occurring?',* three out of twelve interviewed teachers emphasised that teachers should always

avoid the word assessment or test especially in oral communication, as this skill needs more support and confidence. They reported that the best process is, to observe their students' performance covertly. For example, when students work on a specific oral communication task during working in pairs or groups their performance on that task could be assessed. On the other hand, a male teacher number 12 said, '*well, I believe that the best method teachers can use for checking their students' learning is using filling gaps activity*'. He justified his opinion by explaining that this process is easy and appropriate for students' level.

Assessing students' learning using this kind of filling gaps, is considered a suitable process by many Libyan teachers because teachers are supposed to use Communicative Language Teaching which is based on the main goal of involving students in meaningful communication using the target language. Three teachers reported that they believed in this kind of activity as they considered it achieves the goal of student's communication on getting the information they do not own. Therefore, students are encouraged in the classroom to perform this kind of activity and communicate meaningfully to obtain information. These teachers also stated that by using this kind of activity teachers can find out their students' strengths and weakness in a short time. Therefore, they considered such activity one of the ideal process for assessing students' learning.

6.4.6. Teachers' Perceptions towards Difficulties in Assessment

The analysis of the interview data revealed that, the most influential problems that were reported by the majority of the teachers related to the large number of students in a class, and the design of how chairs are fixed which cannot be moved and used for group work activities easily. The teachers explained that this challenge makes it difficult for them to employ cooperative activities and concentrate on every student. They said that the classroom environment is not helpful for the students and hinders teachers to provide opportunities for students to work cooperatively. One of the teachers T11 claimed '*Classroom size is not conducive for communication teaching activities*'. One other teacherT6 added '*Active learning can be achieved by encouraging students to work together and*

get benefit from each other'. This teacher also indicated that teachers find difficulties when they try to use communicative learner-centred activities because of the lack of time and the large number of students in each class.

This indicates that teachers were aware of the importance of their students working together in pairs or in groups to help each other in the learning process. However, teachers employ what it is possible to employ as emphasised by T1 *'because most of classrooms' design do not help in employing cooperative activities easily, as the classes are too large and the time is too limited. I am forced most of the time to use the whole class discussions'.* These findings agree with what Cooper, (2011) and David, (1999) explained that the large number of students may affect the teacher ability to focus on individual students and satisfy their needs.

The majority of the teachers also related their failure to create a suitable and new environment that includes students' participation in assessment process for many reasons. One of the interviewed teachers 7 clarified that teachers and students need to be trained to be able to adapt to the new assessment practice. This indicated that some of the current teachers were unable to implement the alternative methods of teaching and assessing. Other teachers complained about the lack of support or sympathy for what they do. They mentioned that there has been shortage of education facilities in all secondary schools which might help in facilitating the teaching and learning process.

Two teachers related the challenges that they face in employing various assessment processes to the students themselves. For example, T12 explained, that students do not feel confident enough to engage in oral activities which demotivate students to adapt to their new roles and participate during group activities. The findings of the teachers' interview also revealed that teachers do not trust their students. They reported that their students are not able to provide reliable grades when they assess either their own or each other's work. These findings are supported by the findings of the quantitative data which showed that teachers did not trust students to provide a reliable grade if they were asked to assess their work. Teachers justified their views by stating that students may be

affected by many issues such as their relationships with each other. Therefore, they need to be practised before expecting them to provide a reliable grade. These results correspond with Weimer's, (2002) and Harlen's, (2013) who stated that some matters such as the power of the relationships might touch students' evaluation of their peers' work.

Although, experience is not the focus of this study, some factors have been appearing when analysing teachers' observation. Differences and similarities in using assessment practices were found among the more and less experienced teachers when they check their students' understanding. More female experienced teachers were observed to be less nervous and anxious about students' committing errors especially grammatical ones during oral activities. These teachers were observed to be more patient and tried to ease the learning process during oral communication activities in certain situations and when students work in groups by giving students a chance and time to think and check their work. They also use more facial expressions such as smiling and praising their students when they try to involve their students in the classroom activities.

In addition, rejecting feedback was practised more by less experienced teachers. These teachers regularly intervene whenever students commit any errors. In other words, it was apparent that teachers who have been teaching English for more than ten years were more concerned with providing constructive feedback, as they believed that it motivated students and helped them to feel secure and unthreatened.

These results agree with Wiseman et al., (2002) who stated that experienced teachers employ various strategies and might become an expert in the method and technique they use. It is also in line with Harkin et al., (2001) and Ali, (2008) who confirmed that less experienced teachers are more uncertain and dissatisfied in their teaching methods than more experienced teachers.

In summary, the teachers had different perceptions and preferences and different reasons to justify their practice when teaching and assessing their students' communicative competence. However, it was evident from both the observations and the interview that a good teacher can make the traditional classroom an

exciting place. Three out of twelve teachers who were observed were able to create a positive classroom environment in which students were observed to be actively involved in the classroom activities. The precise goals of any course must be clear in the mind of the teacher, as well as, the best processes and strategies for checking their students' understanding.

6.4.7. DATA ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' INTERVIEW

Research question 2 (B) is concerned with students' opinions towards the assessment process used by their teachers in assessing their oral communication. The following subsections provide an analysis of students' interview, in order to find out answers to the research question (2) with respect to students' point of view:

6.4.7.1. Students' Perceptions towards the Importance of Oral Communication

All students, who participated in the interview question 1 regarding how long they have been learning EFL. All the students responded with more than six years. From this one might assume that they should be able to use the language in real life situations. In responding to the interview question whether mastering speaking skill is important for students, they reported different views about the importance of speaking English language. Generally, all of them were aware of the importance of speaking English for different reasons such as furthering their studies or get a good job in the future. One of the interviewed student said, '*speaking English is necessary if you want to work outside of Libya, without English it will be a bit of problem,* another student added *we must know English if we want to study further to a higher level'.*

All the interviewed students insisted on the importance of speaking English. They stated that they needed to practise English language to improve their ability to speak. One of these students mentioned that *'more opportunities should be given to students to practise English in different communication activities'.* Another student emphasised the significance of speaking English language by saying, '*because speaking is so important. When I work, I will work with company so the English is quite important, so it is necessary'.*

Students' interest in mastering speaking skill was also reported by other students for other purposes. For example, one student clarified his view by explaining, '*knowing English language can lead to me passing my final examination'.* Another student added '*we have to study English language to be able to join the university. We cannot complete our study if we do not know English language'.* However, three of the students reported their hatred of learning English. One of the students claimed '*I hate learning English it is difficult a language'.* Another student added '*I am shy to speak in front of the class as I think my English is not good and I can only speak broken English. It is because I am not confident with my poor grammar'.*

From these responses, it can be said that students were aware of the importance of speaking and mastering English language especially for furthering their studies. Nevertheless, some of the students admitted that they found speaking and learning English not an easy task and they dislike learning it. In responding to the interview question 3 '*Do you feel that you are confident and able to communicate in English lessons?'* , the findings revealed that nine out of twelve interviewed students reported their lack of confidence when they communicate using English language due to various reasons. One of the students admitted '*I understand English is important. Umm I would like speaking English It's just I do not have the courage yet'.* Another student responded '*I am shy to speak with English. We study grammar, vocabulary not speaking. I want to learn to speak I do not feel confident in front of others'.*

Interview question 6 asked students, how they feel speaking in front of their classmates. The majority of the students, nine out of twelve students reported that they feel anxious and embarrassed when they commit mistakes, and shy when they try to communicate in English and cannot continue communicating. One of the students stated '*I want to speak English, I do not feel confident to speak English with people, I am afraid of making mistakes and losing face'.* However, some other students reported that they feel shy when their teacher corrects every single mistake and does not tolerate committing errors. One of the students reported '*for me I sometimes encounter difficulties when my teacher keeps stopping me and correct every mistake, stop that is wrong, stop that's*

wrong. Ha ha, I feel crazy'. Another student added *'when I speak, I feel that all my friends. I mean classmates are judging me'.*

Three out of the twelve interviewed students responded that they are self-confident when they communicate in English. Although, they committed some grammatical mistakes, they tried to respond in English. One of them explained *'English is important nowadays to learn. I always encourage myself to communicate in English, I do not care if I make some mistakes because I feel sure that unless I speak I cannot learn English'.* The other student added *'I have no problem with the grammar but I find some difficult to speak fluently, and I do not feel shy to speak English. It is not my language, so mistakes is normal'.*

Thus, based on these interviews, the majority of those students realised the importance of English in their lives. They believe that speaking is an important skill because it can be used for various purposes and communication with other people, which is similar to the opinion of the teachers presented in sub-section 6.4.1. These students perceived that they were weak in English and even then, they tended to learn and communicate using English language. Some of them may have admitted their dislike of the language, yet, they were aware of the significance of learning English language and would like to improve their speaking skill. However, as seen from the analysis of classroom observation, although most of the students have positive attitudes towards English language learning, the use of English is limited in the classroom. Students tend to use the Arabic language when communicating with each other in the classroom.

6.4.7.2. Students' Perceptions towards the Importance of Assessment

The data collected from the qualitative method used revealed that students were aware of the role that assessment play in learning. They considered that assessment was a necessary step to find out the strengths and the weaknesses area of students' achievement. One of the students responded *'it is important for us, and our teachers to know how we are doing in our learning.* She added that *when teachers check our level of understanding that helps them to be aware about how to change or modify their strategies according to the assessment*

results'. Another student explained *'when teachers evaluate students' work; it becomes clear how we can improve learning for both teachers and students'.*

This indicates that assessment is considered by these students as necessary process for both teachers and students. In responding to the interview question, *'do you think that the current assessment techniques for oral communication is helpful enough to enhance your learning to speak English?',* ten out of twelve interviewed students reported that the current methods of assessment push them to account for how to pass the examinations and get good marks. One student responded to the interview question by saying, *'we need to speak English, we know how to write English correctly most of the time but we cannot communicate confidently'.*

It seems clear that the current methods of assessment do not provide opportunities for students to take part in their learning as most of them acknowledged their weaknesses in communicating using English language. They confirmed that their focus in the current assessment is memorizing the grammatical rules rather than practicing their knowledge of the language.

6.4.7.3. Students' Perceptions towards the Assessment Process

In the interview question, students were asked about the different processes that their teacher used to assess their oral work. Different responses were provided. Generally, all the students emphasised that the most utilized practices were written tests and examinations. They mentioned that these examinations are presented to them in form of true/false items, fill-in-the blank, multiple-choice tests. One of the students explained *'during the oral lesson, our English teacher gives the class a short quiz about the topic that we studied in the previous lesson to check if we still remember what we had learned'.* Another student added *'we rarely practise speaking. Teachers focus on grammar'.*

Students' responses seemed to be limited to the awareness of the famous method that is used in these schools for evaluating their work. One of the students responded *'our teacher sometimes assess our speaking by giving us a choice to choose a topic and practise talking about it in front of the class.* She added *we get high grades if we speak without grammar mistakes'.* The interview question

8 asked students, how their teachers assess fluency. Students provided various views. Eight out of twelve students believed that teachers should evaluate fluency as how able students can understand and send a message. One of the students explained *'we know grammar more than vocabulary'.* Another student added that teachers should assess students' fluency based on student's ability to communicate in English language confidently. One other student explained *'if I speak and the listener understand me. It is ok. When they understand my talk even with mistakes, it means I am able to communicate in English'.*

With respect to the interview question, *'Do you think that you have enough opportunities to practise English speaking during each lesson?'* the majority of the students reported that they rarely get a chance to practise English. They said that they know how to write correct sentences but when it comes to communicating in English, they feel lack of confidence. Therefore, one student claimed, *'teachers should focus on how students can speak and use the vocabularies that they learned; we need to practise how to communicate rather than focusing on correcting every grammatical mistake'.* Another student added that their teacher rarely provides opportunities for students to communicate using the language. He said *'my teacher sometimes asks the class to describe some pictures in our textbook. So, we try to practise speaking but it is not enough'.*

Students' Perceptions towards Peer-Assessment

Responding to the interview question, *'Do you think that peer-assessment encourages you to participate in oral activities?',* the interview responses revealed that seven out of twelve of the students were positive towards working together. However, four students explained that not all the teachers provide opportunities for students to work together and practise peer-assessment. One of the students explained his view by saying *'when our teacher divides us to groups; we feel active and get benefit from each other'.* Another student reported *'working cooperatively can be beneficial, if it includes interesting topics. These speaking activities should include conversations and topics related to daily life'.*

Concerning the students' opinions of the interview question *'Do you enjoy peer-assessment? Does it help your learning?',* the students raised several issues

concerning peer-assessment. Some of them were not satisfied with the practice that their teacher use. Four out of twelve do not enjoy peer assessment. They reported that when they work as groups or in pairs on oral activity, some of the group members do not accept assessing or correcting their work. They added that in-group work activity, some students do not participate and only one or two students do the whole work. One of the students explained his view '*when I work with weak classmates, they do not try to participate and sometimes they misunderstand your judgment, they do not want to try to make any effort'.* One other student added '*I enjoy working with others; however, some students are low achievers. Therefore, the good student will do the whole work and at the end, we might get the same mark'.*

Students' Perceptions towards Using L1

The analysis of data gained from interviews with the students, revealed two different views. Although, all the students expressed their agreement about the importance of communicating using English language in order to develop their proficiency, those students who support code switching reported that they sometimes are obligated to use L1. They provided various responses to justify their opinions. One of the students in responding to the interview question, '*When you work on oral activities in English lessons with other classmates, do you prefer to speak in Arabic or in English?'* explained her view by saying, '*when we encounter difficulties in understanding some new vocabulary we prefer to explain them in Arabic'.* Another student added, '*some grammatical rules are difficult to be understood in English, teacher should explain them in Arabic'.*

On the other hand, some other students justified their view about using their native language when working in groups during oral activities, by giving other reasons. One of the students' claimed '*when I work with some classmates, who are weak and unable to speak in English, I prefer to speak in Arabic because they may feel that I am better than they are. Some students are very sensitive; they may feel that I am showing off'.*

Although, the classroom observation showed that the majority of the teachers use English most of the time during English lessons, it was evident that most

of the students prefer to code switch, as they found it helpful to translate some rules and vocabulary to their mother tongue to gain more understanding either when working in pairs or in groups (Nunan and Carter, 2001; Cook, 2001). In addition, students sometime used their mother tongue to ask for more clarification from their teacher. This implies that some students were not aware that language development involves the exposure to spoken utterances beyond their current language proficiency (Brown, 2004).

6.4.7.4. Students' Perceptions towards Conceptions of Assessment

Students' Perception towards Grades

Data from students' interview related to the question *'Do you prefer feedback with grades?'* revealed that the majority of students nine out of twelve consider that good grades encourage them to work harder. However, three out of twelve students reported that they prefer not to get feedback with grades. One of the students explained her view by emphasising that she finds grades useless as it does not help in discovering what to do to enhance her performance. One other student responded '*when my teacher gives me grades, I feel worried if it is not as I expect. We need to know why it is this mark. Teachers need to explain'*. This indicates that this student prefers to know how and why she got the mark. Another student added, '*I did not know, I do not prefer grades and marks. Comments are better'*.

In responding to the interview question, '*How do the grades you get from the teacher help in your learning?'* most of the students considered good grades as a motivated goal. Nine out of twelve students reported that they work hard during classroom activities or when they were given a homework to get high grades. One of the students explained '*for me, I think getting high marks means a lot. It means that I am a bright student and doing well in my work'*. Another student added '*when my teacher gives me good mark. Next time I work harder to gain better than this one. I mean grades encourage me to improve my performance'*.

Students who believed that providing marks help them to enhance their performance, explained some other advantages of grades. One of the students reported '*I think it is fair to provide good grades for students who work harder.

How can we differentiate between active students and lazy ones. When I got any result from my work the first thing I do is focusing on how much marks did I ge'. Another student added we *'get used to gain good marks whenever we perform well'*. Therefore, they consider grades as a reinforcement that helps them to work harder. However, the other students who considered providing grades impractical and do not help in their learning justified their opinions by explaining that when they get low marks they just feel disappointed and most of the time they neither know their strengths nor know to what extent they are weak.

Although the majority of students reported positive views towards the grades when interviewed there was a contradiction in their responses to the statement 15 in the students' questionnaire as a high number of students 83.9% reported that they preferred written feedback without grades (see Table 11).

Students' Perception towards Understanding Criteria

In responding to the interview question, '*Do you think that assessment should be based on clear criteria?,* findings revealed that all students prefer to know the criteria for assessing their work. One of the students explained '*I need to know what exactly required from me'.* Another student added '*when my teacher wants to assess my work, I want to know how can I get a good mark. I mean how to work well'.* It is clear from the interview responses that all students were aware of the importance of understanding the criteria. They reported that their teachers should help them to know what to do to improve their performance. They emphasised that understanding the criteria is very beneficial for their work and can develop their work according to what their teacher is looking for. These responses can also, be discovered from the students' answers to the statement related to understanding the criteria in the questionnaire as most of the students were positive towards the statement.

6.4.7.5. Students' Perceptions towards Teacher's Role

The findings revealed that most of the students believe that the role of the teacher should be as a facilitator who guides students in their learning. Ten out of twelve interviewed students believe that their teachers should act as a guide and adviser instead of just transforming and presenting knowledge. These findings supported

students' responses to the questionnaire statement which related to the role of the teacher when teaching and assessing students. One of the students explained her view by saying '*I think teachers are the most important element in the teaching and learning process. Teachers should act as fathers, mothers. I mean everything'.*

Another student claimed '*I feel shy when my teacher keeps stopping and correcting me whenever I commit error. I prefer my teacher to encourage me and later provide their corrective feedback'.* Some other students emphasised that they feel more relaxed when their teacher act as a friend and tolerate committing errors. One of the students explained '*when my teacher interrupts my flow while speaking the language, I feel frustrated'.* Another student added '*I always prefer teachers, who are old. They are more patient and treat us in a friendly way'.* Thus, it is clear that most of the students prefer their teachers to assist their learning through acting as an advisor who aid and share the learning process with their students.

It is also evident that the students generally prefer to be taught in English, as it was clear from their responses related the interview question about how they would like to learn English. Some students recommend that the textbook could include different extra materials of speaking activities such as conversation activities and discussion activities. Other students suggest that the topics of the activities should be related to everyday life issues. They also insisted on giving them the chance and more opportunities to choose the topic that interests them and push them to communicate using the language

6.4.7.6. Students' Perceptions towards the Difficulties in Assessment

In responding to the interview question, '*Do you think that the current assessment process for oral communication is helpful enough to enhance your learning to speak English?*', students raised some issues related to the difficulties that they face when their teacher evaluates their work. Students reported that the role of assessment is important in helping both teachers and students to find out the level of students' achievement. They explained that when their teachers assess

their learning, most of the teachers focus more on how students produce linguistic accuracy. They claimed that there was no chance to practise the language.

All the students were aware of the benefit from exposure to the spoken target language in developing their EFL proficiency. Most of them reported that they face difficulty in communicating in English. Students explained that the current assessment methods do not provide chances to them to be independent learner. One of the students clarified '*if the teachers, pay more attention to the students' participation, I mean if teachers do not consider that accuracy is more important than fluency we can speak the language easily*'.

This might indicate that students were not satisfied with the method that their teachers follow as they believe that their teachers focus more on how to construct correct sentences at the expense of how to communicate spontaneously. Some interviewed students also, mentioned that their teachers rarely establish clear criteria that helped in discovering what their teachers were looking for from them. All students considered this issue as the most important aspect that would improve their learning.

6.5. RESEARCH QUESTION THREE

What are:

A. *The similarities between teachers' and students' perceptions?*
B. *The differences between teachers' and students' perceptions?*

6.5.1. Comparison and Contrast

This section compares the results of teachers' and students' semi-structured interviews and questionnaire responses. As shown in the following tables (15 & 16). The analysis of teachers' and students' semi-structured interviews and questionnaires revealed similarities as well as differences in teachers and students' perceptions. The similarities and the differences lay in the following sections:

The Similarities

With regard to the responses of semi-structured interviews from teachers and students the findings revealed that there are some similarities in teachers' and

students' beliefs and views towards various issues relating to assessment practice. However, some differences were also found between teachers' and students' opinions. Table 15 illustrates the similarities between both teachers and students' beliefs:

Table 15: Similarities in teachers' and students' perceptions

Teachers' Perceptions	Students' Perceptions
• Teachers believe that oral communication helps students to convey their messages	• Students believe that oral communication is important to help them express themselves.
• Teachers believe that oral communication is necessary component for language learning.	• Students believe that oral communication is necessary for passing their exams in order to join the university
• Teachers believe that students who communicate well can gain jobs easily	• Students believe that if they can communicate easily in English language, they can gain good jobs
• Teachers believe assessment is necessary and students should be involved in the process of assessment	• Students believe that assessment is important and they need opportunities to practise assessing their work
• Quizzes can help teachers to assess their students in different areas and in limited time	• Students believe that they used to prepare themselves to utilizing short quizzes as an assessment process
• Teachers are aware about the importance of students working in groups and assessing each other's work	• Students are positive towards group work and peer- assessment
• Using L1 can help students to overcome some difficulties in their learning	• Code switching is needed for particular purposes such as clarification

• Teachers believe that assessment should be based on clear criteria	• Students consider that understanding criteria is necessary in assessing their work
• 86% of the teachers believe that teachers' role should be changed from controller to facilitator as many activities in the textbook require that	• 83.4% of the students consider that teachers' role should be as a facilitator not as a presenter of knowledge
• The majority of teachers consider correcting students during speaking hinders students speaking fluently	• All students believe that correcting them while speaking does not help in improving their learning
• The majority of teachers consider that their students believe that assessment is only the teacher's job	• The majority of students believe that assessment is only the teachers' job
• 77.8% of the teachers believe that providing feedback with grades is motivating	• 72% of the students believe that providing feedback with grades is motivating

The differences

Data analysis of semi-structured interviews from teachers and students revealed that there are some differences in teachers and students' beliefs and views towards various issues relating assessment process. The following table (16) illustrates the differences in teachers' and students' views:

Table 16: Differences in teachers' and students' perceptions

Teachers' Perceptions	Students' Perceptions
• Teachers were different in their views towards grades. Grades can be beneficial as well as harmful	• The majority of students consider that grades encourage them to work harder
• Teachers believe that students' participation in assessment gives them self-confidence	• The majority of students do not believe that assessment helps them to be self-confident

• The majority of teachers believe that paying more attention to accuracy is more helpful for students' learning	• The majority of students consider that fluency is more important than accuracy
• Teachers were less positive towards understanding assessment criteria	• Understanding assessment criteria is vital for students
• All teachers believe that students use their mother tongue during group discussion	• The majority prefer not to use L1 during group activities
• Few teachers believe that teachers should supplement extra materials to satisfy students' needs	• All students believe that teachers should supplement extra materials to satisfy students' needs
• The majority of teachers believe that assessing students at the end of each speaking course enables teachers identify students' strengths and weaknesses	• The minority of students believe that assessing students at the end of each speaking course help them to improve
• The majority of teachers believe that peer and group activities provide good opportunities for language practice.	• The minority believe that peer-assessment helps to practise the language

6.5.2. Summary of interviews data analysis

The conclusion that can be drawn from the data analysis of the semi-structured interviews is that the research objectives that are related to the teachers and students' perceptions were achieved. These interviews aimed to understand the perceptions and views of both teachers and students towards the assessment process. The interviewed participants' responses revealed that oral communication is necessary for various purposes, however, it is a challenge for the majority of students. Consequently, many students face various difficulties when they try to communicate and practise English language. The participants stated that the unsuitable environment for the teaching and learning process has negatively influenced the assessment practice of students' oral communication.

According to teachers' and students' responses students find that communicating in English language is hard due to their lack of confidence and limited opportunities to practise the language. Much of the teachers' attention and efforts endeavoured to help students produce correct grammar and pronunciation. Therefore, the focus of the majority of the teachers was on assessing linguistic accuracy rather than fluency, and teachers were relegated to applying teacher-centred approaches where there is little or no formative assessment employed. As a result, oral communication skills were not assessed and taught effectively whereas students were kept as passive and demotivated learners because some teachers still believed that the fear of losing control over the class or wasting too much time, was a challenge that hindered them from performing group work activities.

Furthermore, most of the interviewees complained about the time constraints and blamed overcrowded classes for avoiding interactive activities such as arranging the class in groups or pairs. In fact, it cannot be ignored that the class size and time allocated to oral communication classes can largely affect teachers' instructional practices. Some other problems which had been drawn from the responses of the interviewees were related to the students' inability to provide reliable grade when assessing their work and the lack of training for both teachers and students.

However, such factors should not form excuses for teachers in order to stop making efforts to diversify their teaching and assessment practice, and integrate speaking activities to improve their students' ability to practise the language. Teachers' careful selection of learning tasks in the light of their good understanding of their students' cognitive abilities and employing cooperative learning are good strategies for encouraging students' working with peers and freeing them from dependence on teachers. Overall, teachers' and students' responses provided in the semi-structured interviews support largely the findings of the questionnaire. Students' lack of confidence negatively affected their oral communication performance. The lack of facilities and inadequate environment are partly to be blamed in the process of teaching and assessing oral communication.

CHAPTER SEVEN: DISCUSSION

7.1. INTRODUCTION

In chapter five, the statistical findings concerning the types and frequencies of the assessment practices secondary school Libyan teachers used were presented. Chapter six incorporated the results from interviews concerning both teachers' and students' perceptions towards these practices. This chapter aims to provide an interpretation and discussion of the findings obtained from both chapters five & six. It compares the data analysis and the results gained from both quantitative and qualitative data. Therefore, the first research question will be answered by a detailed discussion on teachers' application of different assessment forms and the relevant findings from observations and teachers' responses to the questionnaire, besides the relevance of these outcomes to previous findings from other studies whenever applicable.

7.2. RESEARCH QUESTION ONE

What are the assessment processes Libyan teachers use at secondary schools in assessing students' oral communication?

This research question seeks to identify the assessment processes Libyan teachers employ in order to check their students' understanding. The findings obtained from both quantitative and qualitative methods propose that teachers' used various processes throughout their oral activities tasks. More details in the following sub-sections.

7.2.1. ASSESSMENT PROCESSES

This section discusses the findings from the analysis of quantitative data (see sections 5.5.1 & 5.5.2) and qualitative data (see sections 6.3.1, 6.3.2). Analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data revealed that teachers employ different assessment processes to check their students' learning. The data results also showed that both teachers and students consider 'test', which is referred to by teachers and students, as 'exam' that takes place at the mid and the final term of the learning course as the traditional and formal practice of summative

assessment. Depending only on traditional tests in assessing students is viewed in the literature as an ineffective practice (Fraser, 2016) as it encourages rote learning and depends on students' memory to answer its questions. In addition, it focuses on achieving correct grammatical sentences structure (Alhmali, 2007; Shihiba, 2011). Researchers recommend a variety of assessment methods (Fraser, 2016; Avis et al., 2010).

However, the teachers' questionnaire findings revealed that a great number of teachers 74% of the teachers assured that they do not depend only on the traditional process of summative assessment (see Table 5) as 70% of them considered assessment as a part of the learning process. These processes of assessment include short quizzes during oral communication lessons, using various feedback such as questioning, encouraging and rejecting in order to find out to what extent their students understand the task. However, a number of teachers 56% signified that they sometimes, rarely or never applied participatory assessment practices such as giving students the chance to assess themselves or each other's work (see Table 7). This finding contradicts the literature which emphasises that students need to evaluate their performance in order to "understand what more they need to learn and so that they do not become dependent on their teachers" (Oscarson, 2009, p.63). It is understandable that these types of assessment forms might be found as a new practices and teachers have less proficiency with them and may not be applied widely as other processes. This is because most of the teachers, especially in Libyan context, were accustomed to teacher-centred approach in their teaching and learning as well as students. Thus, more training and encouragement could lead learners to improve their performance and increase independent learning.

Although, teachers were observed dominating the classroom instructions, the majority of them were talking in English during English lessons, which provided the students with a considerable amount of target language input. Communicating using the target language during English lessons is a significant feature in language learning success. It is recommended by many educators and researchers such as; Carter and Nunan, 2001, Harmer, 2007, Brown, 2007, Richards and Rodgers, 2014, and considered valuable for improving

communicative competence. The results gained from qualitative data revealed that the focus of the majority of teachers was more on assessing accuracy at the expense of fluency. This, as confirmed by the teachers' responses to the statement 28 in the questionnaire (see Table 9) which showed that 78% of the teachers believed that accuracy is more important than fluency. The qualitative findings supported the quantitative results where (most) eight out of twelve of the interviewed teachers stated that they pay more attention to grammatical rules and pronunciation errors in oral communication classes. They indicated that they could not develop their students' oral skills because of many challenges and constraints such as time constraints, the accountability for the national exam and the large number of students which is between 25 to 30 students in each classroom.

In this study, it is argued that students' lack of fluency is one of the reasons behind the poor oral communication performance of many Libyan students. Most of the students do not feel confident enough to communicate using English language. This was apparent during the classroom observations where students most of the time were passive and hesitant to participate in oral activities. These results were also confirmed when these students were interviewed. Most of the interviewed students (nine out of twelve) reported that their teachers rarely provide them with sufficient opportunities to practise communicating and using the language. They claimed that most of their teachers focus more on how to produce correct sentence structure. One of the students explained *'for me English is difficult subject. I do not feel confident to speak with other people. My teacher does not tolerate our mistakes and corrects every single error'.* This was also clear in the students' responses to the questionnaire statement 29 (Table11) as 89.5% of them claimed that it becomes difficult when their teachers correct them while they still speaking. Additionally, the results from teachers' interview data emphasised this finding, as eight out of twelve teachers related students' hesitation in participating in oral activities to their lack of confidence in communicating using English language.

The quantitative findings revealed that 58% of the teachers' questionnaire responses stressed using various resources that fulfil students' interests. The

results from the qualitative data revealed that five out of twelve teachers stated that they tend to provide their students with different topics that motivate them to engage and participate in oral lessons (see Table 8). However, these findings contradict what was observed in that, most of these teachers, who were observed, were focusing mainly on the topics, which were included in the textbook. In particular, the analysis of the data from classroom observations revealed that certain teachers correct their students' pronunciation and grammatical errors immediately. It became apparent that these teachers were also observed to provide negative feedback such as saying '*no*', '*no*' '*it is not correct*', '*stop your answer is not right*' whenever students fail to respond correctly (see section 6.3.5).

This behaviour can act as a barrier that might hinder students from feeling self-confident and minimizes their chance to participate in further activities, thus, became more hesitant to communicate using the language (Hedge, 2000; Mitchell et al., 2013). Gregson and Hillier, (2015) advise that feedback should be clear and scaffold students in their learning. These findings might assume that these teachers were not aware of the efficiency of providing students with the chance to rethink and correct themselves. Nevertheless, they were not working in line with advice (Harmer, 2001, Roberts, 2006), which says that it is better to give the opportunity for students to correct themselves when they encounter any difficulties, because this process was found to be helpful for improving students' fluency. Moreover, these findings are in agreement with Mitchell et al., (2013, p.18) who argued that formal correction is given by the teachers, does not give a chance for the students to evaluate their performance. Hence, when teachers encourage students to correct their errors and avoid giving direct correction, students are helped to experience evaluating their own performance. This view is also in concord with the constructivism theory views, which consider learning a language as a creation of meaning and learners as active participants who negotiate for better learning (Brown 2000, p.245).

However, it was evident that a few teachers were more concerned with improving communication skills rather than focusing on grammatical rules and were using more varied procedures in correcting students' grammatical and pronunciation

errors, such as giving the students more time to rethink and evaluate their work. It can be assumed that three of the teachers, who were observed providing students with the opportunities to self-correct, were aware of the effectiveness of using different assessment processes. These teachers were more concerned with helping students to engage in the learning process than some other teachers were.

Findings of the study also showed that the same three teachers were trying to provide positive feedback and encourage students to communicate even when they were committing mistakes. Supporting students and avoid interrupting their flow while communicating, create a safe and secure environment for improving students' learning. The results of this study in this respect concurred with those of Scales, (2008, p.51) who considered that feedback is linked to empathy. It is also in line with Taras, (2002, 2005) who referred to feedback, as a significant element of production.

7.2.1.1. Employment of Participatory Assessment Practices

Findings gained from the teachers' questionnaire revealed that 68% of the teachers consider that involving students in assessment helps them to become more responsible for their own learning and guides them to check their learning progress towards their objectives (see Table 5). The qualitative findings contradict the quantitative results. The observation of the teachers' classroom practice revealed that only three out of twelve teachers who participated in this study were observed to give their students a chance to practise peer and self-assessment in their classrooms; despite the positive views of many of them towards these forms of assessment (see section 6.3.3). It would be worth mentioning that these teachers were the same three teachers who were mentioned above. These teachers were concerned with engaging their students in assessing their performance in which students were provided with opportunities to involve and be motivated to assess their work, were also noticed to be more active than others were.

This indicates that the three teachers tended to avoid preparing students just for the final examination and tried to encourage them to take part in the learning

process. Although, the three teachers' classes were noisier than the others, it clearly seemed that these students were enjoying their lessons as speaking the language requires noise. This can be confirmed by the data from the semi-structured interviews with those teachers inspiring their students to take part in the participatory assessment forms that they consider providing students with opportunities to practise peer and self-assessment as a goal and necessary step for students' improvement.

Teachers' questionnaire findings also indicated that 70% of the teachers confirmed that students' participation in self-assessment helped them to be self-confident. These findings are consistent with Roberts, (2006) & Oscarson's, (2009) argument which considered that when students practise evaluating their work it increases the ownership and the commitment to their learning process. It also helps them to experience their teachers' role (Taras, 2001, 2005).The importance of encouraging learners to be active and practise evaluating their work is also a notion emphasised by many other researchers, such as Oxford, (1990, p.161); Sadler, (1989); Black & Wiliam, (1989); Tsui, (2003); Freeman, (2011); McDonough et al., (2013) and Harlen, (2013).

These ideas imply that these scholars interest shift the focus of classroom instructional approaches to be on more learning and less on teaching in order to offer active and participatory roles for learners in constructing their knowledge. This is also reflected in constructivist theory views which consider that learning a language is a personal process of constructing meaning upon previous experience and knowledge (Brown, 2000; Gadsby 2012; Harlen, 2013). Constructivism's interpretation of learning is that learners can develop new skills and knowledge when they are active participants and when they engage in their learning. It is also a common belief of socio-cultural theory which considered that to achieve what Vygotsky called 'Zone of Proximal Development' (ZPD), learners should be involved in a collaborative activity in the classroom. In addition, learners need to be active so that a new language is created and learners can develop their ability to communicate using the language with the help of their peers and teacher (Mitchell et al., 2013, p. 222).

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The notion of independent learning is central in many researchers' studies, which emphasised the suggestion that students should be the core of teaching and learning process. Researchers such as Black & Wiliam, (1989); Sadler, (1989); Taras, (2001); Black et al., (2004); Gardner, (2012) believe that students need to be trained to assess themselves and practise peer and self-assessment. This notion is considered fundamental in improving students' learning. It was clear that teachers' application of different assessment forms seemed to be an individual practice for some of them who considered the use of some specific forms as part of their assessment plans in order to improve their students' learning. In fact, this study found that the choice to employ the new assessment practices is not fully in the teachers' hand, since they have to account for the summative assessment, which might conflict with their own intended assessment practices. One other reason for this might be related to students' reluctance to participate in oral activities, as most of the students observed and interviewed lacking confidence in their communication skills suggested that they felt embarrassed whenever they commit a tiny error.

Student-learning method can be approached through the employment of activities encouraging students to cooperate and take part in the learning process. This can also be reached when teachers perform tasks and establish an appropriate climate that require students to share and engage in such activities. However, teachers who were positive towards the student-centred approach would not be able to translate their perceptions into practice in the Libyan context where the education system is still dominated by the teacher as main source of knowledge (see sections 2.2.6 & 2.2.7). The implementation of forms of formative assessment also requires the existence of what researchers such as Taras, (2001, 2005); Roberts, (2006); Broadfoot, (2007); Chappuis & Stiggins, (2012); Harlen, (2013) emphasised the encouragement and involvement of students in identifying criteria and standards. It also needs the teachers to change their beliefs and teaching strategies from a controller whose mainly role is to present knowledge to a facilitator who guides and facilitates learning (Richard- Amato 2003; Black et al., 2003; Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011, p.122)

It can be concluded that this should not lead to the conclusion that formative assessment forms can never be employed in contexts such as Libya. It was evident that some teachers were to some extent able to practise and engage their students and tried to make them active instead of passive in certain situations. More time and effort are required beside a lot of training for both teachers and students to achieve these goals.

7.2.1.2. Using Cooperative Classroom Learning Activities

Language activities provide a chance for students to practise what they have learned and consolidate what it has been taught or acquired. They help students to use the language actively and hence contributing to their learning (Tsui, 2003; Richards, 2006; Harmer, 2007; Ellis, 2012). The teachers' questionnaire findings of this study revealed that 84% of the teachers were aware of the importance of language activities as tools that reinforced students to involve and engage to improve their learning (see-Table 5). However, analysing relevant data revealed that not all the communication activities included in the textbook were implemented by the teachers (see-section 6.3.6). These activities were not frequently implemented by the majority of the teachers despite the positive views of these teachers and the instructions of the textbook which emphasised that students need to work cooperatively either in pairs or in groups to perform communicative activities. It was also clear that some of the language activities appeared not-to be appropriate for what they were intended to practise. Nine out of twelve teachers failed to create a suitable environment through which their students could contextualize the structure of the language that they have learned. This suggested that those teachers were affected by behaviourist views where focusing on language structure is seen to be helpful in forming correct language habits (Mitchell et al., 2013).

These findings agree with the findings of Orafi and Borg (2009) who assured their readers-that Libyan secondary school teachers do not pay much attention to pair and group work activities and most of the time tried to avoid implementing them in their classrooms. However, few teachers practised group work discussion where all the class- were-involved in participating in such activity. These teachers

seemed to be more concerned about how to improve students' communicative competence. These results are in line with Tsui, (2003, p. 38) who confirmed that expert "teachers are more selective in information processing, and they often consider student learning the most criterion for selection". His view of these teachers is that they have the ability to conduct individual, pair or group work and they can deal with any disruptive behaviour from their students during these activities.

7.2.1.3. Code Switching

Findings from teachers' questionnaire analysis revealed that 86% of the teachers reported that students code switch for discussion when they work in groups (see-Table 8). Findings from the qualitative data analysis supported these results. The classroom observation showed that the students avoid using the target language and rely on the mother tongue as a medium of communication in the classroom, most of the time. In addition, the classroom observation revealed that code switching was a common practice among students, especially when discussing new grammatical rules and speaking activities. They also code switch when they seek help from their teacher during working together in pairs or in groups. In contrast, when interviewed, all the students reported that they prefer to communicate using English language. This difference could be related to students' lack of competence as emphasised by their teachers earlier. These findings were in concord with Cook's (2001) findings which confirmed that learners tend to communicate using their mother tongue during working together.

Findings from classroom observations confirmed that teachers code switch when they realize that using L1 is needed in some situations. Teachers use Arabic in their classroom for certain reasons and this was confirmed during the interviews. However, it is quite clear from the qualitative findings that the use of the mother tongue by most of the teachers was limited and systematic. Teachers occasionally used code switching for particular purposes such as; clarifying some new vocabularies or helping students to understand grammatical rules. Those teachers considered that using L1 is an essential issue that cannot be ignored. These results correspond with Nation's-(2003) findings highlighted that utilizing

L1 can help students to maintain the flow of communication which, in turn, could promote fluency. This limited use of code switching may encourage students to adapt to the method of teaching and assessing that their teachers use. It can improve the language learning process by limiting the use of L1 to some basic functions. Further, it can help learners to convey their message precisely and accurately. However, it can be argued that this process of using L1 can be harmful and does-not improve students' learning.

From the analysis of classroom observations, it was clear that the over use of L1 by students during oral activities in Libyan secondary schools was one of the factors that hindered them from improving their oral skill. These findings were in agreement with Lee's, (2005) study carried out through observations in South Korean primary school classrooms. This study showed that this strategy of using L1 prevents students from improving speaking the target language. It is also in agreement with-Macaro, (2003); Nunan and Carter, (2001) who argued that using L1 do not improve students' learning.

To conclude, it can be said that data from classroom observation confirm the findings from the teachers' questionnaire and interview. More specifically, the classroom observation showed that teachers preferred to use English language when teaching and assessing their students in the classroom. The teachers' interview data confirmed this observation and showed that the teachers were aware of the importance of using English for the language learning process (see subsection 6.4.1).

7.2.2. TEACHER'S ROLE

Results of the quantitative data showed that 86% of the teachers believed that the teacher's role is to facilitate and guide students. However, the qualitative data analysis contradicted these findings. From the classroom observation, it was clear that all the teachers were controllers at the beginning of the lesson, presenting the new topic and giving instructions. They were also-trying to discipline their classrooms with only few of them facilitating the process of learning whenever their students were provided with the opportunities to work

together. Teachers rarely changed their roles to provide students with the feedback on what they have achieved.

The notion of the role of the teacher being as a facilitator seemed to be very demanding on the majority of teachers (nine out of twelve), who were used to dominating their classroom instructions and preparing their lessons in advance. The qualitative findings of this study revealed that three out of twelve teachers employed group activities. They were the same teachers who have been mentioned earlier. During these activities, their roles were to guide and scaffold students to achieve the goals of the activities. These teachers applied various oral questions and created a classroom discussion. Students were observed to respond to their teacher in a positive atmosphere that motivated them more to use English language when communicating with their teacher.

 It can be said that the three teachers were intending to apply what Avis et al. (2010) described as the use of oral questioning which helped in changing the atmosphere of the classroom from teacher-centred activity into interactive and challenging one. This, also meant that these teachers were in line with the constructivist theory where the teacher's role is seen as an organizer and facilitator who helps and guides students learning (Brown, 2000, p.245). They are also in concord with Gadsby, (2012) who emphasised that learners are the ones who can develop new skills and knowledge and the ones who can bridge the gap between the teaching and the learning process.

A constructivist's view: is that students' roles in such situations are as independent and active learners. This kind of learning environment is beneficial for better learning in that it provides students with the opportunities to interact and negotiate for meaning. Accordingly, the class is "then learner-centred, which gives the students more opportunities to learn" (Brown, 2007, p. 47). When these three teachers check their students understanding, they are facilitating learning that is one of the functions of assessment methods to identify the gap between what students can do and what they cannot do without the help of their teachers (Davis, 1998; Hedge, 2000; Ecclestone, 2005).

The current study has highlighted the practice used in teaching and assessing students' learning. It provides evidence that involving students in the process of assessment is especially challenging. The teachers displayed both commonalities and dissimilarities in their teaching and assessing of oral communication with regard to the processes they used, the roles they played, and the types of activities employed in the classroom. Teachers who focused more on assessing: the forms of the language rather than communicative skills may have believed that learning a language required more focus on structure and correct pronunciation. Therefore, they used immediate and direct intervention when students commit any errors. However, it was clear that some teachers were more concerned with communication and fluency, which can be achieved without linguistic accuracy. Although, these teachers' classes were the noisiest among many observed classes: they were more confident about their teaching and assessing practices and gave more opportunities for students to speak. They were trying to encourage students to communicate, as it seemed that their aims were to improve students' communicative competence rather than immediate error correction.

7.3. RESEARCH QUESTION TWO

What are:

> *A. Teachers' perceptions towards these processes?*
>
> *B. Students' perceptions towards these processes?*

The second research question seeks to establish what teachers and students state they believe about the assessment process that used in Libyan secondary schools. The results described in chapters five & six illustrated both similarities and differences between teachers and students in terms of what their views about teaching and assessing oral communication. Therefore, the focus of the following discussion will be on the more interesting findings. Both teachers and students' views and comments are discussed below.

7.3.1. TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS IMPORTANCE OF ASSESSMENT

According to many researchers: (Richards & Lockhart, 1996, p.29; Williams & Burden, 1997; Woods, 1996; Brown, 2004) teachers': beliefs and perceptions about teaching and learning have a great impact either positively or negatively on the teaching and learning practice. Assessment as a research topic has been extensively debated and it is of current interest because of its great importance and impact on students' learning. Literature (Hedge 2000; Weeden et al., 2002; Gardner, 2006; Butler & Mcmunn, 2006; Pickford & Brown, 2006; Conole & Oliver, 2007; Havnes and McDowell, 2008; Stobart, 2008; Black & Wiliam, 2010; Wiliam, 2011; Taras, 2001, 2005, 2012; Harlen, 2013; Fraser, 2016), indicates that there is a consent between many linguists that assessment is an essential process in teaching and learning and it should lead to improvement in students' learning.

Findings from teachers' questionnaire showed that more than 70% of the teachers were aware of the importance of assessment. Qualitative findings confirmed these results as all the teachers emphasised that assessment: plays an essential role in the process of teaching and learning (see Table 7 & section 6.4.2). These findings are in line with those of Woods: (1996) and Brown: (2004) who confirmed that such awareness is essential for effective teaching and learning. This study also revealed that students were in agreement with their teachers about the importance of assessment. Findings of students' questionnaire revealed that 85% of the students believed that assessment helped them to improve their learning. This-was-confirmed by the analysis of qualitative data, which showed that there was no significant difference between both teachers' and students' perceptions towards the effectiveness of assessment. They both emphasised that assessments enable them to find out the strong and the weak area and aid the teachers to modify their instructors to fulfil students' needs (see sections 6.4.2. & 6.4.7.2).

However, 86.7% of the students still believed that teachers were the only responsible people for assessing their students (see-Table13).This indicated that the notion of applying the new assessment methods still needs more time and effort, as well as a lot of training, in order to help students feel that they are able

and can practise assessing their own work. Comparing and contrasting between teachers' and students' views towards assessment, it can be argued that although both teachers and students hold positive view towards the importance of assessment and the benefits from involving students in the assessment process, it seemed that it was difficult to transfer their perceptions into practice. This indicates that there have been many constraints and challenges which face both teachers and students during teaching and assessing oral communication. Some of these challenges were emphasised during the interviews (see sections 6.4.6 & 6.4.7.6) for more details.

Regarding the importance of oral communication, a number of interesting findings emerged from the qualitative data analysis. Both teachers and students considered being able to communicate as a goal that needs to be achieved. Generally, all the teachers were aware of the importance of speaking English for different reasons. In line with their teachers, most of the students showed a desire to develop their English language speaking. They considered that the ability to communicate in English helps students to further their studies and obtain good job in future. However, only a few students (three out of twelve) showed a negative view towards English language learning. Those students stated that they found learning English language was a very difficult subject and they were not interested in learning English language.

Sauvignon (1997) argued that oral communication is an important concern for all peoples' daily lives. Findings of the students' interview also revealed that students were unsatisfied with the methods of teaching and learning English. They claimed that their exposure to English language classrooms is limited and added that their accountability for the national examination led them to give more attention to how to memorise the content of the textbook rather than investing this effort for developing their communication skills independently.

7.3.2 TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS ASSESSMENT PROCESSES

Assessing students' understandings is considered one of the most essential processes in teaching and learning (Fraser, 2016, p.133). Teachers perform

various activities in classroom practice in order to check whether students understand the task properly. Researchers such as Avis et al., (2010), argued that teachers can employ various strategies. They can carry out different activities either formally or informally: so that students can be informed about their positive achievements as well as their weaknesses.

In line with this perspective, qualitative findings from teachers' interview revealed that T5 highlighted two processes for checking students' understanding in oral communication, which are: the *observational approach* and *the structured approach* (see section 6.4.3). This teacher justified his belief by emphasising that these practices can be useful for both teachers and students. Firstly, it allows teachers to monitor students' progress and general attitude. Thus, to be aware of students' level of understanding. Secondly, by doing so, teachers are helped to evaluate the students' performance in specific area of oral communication. This indicates that assessment identifies the problems and difficulties and helps teachers to make suggestions to overcome the challenges faced. According to many researchers (Black & Wiliam, 1989; Hedge, 2000; Gardner, 2006) it is possible for teachers to gather information about their students' achievement as assessment supports: teachers to modify and make the appropriate decision about how to assist students in their learning.

The findings of this study showed that there was a similarity between teachers' and students' perceptions towards utilizing tests and quizzes as processes for assessing students' learning, as both of them were accustomed to such practices. These processes of assessment are familiar and used in most educational contexts for checking students' learning as discussed in section: 2.2.9.The majority of the teachers as well as the students were positive towards using these practices because they believed that they can be helpful in various ways. For example, one of the female teachers said that implementing *'short quizzes helps both teachers and students. I mean when teachers use them to check the students' understanding, teachers become aware of whether the students gained the goals of the task. Further, it helps students in that it familiarises the strengths and weakness of students informally and in limited time'.*

The following subsections shed more lights and discussion on teachers' and students' perceptions on various assessment practices.

7.3.3. TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS PARTICIPATORY ASSESSMENT

7.3.3.1. Perceptions towards Self-assessment

A lack of certainty and understanding was implied in the responses of the teachers about the use of formative assessment. This was clear in the teachers' responses to the statement relating the effectiveness of the employment of self-assessment (see Table 6). The teachers' questionnaire findings revealed that only 56% of the teachers were in agreement with giving each student the chance to participate in self-assessment. Teachers' comments from the interviews showed that teachers were positive and willing to involve students in assessing their work (see section 6.4.6 & 6.4.7.6). Nevertheless, the findings from the classroom observations revealed that the majority of the teachers did not practise self-assessment. A contradiction has been found between the quantitative and qualitative findings. This could indicate that these teachers failed to transfer their beliefs into practice. Therefore, it was clear that there was a mismatch between what teachers believe and what they practise inside the classrooms. It showed evidence that teachers' beliefs about instruction do not always exist in schools and classrooms.

The findings of this study were in agreement with Alkharusi, Kazem, and Al-Musawi, (2011) cited in James et al., (2014) findings, which pointed out that when teachers feel incompetent or unable to employ educational assessment, they even avoid or implement poor practices. These results were also in concord with what Bound, (1995) highlighted that teachers' views, attitudes and concepts they hold as teachers might not match their effective employment of self-assessment. One other reason that might hindered teachers from practising self-assessment might be that this process of assessment is a new assessment practice, which was first introduced by Black and Wiliam reviews in 1998. Therefore, Libyan EFL teachers in secondary schools seemed to lack of understanding how to employ this practice. Another factor, which could lead to teachers' avoidance of the

employment of self-assessment can be related to students' lack of confidence as most of the students in secondary schools have very low levels of fluency and they are unable to communicate and express themselves clearly as was shown during the interviews and observations. This factor was also raised by some interviewed teachers, who claimed that students' low level of oral proficiency is one of the challenges for successful implementation of the activities that foster students to participate in the learning process and in particular oral communication. As a result, this might minimize their interest in participating in assessment process.

However, interesting results have been explored. Unlike their teachers, the students' questionnaire results revealed that students' responses exceed their teachers to the statement relating to self-assessment. This was reflected in their responses to the statements concerning the usefulness of involving students in the assessment process, as 78.8% of them reported that self-assessment encourages them to be active learners where more than 70% of the them considered that practising self-assessment form is helpful in making them feel confident and being trustful by their teachers (see Table 5.8). This is supported by their comments from the interview, which showed their positive attitude towards practising assessing their work. These findings agree with Roberts', (2006) and Taras', (2010) beliefs that self-assessment can be used as a means for effective learning and assessment. In other words, they emphasised that students need to experience how to assess their own work, which they said makes big difference from just having it done by their teachers. The application of this new assessment form could deepen students' insight into the assessment process and encourage them to practise the role of their teachers (Brooks, 2002; Gardner, 2012; Sadler, 1989, 2010), by establishing explicit criteria or standards (Sadler, 2014).

7.3.3.2. Perceptions towards Peer Assessment

The findings from both teachers' and students' quantitative and qualitative data revealed similar views towards the importance of the employment of peer-assessment. The quantitative results supported the qualitative findings in that

both teachers and students were positive towards the statements of the questionnaire related to the usefulness of the employment of group activities and peer assessment (see tables 5 & 6). The quantitative findings revealed that 84% of the teachers and 70.6% of the students agreed with the statements. The interview comments highlighted that working cooperatively develops students' ability to identify their weaknesses and difficulties and enhances students' motivation towards learning. It is evident that both teachers and students were aware of the importance of involving students in peer-assessment.

Although the new English textbook in Libyan the context requires teachers to adapt their teaching and learning methods to the modern methods and theories of teaching and learning (see section 2.2.6),very few teachers (three out of twelve) were observed practising participatory assessment, despite their positive attitude towards peer-assessment and group activities. Most of the students who were interviewed indicated that there has been little or even no chance to practise evaluating themselves or each other's work. The findings of this study agreed with Sadler, (1989) and Nunan, (1989) who assured readers that this can be a challenge that faces many educational contexts because teachers might be unable to implement formative assessment forms because of their fear of decreasing their authority or control over their classrooms, and for students because of their inability to make accurate and reliable judgements about themselves.

That seemed to explain why students responded highly to the statement related to selecting materials, which created chances for them to participate and work together in classroom activities. They considered it as a good decision, which contributes to the success of students' learning. In other words, most of the students believed that providing topics and activities that interest and motivate students can improve teaching and learning processes and encourage students to participate. Accordingly, the results gained from quantitative data emphasised that 94% of the students were positive and aware of the effectiveness of supplementing the textbook with extra materials that fulfil their interests and needs. These students were in line with Harmer, (2015, p.387) who advised that teachers need to use various activities that motivate and interest learners such

as short fluency-type activities ones that create enjoyable environments to help students participate in classroom activities.

Interestingly, the qualitative findings also revealed that some of the students reported that, peer-assessment was useful. Yet the students' questionnaire responses showed that only 46.6% reported that they enjoyed it. Relevant qualitative data also revealed that eight out of twelve students do not trust their classmates' assessment and felt unconvinced towards their evaluation. They considered that their peers' evaluation was mostly unreliable and did not help in discovering their strengths and weaknesses. These findings are in agreement with the research on peer assessment, which revealed that peer assessment can be affected by factors such as the influence issues associated with friendship bias and feedback bias (Weimer, 2002) and could not be as thorough as teacher's assessment (Saito and Fujita 2004). Nevertheless, it is not in line with Roberts (2006, p.6) & Black et al., (2004, p.14), who illustrate that students are more likely to follow their peers' advice and accept their criticism than from their teacher and they are easier to be motivated by their colleagues than by academics.

7.3.4. TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

In the current study, it was clear that understanding assessment criteria were considered by the majority of the participants as an essential aspect for evaluating students' work. This indicated that understanding criteria was so important that leads 68% of the teachers and much more of the students 95.5% to agree with this statement in the teachers and students' questionnaires (see tables 12 & 8). The findings obtained from qualitative analysis also supported the quantitative results. The findings from teachers' and students' interviews illustrated that in order for students to assess their performance, teachers are required to set clear criteria that help students to achieve their goals.

In other words, most of the participants comprehend that, when students' work is evaluated and compared to agreed criteria it aids in discovering whether the goals of learning have been achieved by the students and clarifies what needed to be done for the next step. The teachers' and students' comments from the interview

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revealed that understanding criteria facilitates students' learning by inspiring them to engage and take part in the learning process (see sections 6.4.4 & 6.4.7.4).These findings correspond with Taras, (2010) who claimed that understanding criteria encourages students to involve in classroom activities and considered it as the means by which students become aware of the requirements involved in assessment issues.

However, in the current study, results gained from the classroom observations revealed that only three teachers were observed to practise self-assessment and establish assessment criteria when students work in-group discussion or when working in pairs. These teachers were observed to support their students to evaluate their own work and to compare it to established criteria. These students discussed the criteria in pairs and groups and tried to compare their performance with the criteria established. Two out of twelve teachers reported that assessment criteria was not important as they claimed that students need to focus on all elements of the oral language. Therefore, the precise requirements of each assessment are unknown to students and they are not aware of what they are required to do to perform well.

7.3.5. TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS GRADES

Another important issue that is intended to be assessed in the current study is the importance of providing feedback with grades. Findings of both quantitative and qualitative data analysis revealed that, teachers consider providing good grades as a motivator for better learning. However, the findings also showed that grades can hinder students' progress. This is reflected in teachers' responses to the statements 13 &15 of the questionnaire (see: Table 8). The teachers' questionnaire results showed that 70% of the teachers were in agreement with providing feedback with grades. This is supported by the interview results which showed that teachers employ grades as means for motivating students to work harder (see section 6.4.4). Both teachers and students' views towards the importance of grades were positive. The students' questionnaire and interview result also showed that 77.8% of the students consider that good grades inspire them to improve their performance (see: Table 12).

Though these results were in line with Sadler, (2009) who argued that grades are crucial in formative and summative measurement in developing students' responses to tasks, they contradict with the common belief in the literature about the negative side of providing students with grades, which believes that grades failed to guide the students for better learning and for more progress (Tanner & Jones, 2000). This is also emphasised by Black & Wiliam's, (1998) findings which revealed that grades do not help in improving students learning. Further, they advised teachers to avoid providing their students with marks. Nonetheless, 82% of the teachers in the present research confirmed that students put much attention on grades. Teachers express their frustration that students are not interested in feedback comments and are only concerned with the mark.

The qualitative findings supported the quantitative results as both teachers and students confirmed the significance of providing students with grades and how they stimulate and reinforce students to achieve better learning. However, they also comprehend the negative side of providing grades. Both teachers and students believe that when students gain low marks that might minimize their interest in learning and make them more disappointed if they could not attain the desired grade (see section 6.4.4). In this study, the major purpose of final year secondary school level assessments were found to provide grades at the end of the mid-term and final term to determine whether students will have the chance to join and study at the university. For this reason, the mid-term and end of term exams are considered as high-stake tests because they are used to make serious decisions about students' future academic progress. Therefore, students must gain the pass mark since, failure to attain the pass mark leads to being retained in the same stage and loss the prospects for future education.

Teachers' and students' comments in the current study emphasised that this practice of assessment has negative impact on students' learning and leads them to focus more on memorizing information to do well in their tests. It also pushes them to compete with each other. As a result, students' benefit from the assessment results is limited and they do not become aware of their strengths and weaknesses. That might be the reason why some researchers such as Boud, (1995); Taras, (2001) and Eccleston, (2005), assured the reader that providing

grades within formative assessment after making the judgment and after students receive feedback is more effective and useful. They advised that it is more beneficial to focus on how to engage students and how to support them to make progress in their learning rather than just measuring their performance by providing marks or grades. In other words, it is more important to understand the feedback before providing grades so that students become aware of their strengths and weakness and then grades can be provided to compare their academic progress with that of their peers from the same class or others and grade their performance.

This study recommends, as a solution, that Libyan teachers could be trained to help their students to perceive grading as an indication of the area of weakness that needs to be improved and developed and to encourage their students to understand the reason behind receiving different grades rather than feeling disappointed when they gain low marks.

7.3.6. TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

The quantitative findings of the present research illustrated that teachers do not only depend on summative assessment when they tend to check their students understanding. This is reflected in their responses to the statement seven in the questionnaire (see: Table 7).The teachers' questionnaire results revealed that 74% of the teachers reported their disagreement towards using just summative assessment when they assess students' learning. Findings gained from analysing qualitative data supported the results of the quantitative data. Nine out of twelve teachers, who were interviewed, confirmed that they employ various processes to find out the level of their students' achievement. Teachers' comments showed that tests and short quizzes are among those practices that they use to check their students' learning.

Teachers and students reported various views towards the current traditional assessment practice. Some teachers believed that it encourages and reinforces students to prepare and study to pass their examination. Similarly, students signified that tests help them to keep revising the information gained during the

year and they assist them to memorise the information that needs to be employed in the exam paper. On the other hand, teachers and students reported that final examinations tend to increase anxiety among all students and make them feel afraid, stressed and anxious. The results of this study also showed that, both teachers and students were positive towards changing the current assessment forms. They both believed that the new assessment practices can help students to be concerned with their learning as 86.2% of students were in agreement with the statement in the questionnaire that related to changing the current assessment practices. This is also confirmed by qualitative results, as most of students and teachers criticized the present assessment practice. Both teachers and students claimed that their main concern according to the current existing processes of assessment is how to pass the examination and achieve good marks without any development of students' communicative skills.

These findings were in line with many researchers in the literature such as Black & Wiliam, (1989); Sadler, (1989); Boud, (1995); Harmer, (2003) and Taras, (2001; 2003) who criticised depending only on summative assessment for assessing students' performance. They believed that it encouraged rote learning, and made students' main goal, how to get good grades and pass the examinations. Teachers' willingness towards the employment of new assessment practices can be considered as a useful indicator and a strong supporter for engaging students in the assessment process. This is also reflected their beliefs, which pointed out that involving students' in their learning and providing them with the required formative feedback enhance the opportunities to improve their performance and can be a valuable step for more successful learning. This notion corresponds with Black et al., (2003) and Oscarson, (2009) who considered that such constructive beliefs which were held by teachers can increase the chance for better teaching and learning.

Developing Libyan English language teachers' understanding in Libyan secondary schools, in terms of the effectiveness of involving students in the learning process, will enable them to offer clear guidance and satisfactory support for their students. This can be achieved through training both teachers and students to practise formative assessment approaches.

7.3.7. TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS CONCERNING CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK

It was clear from both quantitative and qualitative data analysis that most teachers did not ignore students' errors when they assessed students' spoken language, which suggests that the teachers were encouraging accuracy at the expense of fluency. This also indicated that these teachers' main concern was how students learn accurate language. Findings of the quantitative data analysis revealed that 78% of the teachers considered that paying more attention to accuracy was more helpful for students' learning (see Table 9). The qualitative results confirmed the quantitative findings in that (seven out of twelve) teachers clarified their beliefs by explaining that being clear and accurate is the first step in learning the language.

In contrast, students were different from their teachers in their views towards how to assess and develop their communicative competence. They were keen to produce spontaneous language instead of focusing mainly on correcting every single error. They claimed that their teachers' corrective feedback hinders them from communicating fluently. This was clear in their responses to the statement 29 in the questionnaire. Results indicated that 89.5% of the students faced difficulties in speaking when their teachers stopped and corrected their errors during their communication. Further, the results showed that 86.6% of the students reported that their teacher's oral feedback affected their speaking (see Table 8). However, from the observation data analysis it was found that the students did not have enough opportunities to practise the spontaneous production of the target language.

Analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data revealed that all of the teachers in one way or another employed the process of direct correction of their students' grammatical errors or pronunciation in their classes. These teachers used these practices at different frequencies depending on the nature of the activities. Quantitative findings revealed that 72% of the teachers focused more on correcting their students' pronunciation. This might indicate that these teachers preferred their students to be accurate rather than fluent in speaking the

language. One other reason reported by one of the teachers was that it was not easy for teachers to take care with each student in the class, because there were many students in each class, therefore, *'if students are given a chance to think about correcting their errors, they may not know the right answer in limited time'*. This assumes that these teachers tended to minimize their students' chance to practise self-correction because of the large number of students in each class and to save time.

Even though the findings obtained indicated that most of the teachers were aware of the importance of using positive feedback as a procedure to inspire students to participate in classroom activities it was evident that this process was practised by fewer teachers. An interesting issue that was noticed during the classroom observation and then was clarified and discussed during the interviews was the discrepancies among teachers in their feedback towards errors committed by students in class. While some teachers supported the idea of rejecting students' errors, others strongly opposed this practice. The teachers who believe in refusing the students' wrong answer justified their views by explaining that errors should be banned in order to learn accurate language. This might indicate that these teachers lack understanding of the importance of giving students the chance to think more about what the right answer was and to feel motivated to practise self-correction. These findings contradict Mitchell et al., (2013) who indicated that formal correction is not helpful for students' learning. These findings also are not in line with Harmer, (2010) who advised that correction needs to be in a gentle manner that makes students enjoy it.

However, there were some other teachers who provided positive feedback and ignore their students' errors. Those teachers who tolerate errors believed that negative feedback might create undesirable attitude towards the teacher as well as the learning. Further, it might affect students' engagement. Thus, students might become reluctant to participate in classroom activities. These findings were in line with Cook's (2001) advice who confirmed that the method and the strategy teachers use in their teaching are important elements in successful teaching. However, when teachers fail to employ strategies that support and motivate

students that might create an ineffective environment in which students feel impassive and demotivated (Brown, 2004; Harmer, 2007).

7.3.8. TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS CODE-SWITCHING

Findings gained from the quantitative and qualitative data analysis showed that both teachers and students used L1 in many situations. They justified their behaviours and answers by providing various reasons. Some of them believed that code switching was helpful for achieving the best learning outcomes and facilitated the learning process. Therefore, this might suggest that teachers and students used L1 because they considered that it leaded to better achievement of the lesson's aims. The analysis of the quantitative data revealed that 86% of the teachers believed that their students used their L1 when they work cooperatively.

These findings were confirmed by the analysis of classroom observation. The results from the qualitative data analysis revealed that most of the students were using their L1 when they were communicating with each other and during working cooperatively. The qualitative findings showed that teachers did not seem to be worried about students' use of the mother tongue. Different reasons were given as justifications for using it. The majority of the teachers were aware of the advantages and disadvantages of using L1 in assessing students' learning. Some of the reasons that most of the teachers provide for code switching were that L1 should be used after students fail to grasp the meaning of new vocabularies or grammatical rules. Further, it was also believed that using L1 could save time in some circumstances. The students' interview data also provided more possible explanations for these behaviours including students' lack of competence and EFL speaking anxiety.

The quantitative data analysis showed that more than 77% of the students do not prefer to use Arabic language during oral activities and the qualitative data analysis confirmed these findings, revealing that students prefer to communicate in English language. Students as well as teachers sometimes found it necessary to use their mother tongue especially when they faced difficulties in

understanding new vocabulary or new grammatical rules. The findings from the analysis of classroom observation seem to reflect this claim (see sections 6.3.7&6.4.4).

These reasons can be practical, because as stated by Cook, (2001) learners tend to communicate using their mother tongue during working together and when explaining tasks because either they are not capable or are shy or unmotivated to communicate in L2. This finding was also in line with Nation, (2003) who claimed that using L1was found to be helpful for teachers to transfer the necessary knowledge to their students and create a positive environment for students' learning.

Whatever the teachers' and students' justifications were, it could be argued that they would agree with Johnson, (2008) who concluded that researchers find that learners have a different attitude towards the teacher's use of L1 in class. Some learners do not care about using L1 even if it is needed in certain situations. However, some other learners become upset if their teachers do not use L1 to help communication where necessary.

7.3.9. TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS TEACHERS' ROLE

The results gained from both quantitative and qualitative data analyses revealed that both teachers and students were positive towards the notion of changing teacher's role from presenter of knowledge to facilitator (sections 6.4.5 & 6.4.7.5). In line with teachers' awareness, the idea of changing the role of teacher from a transmitter into a facilitator was agreed on by 86% of the teachers (see Table 9). One possible explanation for this might be that the teachers became more familiar with the usefulness of engaging students in their learning and sharing the responsibility of learning with their students. In the literature, many researchers such as Black et al., (2003), Richard- Amato, (2003), Harmer, (2007; 2010) and Mitchell et al., (2013) indicated that teachers have become aware of the effectiveness of helping students to become autonomous. Further, much progress in the teachers' views about how to share the learning responsibility with their students has been achieved (Black & Wiliam, 2009, 2010).

In order to teach and assess oral communication effectively and improve students' communicative competence, teachers should consider how to facilitate students' learning, and how to select suitable materials that make students feel interested in participating in classroom activities. Teachers are also advised to assist students to work together and scaffold each other (Harmer, 2007). Similarly, findings of quantitative analysis from the students' responses showed that 83.4% of them considered changing teacher's role from a controller who dominates the whole learning process to a facilitator as an important issue (see Table 12).

However, it can be concluded that the findings of this study revealed a contradiction between the teachers' views and practices of the teacher's role during the observation (see subsection 6.3.1). Despite their positive views and their understanding of the effectiveness of acting as a facilitator, most of the teachers acted as a controller who dominated the learning process in the observed classrooms. This contradiction could be attributed to many factors. Teachers who participated in this study reported different reasons for their avoidance of changing their role to become a guide and organizer of students' learning. Some of the influential factors that have been reported by the teachers will be discussed in more detail shortly (section 7.3.10). However, these factors should not form excuses for not providing students with more opportunities to engage and involve in classroom activities. It should not act as a barrier that hinders teachers from acting as a facilitator who shares the responsibility of teaching and learning with their students.

7.3.10. TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS DIFFICULTIES IN ASSESSMENT

An investigation of the difficulties reported by teachers and students in this study (see sections 6.4.6 & 6.4.7.6), indicated that these problems, which challenge teachers to share the learning process with their students, range from teachers and students' beliefs to contextual factors that had a great impact on the process of teaching and learning development. Qualitative findings of this study revealed that most of the teachers still depended largely on the traditional methods of

teaching and learning. It was noticeable that all the classes were arranged in rows, a traditional way that did not support cooperative learning. Most of the interviewees kept complaining about the time constraints and blaming the overcrowded classes for avoiding interactive activities such as arranging the class into groups or pairs. Therefore, teachers believed that it was difficult for them to control these kind of classes and they could not employ effective strategies that helped in changing the traditional instructional methods. Consequently, the notion of these activities seemed to represent a serious source of threat and tension for these teachers.

The successful implementation of the curriculum in Libyan secondary schools designed for (learner-centred) learning, required teachers who are able to provide students with assistance and guidance for carrying out the new tasks brought with this new curriculum. They need to possess language proficiency to overcome such challenges, therefore, most of the EFL teachers who were observed and interviewed found it difficult to transfer the instructions of the new textbook into practice. Consequently, it seemed that some teachers' low level of oral proficiency fostered some of them to convert the activities that the textbook contains from communicative activities that help students to assess and scaffold each other to teacher-led classroom environment that depends mainly on the teacher's instructions.

The quantitative findings of the present study also showed that more than 84% of both teachers and students believed that students still consider assessment as the teachers' job. This was clear in their responses to the statements 22&12 (see Tables 10 & 13). Both teachers and students were in agreement and showed their consensus with the statements. These beliefs of the Libyan EFL learners limit students' learning development, in that for them, learning English language classes were a source of good grammar, as well as, question and answer format rather than practicing sharing the learning process with their teachers. Students considered that assessing their work was mainly the teacher's job.

Furthermore, it can be noticed that most teachers stressed their students' poor knowledge of how to assess and grade their performance and work. For example,

the main source of difficulty in assessment that could face teachers according to the analysis of quantitative data was how to trust their students when they grade their work. This can be understood from the quantitative data analysis which revealed that 84% of the teachers consider that students will give themselves high grades if they were asked to grade themselves (see Table 10). This high percentage of teachers' responses indicated the need for training students to evaluate their work explicitly and clearly. Additionally, more training for their teachers are also needed so that they become capable and convinced of their teaching and learning practice.

Findings from qualitative data showed that most of the students claimed that they rarely communicate with their teacher and classmates in English. Generally, it can be said that learners with little exposure to the second language have difficulty in communicating using the English language. These findings are in line with Brown, (2000) and Gadsby, (2012), who confirmed that learners face difficulties if they do not practise the language. They argued that if learners want to develop their learning, they are the ones who can bridge the gap between the teaching and the learning by engaging in the learning process. Many other factors that have been reported by both teachers and students related to the high accountability for the examination which could have led the students to give more attention to memorising the content of the textbook rather than investing this effort for developing their communication skills independently. In addition, many issues such as the appropriate learning environment, need to be considered to help students develop their learning. Thus, it is evident that unless these challenges and problems are resolved neither teachers nor students will be able to change their beliefs into practice.

Results from the qualitative data revealed that students were almost unable to apply what they have learned in real life situation, as eight out of twelve students preferred to communicate in their native language. Further, these students were hesitant to speak in English. This was also clear during the observation. In the light of these findings, it may be said that students' level of competence in speaking is lower than the level that they are expected to have achieved at this stage, though, certain teachers support students to engage in the English

language lessons through carrying out different activities. Yet, the results of the current study showed that this engagement is not enough to learn how to communicate fluently and accurately. The argument for implementing ideas about involving students in the assessment process within the centralised system of education in Libya (Sadler, 1989; Hedge, 2000; Taras, 2001; 2005; Roberts, 2006; Gardner, 2006; Black & Wiliam, 1989; 1998; Harmer, 2010; Harlen, 2013 and Fraser, 2016) seems to be a very far-reaching goal although the instructions of the authors of the textbook recommend training students to assess themselves and their peers (Phillips et al., 2008). This is also because in learner-centred language classrooms, both teachers and students have to perform many challenging tasks and to undertake many responsibilities different from those they used to carry out in teacher-centred classrooms.

We can conclude by saying that many factors and issues need to be considered by all Libyan society and in particular the Ministry of Education in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning in secondary schools. These findings highlighted that there is a need for an effective assessment system, which would enable teachers to diagnose the weaknesses of students during instruction and help students to achieve their goals. Further, students need to learn and be evaluated in an anxiety-reduced environment which can be achieved if both teachers and students perceive assessment as an integral component of the learning/teaching process and comprehend that the "knowledge and understanding are constructed by students through their own thinking about their experiences" (Harlen, 2013 p.35) rather than an independent process whose purpose is to pass judgment on their performance and abilities in relation to their classmates.

7.4. RESEARCH QUESTION THREE
What are:

> A. *The similarities between teachers' and students' perceptions?*
> B. *The differences between teachers' and students' perceptions?*

The third research question tried to explore the differences and similarities between teachers' and students' views towards the assessment practices.

Regarding this question, both similarities and differences were found between all participants. More discussion in the following sub-sections.

7.4.1. The Similarities

- Regarding the importance of assessment, the results of the data analysis showed that all teachers were aware of the necessary role that assessments play in teaching and learning (see sections 6.4.2 & 6.4.7.2). They believed that assessment was essential in helping both teachers and students to find out information that would help teachers to make their judgment and to match and modify different materials that would improve students' learning. Interestingly, the quantitative and qualitative findings also revealed that most of the students believed that assessment was necessary and could motive them to make further progress. However, they confirmed that some of the practices that teachers used in assessing their understandings could demotivate them in terms of their learning. They explained that assessment should be used to enhance students' learning, and it should also be used to solve any difficulties in their learning.

- Results gained from qualitative data analysis revealed that both teachers and students were aware of the importance of oral communication (see subsections 6.4.1 & 6.4.7.1)**.** Most teachers believed that being able to communicate orally in English language facilitates students' learning. They claimed that it helped students to express themselves and convey their messages clearly. It was considered a necessary component for language learning. Consequently, it seemed that this view was reflected in their practice and that was why English was largely employed by the teachers in their classrooms, both in teaching and in communicating with the students. This procedure used by teachers, promoted and encouraged students to communicate using the language. However, although all of the teachers agreed that students should use English when interacting with each other or with the teachers in order to improve their language, certain teachers showed some tolerance to students' use of their mother tongue. These teachers justified this and attributed their tolerance to reasons, such as topic difficulty and several new grammatical rules.

- Additionally, qualitative data analysis indicated that most of the students showed a desire to develop their English language speaking. The majority of students held a positive attitude towards learning and speaking English, even though they felt lack of confidence and were unable to communicate in English because of various reasons. The analysis also revealed that teachers had positive views towards learning English language and in particular oral communication. Their view emerged from their beliefs in the vital role that speaking and learning English language plays in the world and in gaining a good job. They both consider English language as a means that can be used to contact and discover other cultures.

- Data analysis showed similarities in teachers' and students' views towards assessment processes. All teachers believed that employing tests and quizzes was good practice for measuring students' learning and helped in discovering students' level of achievement in different areas and in limited time. Therefore, it was observed and reported that all teachers considered that they regularly used quizzes and tests as traditional practices for assessing students' performance despite their negative effects on students' learning.

- Similarly, all students reported that tests as a process for assessment were the most familiar that their teachers employed when they wanted to check students' understandings of different aspects of the language. They were in line with their teachers, as students considered that these practices hindered them from being active and involved in the learning process. Students' orientation towards obtaining a good mark pushes them to memorize what they have learned and invest their time and effort to achieve this aim. However, these results were in disagreement with Taras, (2001, 2003, and 2012) who advised that students should be given a chance to practise evaluating their work so that they become active learners. In addition, these findings were not in concord with the instructions of the Libyan Teacher's Book (2008), which emphasises the need for teachers to provide opportunities for students to self-asses and to work cooperatively so that they can improve their performance in learning the language (see section 2.2.9).

- Results of quantitative and qualitative data analyses revealed that both teachers and students have similar opinions about who assesses students' work. The majority of the teachers reported that their students believe that assessment is the teachers' job. This view is reflected in their responses to the statement in the questionnaire as 84% of the teachers reported that their students consider assessment as the teacher's job. Similarly, 86% of the students also, agreed with this notion and this was clear from the findings of quantitative data analysis. They considered that assessing students' understanding was the teachers' work.

 - A good implementation of the notion of the employment of formative assessment forms, in which learning is a shared process, requires developing Libyan English language teachers and students' understanding of the usefulness of engaging students in the assessment process. It, also, requires creating a sense of cooperation among schoolteachers and students. This can be achieved through conducting extensive training programmes for both teachers and students and offering an appropriate environment that provides them with sufficient support and guidance for more effective teaching and learning (Aldabbus, 2008; Orafi & Borg, 2009 and Shihiba, 2011).

- According to both quantitative and qualitative data analysis, teachers and students have similar views concerning providing feedback with grades. Most teachers believe that good grades can encourage students to work harder and gain more improvement. Quantitative findings revealed that 82% of the teachers reported their agreement to statement 16 (see Table 8) relating to grades. Additionally, most students believed that good grades inspired them to improve their performance. It was evident from the qualitative data analysis that grades played a significant role in motivating students to work harder. However, the qualitative data analysis revealed that grades could also demotivate students. This indicated that students might feel disappointed when they get low marks and therefore, they are not helped in improving their learning.

- Quantitative and qualitative data analysis revealed that both teachers and students were aware of and in agreement with the role of teachers in teaching and learning. They stated that teacher's role should be changed from just a

presenter of information to a facilitator who guides and assists students learning (see Tables 8 &12) and (sections 6.4.5 & 6.4.7.5). However, teachers claimed that students' low proficiency levels and lack of interest in participating in communication activities, besides many other challenges and difficulties, would make the role of facilitator more complex and demanding.

Interestingly, it was unexpected that very few teachers who participated in this study responded negatively and were reluctant to hand over the responsibility for the learning process to students. This concern was raised only by 14% of them (see Table 8).This contradicts the common belief in the literature relating to teachers' resistance to implement this method for fear in losing their authority and control over classrooms (Nunan, 1998; Sadler, 1989; Breen &LittleJohn, 2000; Harmer, 2007; Scales, 2008).

- Similarities were also found in both teachers' and students' beliefs towards peer assessment. Quantitative and qualitative data provided an interesting picture about cooperative learning. Results obtained from qualitative data indicated that the majority of teachers and students were in agreement about the effectiveness of peer assessment in providing students with a good chance for classroom interaction. Seven out of twelve students reported that they gain more benefits when working with classmates (see section 6.4.7.3). This was also reflected in their responses to the statement in the questionnaire where 70.6% of students who reported that group work motivated them to communicate in English (see Table 11). Nevertheless, 53.4 % of them do not enjoy being assessed by their peers. In addition, more than a half of the teachers 68% (see Table 7) reported that they asked their students to practice peer assessment. The qualitative results confirmed that teachers considered peer assessment was a good process for better learning (see section 6.4.3).

However, comparing the teachers' positive views about these activities as implied in their responses to the interview and the questionnaire (see section 6.4.3 & table 9) with their implementation of these activities inside their classrooms (see section 6.3.6), indicated a contradiction between their views and practices of these activities. A similar contradiction was reported by Orafi and Borg, (2009)

among three Libyan EFL teachers' beliefs, and implementation of a communicative oriented learner-centred learning. This contradiction indicated the existence of certain reasons or difficulties which could have hindered the teachers from translating their positive views into classroom practices. These results were also in disagreement with the literature about teachers' beliefs which emphasised that teachers' perceptions play an important role in their decision making and provide the underlying framework that guides the teacher's compatible actions whether implicitly or explicitly (Richards &Lockhart, 1996, p.29).

7.4.2. The Differences

- Some differences between teachers' and students' perceptions were also reported. With regards to the importance of accuracy or fluency. Quantitative and qualitative data analysis revealed that the majority of the teachers pay more attention to accuracy at the expense of fluency. Results showed that 78%, (see Table 9) of the teachers believed that students should be more accurate when they learn the language so that, they become clearly understood when communicating with others. Surprisingly, unlike teachers the quantitative findings revealed that 89.5% of students feel confused and found it difficult to carry on speaking when their teachers stop them to correct their errors. Analysis of teachers' observation also showed that students rarely practise how to employ their English ability in order to communicate their ideas clearly without disruption from their teacher. Most of the students reported that learning how to communicate fluently is more important than just focusing on how to learn grammatical rules and clear pronunciation.

Analysis of teachers' questionnaire showed that 56% of teachers reported that they did not interrupt their students while speaking to correct their grammatical and pronunciation errors (see Table 7). Qualitative data analysis also revealed that just over half (7 out of 12) considered that supporting and encouraging students to produce the language was one of their main aims in teaching and assessing oral communication. However, the students claimed that this was not reflected in teachers' actual practices.

- There was a significant difference between teachers' and students' views towards the need for supplementing the textbook with extra materials to satisfy students' needs. Students were more positive towards the need for providing them with extra resources. This was clear in their high responses to the questionnaire statement related to the need for supplementing additional materials to the textbook which rated 94% (Table 13). Nevertheless, teachers seemed not to value this information and were less in agreement. Quantitative results showed that 58.4% of them were in agreement with the notion of complementing the textbook with extra materials which indicated that teachers' main concern was how to complete the contents of the textbook in the limited time available.

- The study findings showed that 86% of the teachers believed that students used their L1 when they were involving in-group discussion, which hindered students from exposure to English language. Teachers also confirmed these results during the interview and stated that although most of the time they communicated using English language during English lessons, to provide students with a considerable amount of target language input, students preferred to use their L1 in certain situations. Students were found to use their L1. Yet, only 47.3% of them were in agreement with this notion. Students reported that they did not prefer to use their L1 during English classes. Most of the students (nine out of twelve) students claimed that they used L1 to facilitate their learning. Interview results showed that students used L1 when they faced difficulties in understanding some new vocabulary or new grammatical rules. They reported that they were forced to code switch to gain better understanding.

- Another difference between teachers and students was that all students considered that understanding assessment criteria helped them to be involved in oral activities. They believed that it was an essential issue, which encouraged students to engage in classroom activities. This notion also emphasised by researchers such as Taras, (2001; 2005) and Black & Wiliam, (1998). Students' perception was reflected in their high responses to the questionnaire statement with 95.5% of them in agreement with the statement that concerned understanding assessment criteria. However, only 68% of the teachers

considered that understanding assessment criteria helped students to be active in oral activities. In addition, students confirmed during the interviews that it was essential for teachers to establish the assessment criteria and students need to be aware of the criteria to develop their work according to what their teacher was looking for (see section 6.4.7.4 & Table 12).

- Results from both quantitative and qualitative analysis revealed some other differences between teachers' and students' views concerning assessment practices. Most teachers believed that students were unable to provide a reliable grades or marks for themselves. They think that if students were asked to evaluate and grade their work, they would provide high marks to their work. This can be understood from teachers' responses in questionnaire statement 20 with the claim of 76% who were in agreement with the notion of the students' inability to grade themselves honestly. However, data from qualitative analysis revealed that students were reluctant to provide a clear response. Three out of twelve students reported that they would provide high mark if they were asked to grade themselves. These results were considered as a challenge for teachers who tend to provide their students with the chance to practise self-assessment. These consequences were in line with Boud, (1995) who confirmed that students tend to overestimate or underestimate their own performance compared to their teachers' assessment of their work.

7.5. TRIANGULATION OF THE MAIN FINDINGS

So far, the findings gained from both quantitative and qualitative data were discussed and interpreted. Triangulation of the main findings across the data sets will now be considered. The classroom observation showed that the teachers prefer to use English language when teaching and assessing their students' oral communication. Teachers' interview data confirmed this observation and demonstrated that teachers were aware of the importance of using English for the language learning process (see subsection 6.4.1). Accuracy seemed to receive great value by some teachers especially the less experienced ones based on their interview. The classroom observation confirmed this perception and showed that these teachers did not pay much attention to fluency during most oral lessons. They generally tried to interrupt their students and stop them

regularly to correct their errors. They promoted accuracy at the expense of fluency (see section 6.3.2).

Data from classroom observation also seemed to confirm the findings from the teachers' questionnaire and interview. More specifically, the classroom observation showed that the teachers employ different practices to check their students' understanding. The teachers' questionnaire and interview data confirmed this observation and showed that the teachers were aware of the importance of employing various assessment processes, and considered this as a part of the learning process (see section 6.4.3 Table 7).The data from classroom observation also confirmed the findings from the students' interviews and showed that little opportunity was given to students to practise to be in depended learners (see section 6.4.7.6). Students' interview findings expressed some difficulties among the majority of them in communicating using English language. The students for instance, claimed that they do not have enough chances to practise communicating in English in the classroom. The findings from the analysis of classroom observation seemed to reflect this claim (see section 6.3.1). The classroom observation also showed that students avoided using the target language and relied on the mother tongue extensively, and used it as a medium of communication especially when they worked in pairs or groups in the classroom during English lessons. The students' interview data provided possible explanations for this behaviour including a lack of competence, and need for more clarification from their teachers (see section 6.4.7.3).

The data from classroom observation also, showed that the teachers rarely employed cooperative learning although it can be an effective procedure for encouraging students to involve and engage in the learning process. The teachers' interview findings expressed some difficulties and challenges concerning the implementation of group work which confirmed this observation (see section 6.4.6). Although, all teachers emphasised the importance of communicating using English language during oral activities lessons so that, students improved their communicative competence. The interview results reported that using L1 cannot be ignored and it is needed in certain situations (see sections 6.4.4 & 6.4.7.3). The results from the classroom observation

seemed to confirm these consequences and showed that teachers do not seem to be worried about students' use of the mother tongue.

Finally, the data obtained from the students' interview seemed to confirm the findings from the students' questionnaire. Students showed awareness of supplementing the textbook with extra materials to fulfil their needs and interests. They emphasised the importance of the inclusion of everyday life topics that motivate students to participate in the classroom activities (see sections 6.4.5. & 6.4.7.5.). The data gained from the students' interview also supported and confirmed the findings from the teachers' interview. The students were aware of the importance of understanding assessment criteria. All the students were in line with their teachers about the need for establishing assessment criteria for assessing students' achievement (see Tables 8 & 12). Therefore, this mutual confirmation of the findings from the employed data collection methods strengthens the claims to validity and reliability of the project overall.

CHAPTER EIGHT
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

8.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter begins with an overview of the research aims and the methodology adopted. It presents an overall summary of the main findings and what was involved in this research. Brief answers to the research questions as dealt with in this thesis are given and then the contributions made by the study to the understanding of teachers and students perceptions towards the assessment process are stated. Finally, limitations and recommendations for further studies are made.

8.2. SUMMARY OF WHAT IS INVOLVED IN THE STUDY

This study contributes to the existing understanding of teachers' classroom practice and their views towards teaching and assessing oral competence. It investigated teachers and students' perceptions towards the assessment practices secondary school Libyan teachers use in assessing students' learning. Despite the increasing emphasis in the field of second or foreign language learning on assessment, in general, very little research has directly addressed the issue of assessing oral competence (see section 1.5). This study, therefore, aimed at investigating this issue in depth and consequently bridging this gap in the literature.

This study was also aimed at exploring the similarities and the differences between teachers and students' perceptions towards assessment practice. In order to achieve its goals, this study was designed within a framework of two phases of quantitative and qualitative research (see section 4.5). The quantitative stage was used to explore the types and frequencies of assessment practices used by the research participants (chapter 5). The qualitative stage of this study was used to probe more deeply into the assessment practices identified and to find out how and why they were used (chapter 6). Therefore, a combination of quantitative and qualitative instruments to collect the data required was utilised.

Two structured questionnaires were distributed to teachers and students and semi-structured interviews with twelve teachers and twelve students were conducted (see sections 4.16. & 4.16.1), and (see Tables 4 & 5). SPSS software was used to analyse the quantitative data and thematic analysis was employed to analyse the qualitative data (see section 4.17). This theoretical approach was adopted because it was considered the most appropriate way to analyse the data obtained. Finally, the quantitative and qualitative findings were compared in an interpretation stage to address the research questions (chapter 7).

8.3. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This chapter summarises only the most significant findings obtained. These findings are presented according to the sequence of the research questions. The first question examined what teachers of English in Libyan secondary schools actually do in their classrooms in relation to the teaching and assessing oral communication. The second research question aimed to examine what teachers' and students' in Libyan secondary schools, perceptions towards the assessment practices used. Finally, the third research question explored the similarities and the differences between teachers and students' perceptions towards the assessment processes employed. The main answers to these research questions are presented below.

8.3.1. TEACHERS' PRACTICE OF TEACHING AND ASSESSING ORAL COMMUNICATION

In response to the first research question, a number of important findings emerged from both the quantitative and the qualitative findings. The teachers employed various processes to check their students learning during oral activities. However, some differences between teachers in using these practices were observed. Those teachers who used heterogeneous processes showed more flexibility and patience in their teaching and assessing their students' communicative competence. The classroom observation showed that the majority of the teachers prefer to use English language when teaching and assessing in the classroom. The teachers' interview data confirmed this observation and showed that the teachers were aware of the importance of using

English for the language learning process (see sections 6.4.1 & 6.3.7). The data analysis also revealed that the majority of students favour their teachers to teach and communicate with them using English language. This reflects their awareness of the importance of the exposure to English input for developing their communicative competence.

8.3.2. TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS ORAL ASSESSMENT

The qualitative data results showed that teachers had various views about teaching and assessing oral communication. They provided different reasons to justify their practice and perceptions towards teaching and assessing communicative competence. Nevertheless, all the teachers were aware of the importance of assessment and they were aware of the effectiveness of involving students in the assessment process. Quantitative and qualitative data showed that very few teachers reported that they only depend on summative assessment when they wanted to check their students' understandings. Teachers believed that assessment is a necessary process that should lead to learning improvement. However, both teachers and students claimed that the current assessment practice has negative impact on students' learning. One of their arguments against it was that it presents pressure and stress to students as well as their teachers that affect the learning process. Findings of the students' interview data analysis revealed that students also view assessment as a vital process that helped both teachers and students to discover the areas of strength and the weaknesses in a student's learning.

Another significant finding was the vital role that oral communication can play in improving the learning process. The teachers' interview data revealed that all of them had positive views towards the English language. They all believed that being able to communicate helped students to express themselves and convey their messages and they considered that speaking skill was a necessary component for language learning. Most of the students were in line with their teachers. They reported different reasons for the importance of learning oral communication. They believed that learning how to communicate using English language was necessary for different purposes such as furthering their studies

and getting good jobs in future. However, they stated that their teachers should not focus on accuracy more than fluency in order for them to be able to communicate without hesitation. Few students indicated that they were confident to speak in English, while most of them felt that they lacked confidence and felt shy and afraid of making mistakes.

More important findings included the fact that certain teachers were more concerned with correcting pronunciation and grammatical errors whenever they occurred. They focused more at accuracy on the expense of fluency. These teachers interrupted their students' flow whenever they committed any errors. They had different understandings and reasons, particularly when they said they used this process so that students could learn accurate and clear language. However, certain teachers struggled to balance their understanding that errors need to be corrected so as to maintain accuracy with their view that error correction by the teacher could negatively influence the student's language production and confidence it was evident that such contradictory awareness existed as a result of teachers' prior teaching and learning experience.

Findings also evidenced that all of the teachers stated that they considered utilizing quizzes as an important process that they employed when they checked their students' learning. They indicated that they found this process very helpful and that it could be used in limited time. Results of the students' interview revealed that students were familiar with such practices of assessment. However, they reported that this process did not provide a chance for them to perform other practices of assessment as the teachers controlled all the assessment process. Findings of the interviews revealed that teachers and students were aware of the advantages and disadvantages of using the students' L1 when teaching and assessing oral communication. Teachers, who used the L1, were asked to justify their use of it in their classes. They reported that they occasionally found it vital to use L1 for various purposes. For example, some of the reasons for teachers to code switch were to discipline their classes as each class contained more than twenty-five students, check whether students understood the task and explain new words and new grammatical rules, all of which are sometimes found to be difficult by students. The other few teachers, who reported that they avoided using

L1 in their classes, believed that it harms students learning. They support that students needed to communicate and use English language all the time to improve their communicative competence. The results of the students' interview showed that students also code switch for different purposes. For example, students reported that they code switch when working with their classmates because they sometimes find it difficult to be understood especially by their peers who are very weak and unable to speak in English.

The quantitative and qualitative data from both teachers and students showed that most of them agreed that grades could motivate or demotivate students' learning. Those teachers, who supported providing grades, justified their views by explaining that good grades could inspire students to work harder and improve their learning. Nevertheless, the others who opposed this view reported that providing feedback with grades was useless and had negative impact on students' learning. They explained that when students were given low grades, that could reduce their interest. Therefore, they claimed that it was more beneficial to dedicate effort to producing effective comments instead of grades. The results from students' interview revealed that nine out of twelve students stated that they considered grades as a motivated goal. Therefore, they worked hard to gain high mark. Students, who did not prefer grades, explained that when they got low mark they felt disappointed and they neither knew their strengths nor knew to what extent they are weak.

Finally, the findings of the study revealed that teachers and students believed that understanding criteria was important issue. They reported that when students became aware of the criteria, they would take care of performing their tasks according to the criteria that was being established.

8.3.3. SIMILARITIES BETWEEN TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS

The data analysis revealed some similarities in teachers' and students' perceptions towards assessment practice. Both teachers and students agreed about the importance of assessment. Students reported that they should be given efficient opportunities to practise assessment. Nevertheless, teachers indicated

that their students considered the notion of assessment as a teacher's job. Likewise, students had the same belief. Both teachers and students were aware of the importance of oral communication. They both reported that oral communication was important for various reasons. Some of the reasons that teachers and students reported were that it was considered as a necessary component for language learning, which helped students to pass exams and further their studies.

Another important finding was that there was agreement between teachers' and students' perceptions towards the importance of learners' true engagement and active participation in the learning process through working cooperatively. Findings of the current study revealed that both teachers and students were aware of the significance of cooperative learning. Therefore, offering students more chances to work cooperatively during language classes was emphasised by the majority of teachers and students. This reflected their understanding of the importance of students group work in promoting students' communicative competence and improving students' ability to be active learners and participate in classroom activities. The findings also evidenced that both teachers and students believed that correcting students during speaking hindered students speaking fluently. Those teachers who considered that students should be provided with the opportunity to correct themselves, and should not be interrupted while communicating, paid more attention and care to how students' communicative competence could be improved and developed rather than focusing on linguistic accuracy.

Another significant finding was that all the teachers and students were aware of the advantages and disadvantages of using the students' L1 when teaching and assessing oral communication in L2 classrooms. They had similar ideas about the reasons for code switching. The results showed that teachers related their use of L1 in English classes for various purposes. They explained that they used it to help their students to improve their awareness of the language. Additionally, students reported that they used their L1 for specific purposes. They emphasised that they preferred to communicate and talk in English so that, they gained more

English input. However, they added that in some situations code switching was needed.

One more important finding was that the majority of both teachers and students were negative towards the notion of the teacher being a controller. The results from both quantitative and qualitative data analysis revealed that both groups considered that the teacher's role should be a facilitator, who guided and facilitated students' learning. Both teachers and students were against the view that the teacher's role was only to transmit knowledge through explanations and by giving examples.

8.3.4. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS

Findings from the data analysis showed that there were some differences between teachers' and students' beliefs and views towards processes of assessment. Teachers held different views towards providing feedback with grades. Some of them considered that providing grades could be helpful in encouraging students to work harder. However, the other teachers believed that grades did not help improve students' learning in that, grades do not aid students in discovering the weakness area that needed to be improved. This finding indicates teachers' confusion about when and how they could provide grades.

In contrast, it was apparent from the data analysis that most of the students stated that grades motivated them to work harder. Those students, who supported providing feedback with grades, explained that grades differentiated between the active students and the lazy ones. They also believed that getting high mark meant that they were doing well and they were bright students. The other few students, who opposed this view, clarified that when they got low grades they felt disappointed and demotivated. Therefore, they considered providing feedback with grades useless as it did not help in improving their performance. Although, both teachers and students had positive views towards providing grades, students were more positive than teachers and they responded highly to the statement related to this notion in the questionnaire (see Tables 8 & 12).

Additionally, the results from the data analysis showed that teachers were more positive than students towards the role of assessment in helping students to be self-confident. The majority of the teachers believed that students' participation in assessment built up their confidence. However, students were less positive towards this notion. Surprisingly, unlike teachers the data analysis revealed that students were more positive towards supplementing the textbook with extra materials to satisfy students' different needs. However, teachers were more concerned with focusing on the content of the textbook so that their students could pass their summative assessment.

Students also were more positive towards understanding assessment criteria than their teachers were. All of the students were aware of the importance of understanding criteria. They reported that understanding criteria was vital for improving their performance and it encouraged them to participate in the classroom oral activities. This was clear from the results of both quantitative and qualitative data analyses.

8.3.5. CONCLUSION

The primary focus of this study was to explore the assessment processes Libyan English language teachers use in assessing communicative competence. It was also intended to raise awareness to the authorities and stakeholders such as students, teachers and decision makers of the importance of assessment in general and assessing oral communication in particular. Data was collected through a mixed-method approach using questionnaires, observations and interviews to evaluate the perceptions and views of students and their teachers regarding assessment practice.

Based on the results, it was found that both teachers and students had concerns about the assessment and there was an argument for moving from employing the old traditional process of assessment, to new assessment practice that helps in understanding the progress that students achieved and how it can be improved. For example, they suggested that in order to transfer what teachers' view were about the effectiveness processes for assessing students' learning, assessment should not be done only at the end of the year to measure students'

achievements. Instead, students ought to be examined or assessed on a regular basis using different assessment procedures. "*Assessment methods and approaches need to be focused on evidence of achievement rather than the ability to regurgitate information*" (Brown, 2004, p. 82). Teachers and students also believed that the teacher's role was to facilitate and guide students' learning. However, the teachers' focus on completing the content of the textbook in the limited time available and the need for summative assessment, affects the implementation of the assessment activities that incorporate students to participate in assessment. The variety of activities used can attract students' attention to make their learning task more interesting and beneficial. This could be achieved, through establishing an appropriate environment and positive atmosphere in which students feel secure and encouraged to take part in the learning process.

The results also draw attention to the impact of various other significant factors that shape teachers' current practices of assessment in their classes. Some of the issues that had been raised by the participants were; the insufficient training for teachers and students in the new methods of learning, the limitation in the resources and facilities provided for schools, the extensive use of the mother tongue by students when working in pairs or in groups and the imposition of the external traditional forms of examinations on secondary schools. They also complained of the imposing English language classrooms with its large number of students. Moreover, teachers referred to some difficulties in assessment in terms of the inability of students to provide a reliable grade to their work if they are asked to assess themselves. These factors besides many others affect in one way or another teachers' ability to employ more useful formative assessment practices that could help provide constructive feedback for their students and assist students to participate in classroom activities.

Another conclusion which could be drawn from the findings of this study was that teachers focus more on accuracy rather than fluency when they taught and assessed students' communicative competence. This indicated that they did not tolerate any errors committed when students learn to communicate using the language. This practice did not help students to learn how to practise their

knowledge of the language freely and confidently. Nonetheless, according to the new theories of learning, learning is a socially mediated process and teachers should create a collaborative activity in the classroom so that students participate and create new language with the help of their teacher or peers (see sections, 3.3.2 & 3.3.3). Teachers should use the target language in context to help students grasp meaning, and more opportunities should be given to students to communicate and interact using English language.

The findings of this study evidenced that using L1 minimised the opportunities for students to practise English language. However, the findings also revealed that code switching could be useful and should not be ignored in certain situations. Most of the teachers were aware of the drawbacks of using the first language too much in English classes. In other words, they understood that it is more beneficial to teach and assess oral communication using English language. Nevertheless, the participants reported that code switching is sometimes required for helping and facilitating students' learning. However, it should be limited and should be avoided as much as possible.

Most importantly, it was apparent that as a direct influence of the Libyan war on changing many values of the social and cultural Libyan society, many secondary school students have become more rebellious in and outside their classrooms. This phenomenon exists as Libyan secondary school classrooms' big challenge recently. Many students refuse to be provided with any negative feedback in front of their peers, especially in classes where the majority of students are females. Further, they also deny to be given low marks even though their achievements were poor. This issue becomes relatively sensitive and forced most teachers to change their behaviour and account for any practices they tend to implement to check their students' learning. Students at this age consider themselves as an in depended and adult like. Therefore, teachers find it more difficult to control and discipline their behaviour. This study has also found that the current assessment practices have some negative impacts on students learning. These practices have led students to focus more on their grades and push them to memorize information to perform well in their tests, which increases test anxiety among them and hinders long term learning.

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In sum, it can be said that many factors affected the teaching and learning process in the Libyan context. The shortage of teaching and learning facilities seemed to be a common issue in Libyan secondary schools and urgent action needs to be taken to supply Libyan secondary schools with the appropriate conditions for facilitating and promoting better teaching and learning process. Focusing on how to train these teachers to improve the assessment process in secondary schools particularly how to employ the new formative assessment forms presents an essential issue that needs to be considered by the Libyan Ministry of Education. "*Teachers need to have professional pre-service training for these specific requirements of formative assessment*" (Sadler, 1998, p.82) as well as in-service training too.

Nevertheless, even those teachers whose classes are poorly equipped or traditionally furnished should not consider the poor conditions in their classrooms as an excuse for not adopting instructional approaches that incorporate some principles and practices of the new processes of assessment that encourage students to involve and share the learning process.

8.3.6. CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

There has been a growing interest in teaching and assessment in general and the teaching and assessing of oral competence in particular in recent years. An exploration of perceptions of the assessment processes held by a sample of Libyan EFL teachers and their students offers useful implications for teaching and assessing oral language in Libyan context and may be in other similar contexts. This study was conducted partly to answer the calls of researchers in the literature and particularly those of Sadler, (1989); Black & Wiliam, (1998); Taras, (2002, 2005) who emphasised the importance of involving students in assessment processes. A general contribution of this study is also to offer a clearer picture about the challenges that face teachers in teaching and assessing oral communication. Therefore, an identification of the difficulties, which hindered the teachers and students from implementing various participatory assessment practices alongside the traditional ones properly, offers an explanation about the

most influential reasons for the failure of implementing them for TEFL in Libyan context.

A further pedagogical implication of this study is that understanding teachers' and students' perceptions of the assessment process could have a positive effect on teaching and learning practice in the future in that assessment can be seen as a process for developing students' achievement and not just a judgment of students' learning. Further, it can also be viewed as an approach of determining students' needs for better improvement. An important contribution of this study is that it draws attention to the importance of understanding criteria. Libyan teachers could be required to provide students with the assessment criteria that will be used to assess their work. This would allow students to focus more on particular aspects while working on a task to meet the required standard.

This study may help in creating feasible and practical solutions to overcome the challenges in teaching and assessing students. This study provides empirical evidence for the possibility of integrating quantitative and qualitative research methods and analysis. The instruments of data collection used in this study (questionnaires, observations & interviews) can be replicated in similar contexts (Gass & Mackey, 2007, p. 11). Finally, it can be concluded that this study could serve as a starting point for further studies undertaken in this context and other different contexts.

8.3.7. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Like many other studies, this study has some limitations. According to Cohen et al., (2007, p. 116) researchers should be honest in reporting all the matters and issues of their research including any limitations. The first limitation of this study was related to the sample of EFL teachers in schools in Janzour city. The qualitative data were gathered from low numbers of teachers across six secondary schools in Janzour city. However, more possible outcomes and results could be gained and identified if the data were collected from all teachers and students of the schools. Therefore, there was no opportunity for generalizing the conclusions as the sample of the volunteering teachers and students may not reflect the whole population in the context of the study. In addition, this study

would have been more comprehensive if the situation in Libya had been natural and stable.

The second limitation of this study was also concerned with the sample of teachers who were observed. It was difficult to distinguish the normal and natural practice of those teachers, who were observed, and whether my presence as a researcher affected their behaviours, although I did my best to avoid my presence's influence. Further, the researcher was intended to video record each observation to achieve more reliable and more validity. However, getting the permission to accomplish this was declined. The third limitation was the fact that the students' perceptions of the assessment practices explored in this study might have been influenced by the description given about these principles and practices in the statement of the questionnaire. It is possible that students' agreement or disagreement with these statements did not reflect their theoretical thoughts and understanding of these principles and practices. It was not possible to develop further results for representing their beliefs of these principles and practices during the interviews due to consideration of time and the pressure of the unsettled situation in the context of study (Libya).

Thus, the process was not without shortcomings, and further study is recommended in order to construct a more complete picture of teachers and students' views and practices when teaching and assessing English oral communication. Moreover, the gender sample of this study was unbalanced as the majority of the participants were female. Therefore, selecting an equal number of males and females could have produced more diverse and worthwhile results in comparison to ones from achieved in this study.

Finally, the researcher advocates the notion of implementing the new assessment practices in Libyan secondary schools. This belief may have unconsciously influenced the interpretation of the findings in this study and in the development of its conclusions. However, the researcher monitored her own subjectivity by making every effort to avoid any prejudice and expectations.

8.3.8. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Although this study highlighted both EFL teachers' and students' practices and perceptions towards the assessment process in the Libyan context, the results gained from the observations and the interviews of this study cannot be generalised because of the small numbers of the volunteering teachers and because of the war and the instability in Libyan context. Consequently, this study suggests further areas of research related to the issue of assessment processes to identify the impact of EFL teachers' practices and views on their EFL students' learning outcomes. It would be interesting in the future to explore if there is similar research in other contexts of war or social and political instability, and compare them to the Libyan context.

Findings of this research revealed that very little opportunities were given to students to employ their English ability in order to communicate their ideas clearly. Furthermore, there were several possible opportunities for more exposure to English input which have been exploited and wasted by students. This is because students interact with each other using their Arabic language during group work. Teachers do not pay much attention to this issue even though the main method of teaching is supposed to be based on a communicative approach. This suggests that more research could investigate this issue to further understand the reasons behind the observed behaviour. In addition, further research is still needed, which might be helpful in overcoming some of the problems and challenges that face teachers of English in teaching and assessing students' oral communication in EFL contexts around the world. Such research would concern how to support and raise both teachers' and students' understanding and knowledge of the effectiveness of implementing formative assessment forms such as self and peer assessment, which support Learner-centred learning.

The orientation towards the change in Libyan EFL secondary school teaching and learning methods should be associated with a parallel change in teachers' perceptions of assessment. A teachers' lack of understanding or knowledge of formative assessment forms such as peer and self-assessment can affect their

implementation of these processes significantly. Therefore, more studies are required to further our understanding of teachers and students' views of assessment practices. The findings of this study which concentrate on how EFL teachers can help and support their students' communicative competence might be helpful for developing training programmes. It could be also beneficial in raising teachers' awareness on how to transfer their beliefs and views into practice. It has always been the researcher's main objective and interest to improve teaching English performance in Libyan context, as well as students' ability to communicate clearly and confidently.

Most importantly, it can be argued that the successful implementation of any alternative of assessment practice is a complex process and involves true cooperation and active engagement among all education members such as policy-makers, teachers, students, head teachers and parents. Such collaboration could lead to effective changes in improving the teaching and learning operation. Therefore, raising teachers and students' awareness and understanding of the concept of learner-centred learning by training students for playing the role implied in the notion of independent learning, and teachers' acceptance of transferring their roles as a controller and presenter of knowledge, could be significant steps for the proper implementation of formative assessment forms.

I optimistically conclude by emphasising that teachers' positive views on the effectiveness of sharing assessment process for developing students' learning will lead them to continue their attempts to implement various assessment practices in language classrooms.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

University of Sunderland

School of Education and Society

Dear Teacher

Thank you for taking part in the following questionnaire, which concerns an investigation about 'Assessment'. Your participation and honest opinions will be of great value and it will strongly support this study. This questionnaire is anonymous. That is you can choose not to write your name if you do not want to. All the information will be confidential and no one will be allowed to access it except the researcher. Further, your participation is voluntarily and you are free to stop participating when you wish.

An Arabic version of the questionnaire and this information letter are available and will be given to you upon your request.

Section (I)

Before you start, could you please complete the following:

Place of graduation: College of Teachers **( )** Training College of Arts **( )** others please

specify……………………….

 Male **( )**   Female **( )**

Teaching Experience in years   **(**1-5)   (6-10)   (11-15)   (16- 20)   (21-25)   (26 +)

Section (II)

Please put a tick **( )** in the most appropriate box for each statement to express your opinion:

No	Items	Always 100%	Usually 80%	Sometimes 60%	Often 40%	Rarely 20%	Never 0%
1	I collect information about my students to assess their oral communication						
2.	I encourage my students to speak even if they commit errors						
3.	I give my students the chance to practise peer assessment						
4.	I give every student the chance to participate in self-assessment						
5.	I give summative grades after providing my feedback						
6.	I assess students' pronunciation						
7.	I depend only on summative assessment to know the level of my students understanding						
8.	I choose the techniques which is/are related to the course objectives						
9.	I ask my students to assess their own work comparing to criteria and /or standard						
10	I do all assessment by myself						
11.	Students do not like to discuss their feedback in front of their peers						
No.	Items	Always 100%	Usually 80%	Sometimes 40%	Often 60%	Rarely 20%	Never 0%
12.	Students like to receive only positive feedback						
13.	Providing feedback with grades is demotivating to students						
14.	Students' participation in assessment gives them self-confident						
15	Providing feedback with grades is motivating						

16.	Students put much attention on grades						
17.	The teacher should supplement the textbook with extra materials to satisfy students 'different needs						
18.	When students are asked to grade themselves they give themselves grades similar to my grades						
19.	When students are asked to grade themselves grades they give themselves grades which are lower than my grades						
20.	When students are asked to grade themselves they give themselves high grades						
21.	My students do not participate in the assessment process						
22.	My students believe that assessment is only the teacher's job						
23.	Assessment is a part of the learning process						
24.	Assessment helps students to become more responsible for their own learning						
25.	Assessing students at the end of each speaking course enables teachers identify students' strengths and weaknesses.						
26.	Assessment enables students to understand what they can do to improve their weaknesses in speaking						
27	Collecting information about students' achievement helps teachers to modify their instructions						
28.	paying more attention to accuracy rather than fluency during oral						

No		Strongly Disagree	Disagre e	Slightly Disagree	Partly Agree	Agree	Strongl y agree
	activities is helpful to students						
29.	It is difficult for the teacher to monitor students' performance during pair and group work activities						
30.	Students may use their mother tongue for discussion when they work in groups						
31.	I ask my students to provide feedback on their own work						
No	**To what extent do you agree with the following beliefs in assessment**	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagre e**	**Slightly Disagree**	**Partly Agree**	**Agree**	**Strongl y agree**
32.	The teacher's role is to transmit knowledge through explanations and giving example						
33.	Peer and group activities provide good opportunities for language practice.						
34.	Assessment guides students to check their learning progress towards their objectives						
35.	Teacher's role is to facilitate and guide students' learning.						
36.	paying more attention to fluency rather than accuracy during oral activities is more helpful						
37	Providing corrective feedback during speaking hinders students speaking fluently						
38.	Understanding the assessment criteria enhances students' involvement in oral activities						

Section (III)

Note: Please indicate if you are interested in participating in a semi-structured interview.

Please, read the following notes before you decide:

(a)- The interview will be between 30 to 45 minutes long.

 (b)-Recording the interview will be left to your decision.

(b)- The language used in the interview will be left to your choice (Arabic, or English).

 Yes ☐   No ☐

  If (yes), please complete the information below

Name
………………………………………………………………………………………
….

 City …………………………………… School
……………………………………………….

 Mobile phone………………………. Telephone
Number………………………………

 E-Mai address:
……………………………………………………………………………

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact the researcher:

Name: Zadma Al-Fourganee

Mobile phone: (Libya) 092 7158892 - 092 4065025 (UK) +44-7440064837

E. Mail Address: Al-Zadma Al Fourganee@sunderland.ac.uk

………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………….

APPENDIX B: TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE (TRANSLATED VERSION)

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استبيان المدرسيين

عزيزي المدرس

شـــكرا لمشـــاركتك فـــي الاســـتبيان التـــالي والـــذي يتحـــدث عـــن التقيـــيم مشـــاركتك و افكـــارك الصـــادقة هـــي ذات قيمـــه وسـوف تشـجع هـذه الدراسـه. هـذا الاسـتبيان سـري ولـك الحريـه فـي عـدم كتابـــه اســمك وكــل المعلومـــات ســتكون خاصـــه ولــن يســمح لاي احــد بـــالاطلاع ماعـــدا الباحث. مشاركتك طوعيه ولك الحريه في التوقف علي المشاركة متي رغبت.

القسم الاول

قبل البدء يرجي تكمله الاتي :

مكـــان التخـــرج : كليـــة اعـــداد المعلـــيم   ( )   كليـــة الاداب   ( )
اخري ( )

ذكر ( )   انثي ( )

القسم الثاني

لطفـــا ضـــع علامـــة (√) فـــي العمـــود الانســـب لكـــل فقـــره لتوضيح فكرتك.

أبدا 0%	نادرا 20%	أحيانا 40%	غالبا 60%	عادة 80%	دائما 100%	الفقرات	
						اجمع المعلومات عن طلابي لتقييم حديثهم الشفهي	1
						اشجع طلابي لتحدث حتي مع ارتكاب الاخطاء	2
						اعرف ماذا اقييم في الحديث الشفهي	3
						اعطي الفرصة لكل طالب للاشتراك في التقييم الذاتي	4
						اعطي درجات نهائية بعد اعطاء ملاحظاني	5
						اقييم طريقة نطق طلابي	6
						اعتمد فقط علي التقييم النهائي لمعرفة مستوي فهم طلابي	7
						اختار التكتيك المناسب لأهداف الفصل الدراسي	8
						اطلب من طلابي تقييم اعمالهم وفق معايير او مقاييس معينه	9
						اعمل كل التقييم بنفسي	10
						الطلاب لا يحبذون مناقشه الملاحظات امام زملائهم	11

						العبارة	
						الطلاب يفضلون الملاحظات الاجابية	12
						اعطاء ملاحظات مع الدرجات غير محفز للطلاب	13
						مشاركة الطلاب في التقييم يزودهم بالثقة بالنفس	14
						اعطاء الطلاب ملاحزات مع الدجات محفز	15
						الطلاب يضعون اهتمام كبير للدرجات	16
						يجب علي المدرس تزويد الكتاب المدرسي بمصادر احرى لتلبيه رغبات الطلاب	17
						عندما يطلب من الطلاب تقييم انفسهم يعطون انفسهم درجات مشابها لدرجاتي	18
						عندما يطلب من الطلاب تقييم انفسهم يعطون انفسهم درجات اقل من درجاتي	19
						عندما يطلب من الطلاب تقييم انفسهم يعطون انفسهم درجات اعلى من درجاتي	20
						. طلابي لا يشاركون في عملية التقييم	21
						يعتقد كلابي ان التقييم هوا فقط شغل المعلم	22
						التقييم هو جزء من العملية التعليمية	23
						التقييم يجعل الطلاب اكثر مسوؤلية في تعلمهم	24
						تقييم الطلاب في نهاية كل فصل دراسي يساعد المدرسيين في تحديد اماكن القوة و الضعف عند الطلاب	25
						يساعد التقييم الطلاب علي فهم كيفيه تطويير اماكن الضعف في مهاره الحديث	26
						. جمع المعلومات عن التحصيل العلمي للطلاب يساعد المدرسيين في تعدييل طرق تدرسيهم	27
						التركيز علي الدقه اكثر من الطلاقة في تعلم اللغة خلال الانشطة الشفاهيه مفيد للطلاب	28
						من الصعب علي المدرس مراقبة اداء الطلاب خلال الانشطه الجماعيه	29
						. قد يستعمل الطلاب لغتهم الام خلال الانشطة الجماعيه	30
						اطلب من طلابي اعطاء ملاحظاتهم علي اعمالهم	31

موافق بشكل قطعي	موافق	موافق جزئيا	غير موافق بعض الشى	غير موافق	غير موافق علي الاطلاق	الي اي مدي توافق مع العبرات التالية	الرقم
						وضيفه المدرس توصيل المعلومات من حلال الشرح واعطاء الامثلة	32
						الانشطة الجماعيه فرصة جيده للتدريب علي اللغة	33
						. التقييم يساعد الطلاب في مراجعه تطورهم التعليمي للوصول الي اهدافهم	34
						وضيفه المدرس تبسيط وتوجيه تعلم الطلاب	35
						التركيز علي الطلاقة اكثر من الدقة خلال الانشطة الشفاهيه اكثر منفعه	36
						التصحيح اثناء التحدث يعيق الطلاب من تحدث بطلاقة	37
						فهم معايير التقييم يزيد من مشاركة الطلاب في الانشطة الشفاهيه	38

APPENDIX C: TEACHERS' INTERVIEW GUIDE

University of Sunderland

School of Education and Society

Dear Teacher

Firstly, I would like to thank you for taking part in this study; also, I would like to confirm that your role is very important for the completion and success of this investigation, which aims to explore 'Assessment'. Secondly, the data collected from these interviews will be confidential; it will not be used for any other purposes. It will be only used for this research and the recorded information will be spoiled after the completion of this study. The interview will take approximately forty-five minutes. Finally, it is your right to withdraw at any time, also you can use either English language or your native language (Arabic language) or both of them in order to express your thoughts clearly.

Interview No……………… **Name of School……………………………………**

Age…………………………
Gender………………………………………………

Years Teaching in School……………………………….

Suggested Questions

1. Do you think that it is important for students to master speaking skills? Why?

2. Could you please tell us how you gather information about your students to assess their oral communication?

3. Is it important to assess students at the end of each speaking course?

4. Could you please tell me about the role of the methods of assessment that you use in speaking skills?

5. Do you think that understanding assessment criteria help students to take part in assessing their work and their peers' work? If yes, why? If no, why not?

6. Do you encounter any difficulties in implementing pair and group activities?

7. Does assessment help students to be confident learner? If yes, how and why? If no, why not?

8. What do you think accuracy refers to within the context of EFL speaking assessment?

9. What do you know about providing students with feedback?

10. Do you think that providing feedback with grades is motivating?

11. Do you think that providing feedback with grades help students to improve?

12. Do you think that students learn more effectively when they use peer assessment?

13. Do you think that students learn more effectively when they use self-assessment?

14. Do you accept your students to commit errors during oral activities? If yes, why, if not why not?

15. Do you know about using students' L1 to check students' understanding?

16. Are there any changes in the way of assessing your students' oral communication from starting your teaching until now? If yes, could you explain the changes?

17. Do you follow the course book instructions, or do you use your own method in teaching and assessing speaking skills?

18. Could you please tell us about the teacher's role in assessment?

19. Could you please tell us what is the students' role in assessment?

20. Do you think that the current assessment practice that used help students to improve in speaking skills/ If yes how and why? If not, why not?

21. What do you think fluency refers to within the context of EFL speaking assessment?

22. In an ideal world how could you see the oral assessment process occurring?

23. Would you like to add anything about assessment to this interview that we have not mentioned?

Thank you very much for this valuable information. I am very happy you have

participated in my study and it is greatly appreciated.

APPENDIX D: TEACHERS' INTERVIEW GUIDE (ARABIC VERSION)

النسخة العربية لمقابلة المدرسين

1 هل تعتقد انه من الضروري للطلبة اتقان مهارة الحديث؟ ولماذا؟

2 هل ممكن ان تخبرنا كيف تجمع المعلومات عن طلابك لتقييم التواصل الشفهي؟

3 هل من الضروري ان تقيم طلابك في نهاية كل فصل دراسي للمحادثة؟

4 هل بأمكانك اخبارنا عن دور طرق تقييم مهارة الحديث التي تستخدمها؟

5 هل تعتقد ان فهم معايير التقييم تساعد الطلبة في المشاركة في تقييم اعمالهم؟ اذا كان نعم لماذا واذا كان لا اذكر السبب؟

6 هل تقابلك اي صعوبات عند تطبيق الانشطة الثنائية و الجماعية؟

7 هل تعتقد ان التقييم يساعد الطلبة في بناء الثقة؟ كيف ولماذا اذا اجبت بنعم وان اجبت بلا اذكر السبب؟

8 ماذا تعتقد (الدقة) تشيير الي في مجال تقييم مهارة الحديث ؟

9 هل تعتقد ان اعطاء الدرجات مع الملاحظات محفزه؟

10 هل تعتقد ان اعطاء الدرجات مع الملاحظات تساعد في تحسن تعلم الطلبة؟

11 هل تعتقد ان تعلم الطلبة يكون اكثر فعاليه عند استخدام التقييم الجماعي؟

12 هل تعتقد ان تعلم الطلبة يكون اكثر فعالية عند استخدامهم للتقييم الذاتي ؟

13 هل تتقبل اخطاء طلابك اثناء الانشطة الشفهيه ؟ لماذا اذا اجبت بنعم وان اجبت بلا اذكر السبب؟

14 هل هناك اي تغييرات في طريقة تقييم التواصل الشفهى لطلابك منذ بداية تدريسك الي الان ؟ اذا كان نعم هل ممكن شرح هذه التغييرات ؟

15 هل تتبع في توجيهات الكتاب المدرسي (كورس بوك) او هل تستعمل طريقتك الخاصة في التدريس وفي تقييم مهارة الحديث ؟

16 هل ممكن ان تخبرنا علي دور المدرس في التقييم ؟

17 هل ممكن ان تخبرنا علي دور الطلاب في التقييم ؟

18 هل تعتقد ان تقنيات التقييم الحاليه المستعمله تساعد الطلاب في تحسيين مهارات الحديث ؟ اذا كانت الاجابة بنعم كيف ولماذا؟ واذا كانت بلا اذكر السبب ؟

19 ماذا تعتقد (الطلاقه) تشيير الي في مجال تقييم الحديث باللغة الانجليزية ؟

20 هل تريد اضافة اي شي عن التقييم لم يذكرفي هاده المقابله؟

شكرا علي مشاركتكم في هذه المقابله

APPENDIX E: STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE
University of Sunderland

School of Education and Society

Questionnaire to Third Year Secondary Schools Students

in Janzoor

Dear Students,

Thank you for taking part in my research. This questionnaire is a part of my PhD project which aims to identify 'Assessment'. Accordingly, your answers are to be very important and vital in the current study.   All responses are anonymous and no names will be mentioned, beside all the information you will provide will be confidential.   The questionnaire takes approximately fifteen minutes to finish, once more your honest opinion about this study will be of great value, further your participation is voluntarily, so you are free to refuse.

 An Arabic version of the questionnaire and this information letter are available and will be given to you upon your request.

Before you start please complete the following:

 Age………………School……………………………………….   Male (   )

Female (   )

 Date/   /   / 2015

Please put a (√) in the appropriate column.

No	Questions	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Partly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	Teacher's written feedback enables me to go back over what I have done in speaking English						
2	Peer-assessment is useful in motivating me to communicate in English						
3	I enjoy being assessed by my peers						

4	Having to carry out self-assessment encourages me to be an active learner					
5	Assessment helps me to build up my confidence					
6	My English teacher's oral feedback encourages me to speak in English					
7	The teacher's role is to transmit knowledge through explanations and giving examples	.				
8	Teacher's oral feedback enables me to go back over what I have done in speaking English					
9	Self-assessment helps me to become more responsible for my own learning					
10	My teacher's feedback with grades encourages me to enhance my performance					
11	Peer assessment provides a good chance for classroom interaction					
12	Assessment is the teacher's job					
13	peer assessment provides useful feedback					
14	Written feedback is better than oral feedback					
15	I prefer written feedback without grades					
16	Assessment motivates me to take more control of my learning					
17	Oral feedback is better than written feedback					
18	Understanding the assessment criteria helps me to involve in oral activities					
19	I prefer to speak in Arabic when I work in oral activities in English lessons					
20	Peer-assessment is useful in encouraging me to communicate in English					
21	The teacher should supplement the textbook with extra materials to satisfy students 'different needs					
22	providing feedback with grades is motivating					

2 3	All teachers who have taught me oral communication use the same assessment techniques						
2 4	I prefer feedback with grades						
2 5	Assessing students at the end of each speaking course helps me to improve my speaking skills						
2 6	Collecting information by my teacher about my achievement during speaking course helps me to improve						
2 7	The teacher's role is to facilitate student's learning						
2 8	Teacher's oral assessment affects me when I speak in English						
2 9	It becomes difficult when my teacher corrects me while I am still speaking						
3 0	How I am assessed could be changed						

Thank you very much for this valuable information. I am very happy you have participated in my study and it is greatly appreciated.

APPENDIX F: STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE (ARABIC VERSION)

عزيزي الطالب

اشكركم علي مشاركتكم في هذه البحث

هذا الاستبيان هو جزء من رسالتي في الدكتوراة والتي تهدف الي معرفه التقييم. لذلك اجاباتكم هي مهمه جدا و ضرورية لهذه الدراسة. كل االمعلومات ستكون سرية وبدو ذكر اي اسماء. هذا الاستبيان سيستغرق **15** دقيقة لتكملته. مره اخرى اجاباتكم الصادقة عن هذه الدراسة ستكون قيمة جدا. مشاركتكم طوعيه ولكم حريه الرفض.

قبل الإجابة على هذا الإستبيان الرجاء تكملة الفراغات التاليه:

العمر .... المدرسة .... مذكر ( ) مؤنث ( )

لطفا ضع علامة (√) في العمود المناسب

موافق بشكل قطعي	موافق	موافق جزئيا	غير موافق بعض الشئ	غير موافق	غير موافق علي الاطلاق	الاسئلة

315

							العبارة	
							ملاحظات معلمي المكتوبه تمكنني من مراجعة مانجزته في **التحد** ث بالانجليزية	1
							تقييم الزملاء مفيد في تحفيزي علي التواصل بالانجليزية	2
							استمتع بتقييم زملائي	3
							التقييم الذاتي يشجعني علي ان اكون متعلم فعال	4
							التقييم يساعدني في بناء ثقتي بنفسي	5
							ملاحظات معلمي الشفاهيه تشجعني علي التحدث بالانجليزية	6
							وظيفه المعلم هي توصيل المعلومات من خلال الشرح واعطاء الامثله	7
							ملاحظات معلمي الشفهيه تمكنني من مراجه مانجزته في التحدث بالانجليزية	8
							التقييم الذاتي يساعدني في ان اصبح اكثر مسئوليه في تعلمي	9
							ملاحظات معلمي مع الدرجات تشجعني علي زياده ادائي	10
							تقييم الزملاء فرصه جيده للتفاعل في داخل الفصل	11
							التقييم هوا من اختصاص المعلم	12
							تقييم الزملاء يزود ملاحظات مفيده	13
							الملاحظات المكتوبه افضل من الملاحظات الشفاهيه	14
							افضل الملاحظات المكتوبه بدون درجات	15
							التقييم يحفزني في ان اكون اكثر تحكم في تعلمي	16
							الملاحظات الشفاهيه افضل من الملاحظات المكتوبه	17
							فهم معايير التقييم يساعدني في الاشتراك في الانشطه الشفاهيه	18
							افضل التحدث بالعربية اثناء الانشطه الشفاهيه في حصص اللغة الانجليزية	19
							تقييم الزملاء مفيد في تشجيعي علي التواصل بالانجليزية	20
							يجب علي المدرس تزويد الكتاب المدرسي بمواد اخرى لتلبيه احتياجات الطلاب المختلفه	21
							اعطاء ملاحظات مع الدرجات محفز للطلاب	22
							جميع المدرسيين الذين درسوني التحدث الشفهي استعمل نفس تقنيات التقييم	23
							افضل ملاحظات مع الدرجات	24
							تقييم الطلاب في نهاية كل فصل دراسي يساعد في تحسن مهارات التحدث	25
							تجميع المعلومات عن طريق معلمي عن تحصيلي الدراسي خلال الفصل الدراسي بماده التحدث الشفهي يساعدني في التحسن	26
							وظيفه المدرس هي تسهييل تعلم الطلاب	27
							تقييم مدرسي الشفهي يؤثر علي ادائي عند التحدث بالانجليزية	28

| | | | | | | اجد صعوبه عندما يصحح المدرس اخطائي اثناء تحدثي | 29 |
| | | | | | | طريقه تقييمي يمكن تغييرها | 30 |

APPENDIX G: STUDENTS' INTERVIEW QUIDE

University of Sunderland

School of Education and Society

Dear Student

Firstly, I would like to thank you for taking part in my study; also, I would like to confirm that your honest answers are very important to the success of this investigation, which aims to explore 'Assessment'. Secondly, the data collected from these interviews will be confidential; it will not be used for any other purposes. It will be only used for this research and the recorded information will be spoiled after the completion of this study. The interview will take approximately 30 to 45 minutes. Finally, it is your right to withdraw at any time also you can use either English language or your native language (Arabic language) or both of them in order to express your thoughts clearly.

Interview No…………………………………   Name of School…………………………………………………

**Age……………………………………
Gender…………………………………………………………………..**

Suggested questions

1. How long have you been learning EFL?
2. In your opinion, is it important for students to master speaking skills in English?

    if so why? If not, why not?

3. Do you feel that you are confident and able to communicate in English lessons?

4. How do you think teachers can assess fluency?

5. Do you think that you have enough opportunities to practise English speaking

   during each lesson?

6. How do you feel speaking in front of classmates?

7. How do the grades you get from the teacher help in your learning?

8. How does the teacher's feedback enable you to overcome your weaknesses?

9. Do you prefer feedback with grades? If yes, why? If not, why not?

10. Do you think that assessment should be based on clear criteria, if yes, why? If no, why not?

11. Do you enjoy peer- assessment? Does it help in your learning?

12. When you work on oral activities in English lessons with other classmates, do you prefer to speak in Arabic or in English? Why?

13. What different ways does your teacher use to assess your oral work?

14. Do you think that peer-assessment encourages you to participate in oral activities, if yes how and why? If no, why not?

15. Do you think that the current assessment techniques for oral communication is helpful enough to enhance your learning to speak English?

16. How would you like to learn English?

APPENDIX H: STUDENTS' INTERVIEW GUIDE (ARABIC VERSION)

النسخة العربية لمقابلة الطلبة
عزيزي الطالب
اولا اود ان اشكركم علي مشاركتكم في بحثي، كذالك اود ان اؤكد علي ان اجاباتكم الصريحة هي مهمه لنجاح هذا البحث الذي يهدف الي اكتشاف التقييم.
ثانيا كل المعلومات التي تدلى بها ستكون في غايه السريه ولن تستعمل لي اي اغراض اخرى وستستخدم فقط لهاذا البحث وكل االمعلومات سيتم التخلص منها بعد نهاية الدراسة. مده المقابلة ستكون من ثلاثون الي خمس و اربعون دقيقة.
اخيرا لك الحق في الانسحاب في اي وقت وتستطيع الاستخدام اما اللغة الانجليزية او اللغة العربية وا كلاهما للتعبير عن ارائك بوضوح

المقابله رقم ....
المدرسة ....

الاسم ....

العمر ....

الجنس ....

1 منذ متى وانت تتعلم اللغة الانجليزية ؟

2 في رائيك هل من المهم اتقان مهارة الحديث بالغة الانجليزية ؟ اذا كان نعم لماذا واذا كانت الاجابة بلا اذكر السبب؟

3 هل تشعر بأنك واثق وقادر علي التواصل في الدروس الانجليزية

4 كيف تعتقد ان الاساتذة يستطيعو تقييم الطلاقة ؟

5 هل تعتقد ان لديك الفرص الكافية لتدرب علي مهارة الحديث خلال كل درس ؟

6 كيف تشعر عند الحديث امام زملائك ؟

7 كيف تساعد الدرجات التي تتحصل عليها من المدرس في تعلمك ؟

8 كيف تساعد ملاحظات المدرس في التغلب علي مواطن ضعفك ؟

9 هل تفضل ملاحظات بالدرجات ؟ اذا كان نعم لماذا واذا كان لا اذكر السبب ؟

10 هل تعتقد ان التقييم يجب ان يبنى علي معايير واضحه ؟ اذا كان نعم لماذا واذا كان لا اذكر السبب ؟

11 هل تستمتع بتقييم الزملاء ؟ هل يساعد في تعلمك ؟

12 عندما تشتغب في الانشطة الشفاهيه خلال الدروس الانجليزية مع زملائك هل تفضل الحديث بالعربي او بالانجليزي ؟

13 ماهي الطرق المختلفة التي يستعمل فيها استاذك لتقييم عملك الشفهي ؟

14 هل تعتقد ان تقييم الزملاء يشجعك في الاشتراك في الانشطة الشفهية ؟ اذا كان بنعم كيف ولماذا اذا كانت لا اذكر السبب ؟

15 ل تعتقد ان تقنيات تقييم التواصل الشفهى الحالية تساعد بدرجه كافيه في رفع تعلمك التحدث باللغة الانجليزية ؟

16 كيف تريد ان تتعلم اللغة الانجليزية ؟

شكرا علي مشاركتك في هذا المقابلة

APPENDIX I: MODIFICATIONS OF QUESTIONNAIRES (PILOT STUDY) (TEACHERS)

Items added:

- Regarding informing the participants about the Arabic version in the introduction the following sentence was added: *An Arabic version of the questionnaire and this information letter are available and will be given to you upon your request.*

- Regarding the question relating to 'qualifications', *the item place of graduation, was added.*

Modified items:

Q.2. I encourage my students to speak although they commit errors. **Modified:** *I encourage my students to speak even if they commit errors.*

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Q.10. I do the assessment by myself. **Modified:** *I do all assessment by myself.*

Q.18. Students like to discuss their feedback in front of their colleagues. **Replaced:** *when students are asked to grade themselves, they give themselves grades similar to my grades.*

Q.19. I give chance to students to assess each other (peer-assessment). **Replaced with:** *When students are asked to grade themselves, they give themselves grades, which are lower than my grades*

Q. 23. Assessment is a part of the learning operation. **Modified:** *Assessment is a part of the learning process.*

Q.26. Assessment enhances students to understand what they can do to improve their weakness. **Modified:** *Assessment enables students to understand what they can do to improve their weakness in speaking.*

Q.25. I know when to assess students' oral communication**. Replaced with:** *Assessing students at the end of each speaking course enables teachers identify students' strengths and weaknesses.*

Q. 38. I depend only on assessment to know the level of my students understanding. **Replaced with:** *Understanding the assessment criteria enhances students' involvement in oral activities.*

Q.8. I choose the method, which is/ are related to the course objects. **Modified:** *I choose the techniques, which is/ are related to the course objects.*

Q.37. providing corrective feedback hinders students to speak fluently. **Modified:** *providing corrective feedback hinders students speaking fluently.*

(STUDENTS)

Questions modified:

Q.1. Teacher's feedback enables me to go back over what I have done in speaking. **Modified:** *Teacher's written feedback enables me to go back over what I have done in speaking English*.

Q.4. Self-assessment encourages me to be an active learner. **Modified:** *Having to carry out self-assessment encourages me to be an active learner.*

Q.5. Assessment helps students to build up confidence. **Modified:** *Assessment helps me to build up my confidence.*

Q.6. My teacher's oral feedback encourages me to speak. **Modified:** *My English teacher's oral feedback encourages me to speak in English.*

Q.7. Formative assessment is essential since it helps me to discover my strengths and weaknesses. **Replaced***: The teacher's role is to transmit knowledge through explanations and giving examples.*

Q.9. Self-assessment helps students to become more responsible for their learning. **Modified:** *Self-assessment helps me to become more responsible for my own learning*.

Q.13. Peer-assessment is useful feedback. **Modified:** *Peer-assessment provides useful feedback.*

Q.15. I prefer feedback without grades. **Modified:** *I prefer written feedback without grades.*

Q.16. Assessment motivate students to take more control over their learning. **Modified:** *Assessment motivates me to take more control of my learning.*

Q.18. Understanding assessment criteria enhance student involvement in assessing Communication. **Modified:** *Understanding the assessment criteria enhances my involvement in oral activities.*

Q.19. The way my teacher assesses my performance increases my learning and motivation. **Replaced:** *I prefer to speak in Arabic when I work in oral activities in English lessons.*

Q.23. Self-assessment is useful in encouraging and motivating students. **Replaced:** *All teachers who have taught me oral communication use the same assessment techniques*

Q.26. Teacher's feedback received on my work came too late to be useful. **Replaced:** *I prefer written feedback with grades*

Q.29. It becomes difficult when my teacher corrects me while producing the language. **Modified:** *It becomes difficult when my teacher corrects me while I am still speaking*

Q.30. Current assessment techniques need to be modified according to student's needs. **Modified:** *How I am assessed could be changed*

APPENDIX J: MODIFICATIONS OF INTERVIEWS
(TEACHERS)

Items modified:

Q.1. Do you think that it is important for students to master speaking skills, if yes why? If not, why not? **Modified:** *Do you think it is important for students to master speaking skills? Why?*

Q.7. Does assessment help students to be confident and independent learner. If yes, how and why? If no, why not? **Modified**: *Does assessment help students to be confident learner? If yes, how and why? If no, why not?*

Q.8. What do you think accuracy and fluency refer to within the context of EFL speaking?

Modified: *What do you think accuracy refer to within the context of EFL speaking assessment?*

Q.12. Do you allow your students to commit errors during oral activities? If yes, why, if not why not? **Modified***: Do you accept your students to commit errors during oral activities? If yes, why, if not why not?* **Q.13.** Are there any changes in the way of assessing your students' oral communication from starting your job until now. If yes, could you explain the changes? **Modified:** *Are there any changes in the way of assessing your students' oral communication from starting your teaching until now? If yes, could you explain the changes?*

Q. 17. Do you think that assessment techniques used can improve in speaking skills/ If yes how and why? If not, why not? **Modified:** *Do you think that the current assessment practice used help students to improve in speaking skills/ If yes how and why? If not, why not?*

Q. 19. Would you like to add anything to the interview that we have not mentioned? **Modified:** *Would you like to add anything about assessment techniques to this interview that we have not mentioned?*
(STUDENTS)

Q. 2. In your opinion is it important for the students to master the speaking skills, and why? **Modified:** *In your opinion is it important for students to master speaking skills in English, if so why? If not, why not?*

Q.4. How do you think teachers can assess these aspects and which one is more important than the other? **Modified:** *How do you think teachers can assess fluency?*

Q. 5. Do you think that you have enough opportunities to practise English speaking during the lesson? **Modified:** *Do you think that you have enough opportunities to practise English speaking during each lesson?*

Q. 7. To what extent the grades that given by the teacher help in your learning? **Modified:** *How do the grades you get from the teacher help in your learning?*

Q. 8. To what extent the teacher's feedback enables you to overcome your weakness? **Modified:** *How does the teacher's feedback enable you to overcome your weaknesses?*

Q. 10. Do you think that assessment should be based on a clear criteria and standard, if yes, why? If no, why not? **Modified:** *Do you think that assessment should be based on clear criteria? If yes, why? If no, why not?*

Q. 14. Do you think that self- assessment motivates students to take more control over their learning, if yes, why, if no why not? **Modified:** *Do you think that peer-assessment encourages you to participate in oral activities, if yes how and why? If no, why not?*

Q. 15. When you work on oral activities with other classmates, do you prefer to speak in Arabic or in English? Why? **Modified:** *When you work on oral activities in English lessons with other classmates, do you prefer to speak in Arabic or in English? Why?*

Q. 16. Do you think that the current assessment techniques of oral communication are helpful enough to enhance learning speaking English? **Modified:** *Do you think that the current assessment techniques for oral communication is helpful enough to enhance your learning to speak English?*

APPENDIX L: CONSENT LETTERS
Student Consent to Participate in a Research Study

University of Sunderland

School of Education and Society

Dear Student,

My name is AL-Zadma Al-Fourganee. I am a PhD student at Sunderland University. I would like to invite you to participate in my research study about 'Assessment'.

Your participation will involve completing a questionnaire which, will take approximately 15 minutes and accepting to be interviewed which will last 20 to 30 minutes. Your involvement in this study is voluntary, and you may choose not to participate or to stop your participation at any time. All information you provide will remain strictly confidential. There are no risks in participating in this study, and no names will be mentioned. Your responses and opinions are valuable for this research and highly appreciated.

If you have any questions about this research project, please feel free to e-mail me, at

E. Mail Address: Al-Zadma al fourganee@sunderland.ac.uk

……………………………………………………………………………………..

By signing below, I confirm that I have read this form and I have understood what I am being asked to do. I would like to participate in this study with complete willingness.

Date: / /   *Signature of Student ………………..*

Parental Permission Form for Participation in a Research Study

University of Sunderland

School of Education and Society

Dear Parent,   *December/2015*

Your child is invited to participate in a research study conducted by the researcher *AL-Zadma AL-Fourganee;* PhD student at the University of Sunderland. The purpose of this research is to investigate 'Assessment'.

Your child will be invited to be interviewed and that will involve audio recording and it will be held in a room in your child's school during breaks and non-instructional hours. Each interview will last between 20 to 30 minutes.

Neither your name nor your child's name will appear in any report of this research. You have the right to attend if you like. Participation in this research study is voluntary and involves no risks to you or your child. At any time, you may rescind your permission and your child can refuse to participate or withdraw from the project with no negative consequences.

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to e-mail me at: Al zadma al fourganee@sunderland.ac.uk.

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

I have read this parental permission form and I agree to let my child take part in this project. I understand what s/he will have to do through this participation.

Signature of parent   *Date*

…………………….. …..………………...   /   /

Head Teacher Permission Form for Conducting a Research Study

University of Sunderland

School of Education and Society

Dear Head Teacher,
December 2015

My name is *Zadma AL-fourganee,* a PhD student at University of Sunderland. It would be helpful if you could give me permission to collect data for my research study at your school. The purpose of this research is to investigate assessment by secondary school teachers in oral communication.

Some students at secondary level will be chosen to complete a questionnaire followed up by interviews. The latter will involve audio recording. The interviews will be held in a room in your school during non-instructional hours, i.e. either before/after school time or at lunchtime. Each task will last between 20 to 30

minutes and both tasks will be held on different days. You have the right to review a copy of any task being administered to your students.

There are no risks associated with this research, and you may withdraw your permission at any time and stop the research.

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please e-mail me at Al-zadma al fourganee@sunderland.ac.uk   **Or** contact me on- 092 7158892

…………………………………………………………………………………………………..

I have read this form and I give my permission for students   to participate in this project. I understand what they will have to do through this participation.

Signature of headmaster   **Date**

……………………. …..………………..   /   /

<h2 style="text-align:center">Supervisor's Letter for Data Collection</h2>

Letter Issued by the Director of English Department In Janzour College to Secondary School Head teachers (Translated)

STATE OF LIBYA

Janzour People's Educational Committee

Date: 04/12/2015   Ref. 20/3898/67

To: The Head teachers of Secondary Schools

After greeting, in accordance with the aim of encouraging the scientific research, we hope that you offer your cooperation to Mrs.AL-ZADMA AL-FOURGANEE, through providing her with the data and information required for conducting her field study. This will require your assistance in her distribution of the questionnaire and in conducting observations and some interviews with some male and female teachers and students.

 Thank you for your cooperation.

 Approved and signed by

Fatma EL-Tuhami EL-Tomi

 Tel. (00218) 021 20332-021 20437

…………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………

APPENDIX M: IDENTIFYING INITIAL CONCEPTS

Sample of the initial coding chosen randomly	Emerging concepts How and why
Interviewer: Do you think that it is important for students to master speaking skills? **T3:** well, I have been teaching for more than ten years, I don't think that students have to master speaking at the first time. **Academically not at all.** **Interviewer:** Could you please tell me why? **T3:** Students' don't have to master speaking, at least they can communicate probably and convey their message. It is less important than other skills such as reading and writing, we know that they are still learning **and they don't have to speak as native speakers.** **Interviewer:** How do you assess your students' oral production? **T3:** well, there are some activities in the textbook, which require students to work either in pairs or in groups. I encourage my students to work in pairs as I believe it is suitable and I can evaluate the performance of the students when they work on the activity orally. I always try not to stop my students I don't like to interrupt my students. If they commit any error I just need to pass it away and later I might speak to them one by one, I like to motivate my students at least I can understand them I might not stop them. **Interviewer:** What aspects of students' performance do you focus on when you assess their oral communication?	**Academically students do not need to master Speaking** **Because it is less important than other skills** **At least students convey their messages** **Don't interrupt students while speaking** **To encourage them to communicate in English**

T3: Hmmm, I try to assess students' ability to produce the language and how to convey their thoughts accurately. I mean I don't mainly focus on grammatical errors. **Focusing on accuracy rather than fluency do not help students to be confident while they are speaking.**	**Focus on fluency help students in learning how to communicate using the language**
Interviewer: Could you please tell me about the role of the types of assessment that you use in speaking skills?	
T3: well, I think not stopping students while they are speaking help them to feel confident and carry on speaking which have positive impact on their learning.	
Interviewer: Could you please tell me how?	**Because it has positive impact on their performance**
T3: I think not interrupting students encourages them to keep talking. Unless I can't understand them I try to correct them**. I might write some notes and speak to them later.**	**Not to correct students immediately and write notes**
Interviewer: Do you think that understanding assessment criteria help students to take part in assessing their work and their peers' work?	
T3: yes, I do	
Interviewer: Could you please tell me why?	**Assessment criteria is important**
T3: if I am doing speaking assessment, I need to inform students for example that I will assess them in pronunciation, intonation we need to practice that, then when I try to assess them in mid-term, **they know what they need to do.** I think it is very important for students to know the criteria. When they become aware of the criteria that helps them to be active and participate in assessment and know exactly what they need to consider.	**Criteria help students what they need to do**
Interviewer: Do you always provide feedback with grades?	
T3: Actually, I think providing feedback with **grades is not beneficial for students.**	**Grades is not useful**
Interviewer: Could you please tell me why?	

T3: when teachers provide grades to their students, most of the students put more attention on them and they **don't care too much about what their teachers have written.** Therefore, I consider that providing feedback with comments can help students to find out what area needs to be improved.	**Students focus on grades and ignore comments**
Interviewer: Do you think that understanding assessment criteria help students to take part in assessing their work?	**Understanding criteria is important**
T3: **understanding criteria is very important**. When students know the criteria they work on how to achieve their goals. I mean it helps **to identify what their teachers need**.	**Help students to know what it is needed**
Interviewer: What kind of assistance do you provide for students to take part in assessment?	
T3: Actually, I always try to help the students as much as I can. I encourage them to ask me any relevant questions. I always encourage **my students to correct each other**. I believe that working in groups is very beneficial. When they work together in oral activities, they try to encourage themselves to pronounce words correctly and correct each other. **Students sometimes accept their peers' assessment more than their teacher assessment**	**Employ peer-assessment** **Working in groups** **Working in groups encourage students to correct each other**
Interviewer: What do you think accuracy refers to within the context of EFL speaking assessment?	
T3: Accuracy refers to grammar, **the correct structure of a sentence.**	**Students prefer peer-assessment**
Interviewer: Does assessment help students to be confident learner?	
T3: No, I do not think so.	**Accuracy means correct structure**
Interviewer: Could you please tell me why?	
T3: sometimes Assessment makes students nerves and uncomfortable, they feel shy, and prefer their peers'	

assessment. I always encourage working as groups or in pairs for example, giving them a conversation or creating a discussion about a preferred topic motivates them **to participate and become more confident.**	**Assessment makes students nerves**
Interviewer: Do you think that students learn more effectively when they use peer assessment?	**Peer-assessment is beneficial**
T3: Well to some extent yes, when **they work together it is collaborative** I always encourage students to work together it is very beneficial. **When they assess each other you force them to participate in the activity and be an active learner**. I think working in groups is more beneficial than working in pairs in that it creates a discussion and competition between students.	**Helps students to participate** **Peer-assessment force students to engage**
Interviewer: Does speaking receive great emphasis in the textbook?	
T3: well, there are some activities in the textbooks that need students to work in pairs or groups but we don't have enough time. **Forty-five minutes is not enough.** Lesson plan is very important. Teachers need to plan which skill s/he wants to focus in every lesson. **These kind of activities help students to practice using the language.** I try to choose some other activities from outside the text book as some of the textbook activities are not interesting. I try to use activities that relate to Libyan culture.	**Some activities in the textbook deals with speaking skills** **Time is not enough to practise oral communication**
Interviewer: Do you accept your **students to commit errors** during oral activities?	
T3: Of course yes,	
Interviewer: Could you please explain how?	**Correcting errors later**
T3: I try **not to correct their mistakes immediately.**	
Interviewer: Why?	
T3: Because, I consider that **committing errors is part of the learning process. It's a normal thing** we can't	

learn without making mistakes. As long as it's not a major error.	**Not to correct mistakes immediately**
Interviewer: Are there any changes in the way of assessing your students' oral communication from starting your teaching until now**?**	
T3: I suggest yes.	**Committing mistakes is part of learning**
Interviewer: Could you explain these changes?	
T3 : Well, I think, before many years teachers domain the whole learning process, but nowadays teachers are trying to share learning process by encouraging and helping students to be an active learner.	**Changes in assessing students**
Interviewer: Do you **follow the course book instructions** or do you use your own method in teaching and assessing speaking skills?	
T3: Yes, I try to follow it, our text books **are very rich with activities** but teachers just focus on other skills and ignore speaking. I recommend two teachers to teach the four skills and they can collaborate together to teach the four skills. I think that some topics do not relate to Libyan culture which students don't have back ground about and not familiar with. The teacher need to choose activity which is interesting and help students to involve. Sometimes I **supplement some other materials which motivate my students.**	**Nowadays teachers do not dominate the learning process** **Learner becomes an active** **Follow course book instructions**
	Course book contains activities that help to improve speaking
Interviewer: Could you please tell us about the teacher's role in assessment?	
T3: Teachers' role is very important. Well, my role and my students' **role have completely been changed**. We as teachers used to do almost everything. The teacher explains, instructs, decides, gives feedback and prepares the exams and assess the students. Sure I still play a major role, but nowadays it is different. **I am now a facilitator of**	**Supplementing extra materials**

students' learning, a monitor of their performance and a guide of their learning.	**Teachers' role is important**
Interviewer: Could you please tell us what is the students' role in assessment?	**Used to do everything**
T3: Students were passive learners. **Students' role was only** to take notes, memorize information which teachers ask them to memorize, wait for teachers' instructions and behave accordingly. It is true that students now become active participants and can engage in the learning process.	**Teacher's role changed** **Teacher as a facilitator, a monitor and a guide**
Interviewer: Do you mean by this that students are able to undertake the responsibility for their own learning?	
T3: I believe that students **alone can go nowhere.** I do not believe that our secondary school students are mature enough to lead and guide their learning by themselves. **The teacher's guidance and direction is very necessary.** I insist that the teacher should be always there to lead the learning process successfully.	**Students role changed** **Students become active** **Teacher's role is important,** **Students still need their teacher's guidance**
Interviewer: In an ideal world how could you see the oral assessment techniques process occurring?	
T3: *ER*…As assessment in education is vital since it helps teachers to explore the level of their students' understanding. The teachers are required to seek appropriate methods to assess their students. I believe that finding about students' abilities and understanding in speaking skills can not only obtained through tests or examinations. This formal method might have negative impact on students' performance. It is worth noting that assessment is different from grading. When teachers give a grade to student's work it indicates that the teacher is symbolizing the quality of the student's work and s/he might make comparison with other students' work.	**Ideal assessment occurs by Appropriate methods of assessment** **Formal method might have negative impact**

Assessment can be occurred **without being followed by grading or marking**.	**Grades is sometimes demotivating**
Interviewer: Could you please explain how?	**Initiating**
T:3 Through initiating **conversations and interactions between teachers and students and between students** and students, teachers are able to identify their students' ability and understanding in an informal way.	**conversations and interactions and assess in an informal way**
Interviewer: Could you please tell us how you **gather information** about your students to assess their oral communication**?**	**Assessing students' oral communication**
T3: well, I always try to **create a discussion about a specific activity** and provide opportunities to my students either to work in groups or in pairs so that I can explore every student's ability to pronounce the vocabulary and communicate orally.	**Discussion and working in groups or in pairs**
Interviewer: Could you please tell us how you assess your students **at the end of each speaking course?**	**Summative assessment**
T3: in fact, teachers do not pay great attention to speaking skills due to many difficulties. I myself assess my students by asking them to choose a topic and try to collaborate with each other and then **make a conversation about the topic** chosen or they can choose from the activities in the course book.	**Assessing speaking is difficult**
Interviewer: What do you think **fluency** refers to within the context of EFL speaking assessment?	**Choose a topic and make a conversation**
T3: Actually, **fluency is how to pronounce** correctly	**Fluency is how to**
Interviewer: Would you like to add anything about assessment to this interview that we have not mentioned?	**pronounce correctly**
T3: I just need to add that **Libyan teachers need to be trained** to use the new methods of teaching and learning such as communicative approach. **Providing time and effort** for preparing teachers through long academic	**Libyan teachers need to be trained**

educational courses are required. The focus of these courses should be on the content of the textbooks. The problem is that students always **need to prepare for summative assessment** in other skills and teachers try to accomplish what is required from them in the limited time. **Interviewer:** Thanks very much for the valuable information that you provided.	**Difficulties face students** **Preparing for summative assessment**

APENDIX N: REFINING, CLASSIFYING CONCEPTS AND COMBINING THEMES INTO CATEGORIES

Teachers' Perceptions of Assessment Processes	Focused Codes
➢ **Teachers' Perceptions of the Importance of Assessment**	• Awareness of checking students' understanding • The importance of assessing oral communication • Teachers' perceptions about involving students in the process of assessment
➢ **Teachers' Perceptions of the Assessment Process**	• Teachers' perceptions about utilizing short quizzes • Teachers' perceptions about self-assessment • Teachers' perceptions about peer assessment • Teachers' perception towards employment of summative assessment

➤ **Teachers' Perceptions of Conceptions of Assessment**	• Teachers perceptions towards grades • Teachers' perceptions towards understanding criteria • Teachers' perceptions towards using L1
➤ **Teachers' Perceptions towards the Role of the Teacher**	• Teachers' perceptions about teachers' as a facilitator • Teachers' perceptions about teachers' as a controller
➤ **Teachers' Perceptions towards Difficulties in Assessment**	• Difficulties in involving students in the assessment process • Difficulties in employing Participatory assessment

APPENDIX O: INTERVIEW SELECTIVE CODES

Interview Selective Codes
• Teachers' Perceptions of   the Importance of Assessment • Teachers' Perceptions of the Assessment Process • Teachers' Perceptions of Conceptions of Assessment • Teachers' Perceptions towards the Role of the Teacher • Teachers' Perceptions towards Difficulties in Assessment

APPENDIX P: INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTION (TEACHERS)

School: 1	**Teache**r:3	**Teaching Experience**

Time: 1:40- 2:23	Date: 27/12/2015	9 Years

Interviewer: Do you think that it is important for students to master speaking skills? Why?

T3: well, I have been teaching for more than ten years, I don't think that students have to master speaking at the first time.

Interviewer: Could you please tell me why?

T3: Students' don't have to master speaking, at least they can communicate probably and convey their message. It is less important than other skills such as reading and writing, we know that they are still learning and they don't have to speak as native speakers.

Interviewer: How do you assess your students' oral production?

T3: Well, there are some activities in the textbook, which require students to work either in pairs or in groups. I encourage my students to work in pairs as I believe it is suitable and I can evaluate the performance of the students when they work on the activity orally.   I try not to stop my students I don't like to interrupt my students. if they commit any error I just need to pass it away and later I might speak to them one by one, I like to motivate my students at least I can understand them I might not stop them.

Interviewer: What aspects of students' performance do you focus on when you assess their oral communication?

T3: Hmmm, I try to assess students' pronunciation, then how students produce the sentences accurately. I mean grammatically correct.

Interviewer: Could you please tell me about the role of the types of assessment that you use in speaking skills?

T3: Well, I think not stopping students while they are speaking help them to feel confident and carry on speaking which have positive impact on their learning. Focusing on accuracy help students to learn the structure of the language

Interviewer: Could you please tell me how?

T3: I think not interrupting students encourages them to keep talking. Unless I can't understand them I try to correct them. I might write some notes and speak to them later.

Interviewer: Do you think that understanding assessment criteria help students to take part in assessing their work?

T3: yes, I do

Interviewer: Could you please tell me why?

T: if I am doing speaking assessment, I need to inform students for example that I will assess them in pronunciation, intonation we need to practise that, and then when I try to assess them in mid-term, they know what they need to do. I think it is very important for students to know the criteria. When they become aware of the criteria that helps them to be active, participate in assessment, and know exactly what they need to consider.

Interviewer: Do you always provide feedback with grades?

T3: Actually, I think providing feedback with grades is not beneficial for students.

Interviewer: Could you please tell me why?

T3: when teachers provide grades to their students, most of the students put more attention on them and they do not care too much, about what their teachers have written. Therefore, I consider that providing feedback with comments can help students to find out what area needs to be improved.

Interviewer: What kind of assistance do you provide for students to take part in assessment?

T3: Actually, I always try to help the students as much as I can.   I encourage them to ask me any relevant questions. I always encourage my students to assess each other. I believe that working in groups is very beneficial. When they work together in oral activities, they try to encourage themselves to pronounce words correctly and correct each other.

Interviewer: What do you think accuracy refers to within the context of EFL speaking assessment?

T3: Accuracy refers to grammar, the correct structure of a sentence.

Interviewer: Does assessment help students to be confident learner?

T3: No, I do not think so.

Interviewer: Could you please tell me why?

T3: sometimes assessment makes students nerves and uncomfortable, they feel shy, and prefer their peers' assessment. If I divide them in groups and give them conversation for example, this encourage them to become more confident.

Interviewer: Do you think that students learn more effectively when they use peer assessment?

T3: Well to some extent yes, when they work together it is collaborative I always encourage students to work together it is very beneficial. When they assess each other you force them to participate in the activity and be an active learner. I think working in groups is more beneficial than working in pairs in that it creates a discussion and competition between students.

Interviewer: Does speaking receive great emphasis in the textbook?

T3: well, there are some activities in the textbooks that need students to work in pairs or groups but we don't have enough time. Forty-five minutes is not enough. Lesson plan is very important. Teachers need to plan which skill s/he wants to focus in every lesson. These kind of activities help students to practice using the language. I try to choose some other activities from outside the text book as some of the textbook activities are not interesting. I try to use activities that relate to Libyan culture.

Interviewer: Do you accept your students to commit errors during oral activities?

T3: Of course yes,

Interviewer: Could you please explain how?

T3: I try not to correct their mistakes immediately.

Interviewer: Why?

T3: Because, I consider that committing errors is part of the learning process. It's a normal thing we can't learn without making mistakes. As long as it's not a major error.

Interviewer: Are there any changes in the way of assessing your students' oral communication from starting your teaching until now**?**

T3: I suggest yes.

Interviewer: Could you explain these changes?

T3: Well, I think, before many years, teacher used to domain the whole learning process, but nowadays teachers are trying to share learning process by encouraging and helping students to be an active learner.

Interviewer: Do you follow the course book instructions or do you use your own method in teaching and assessing speaking skills?

T3: Yes, I try to follow it, our text books are very rich with activities but teachers just focus on other skills and ignore speaking. I recommend two teachers to teach the four skills and they can collaborate together to teach the four skills. I think that some topics do not relate to Libyan culture which students don't have back ground about and not familiar with. The teacher need to choose activity which is interesting and help students to involve.

Interviewer: Could you please tell us about the teacher's role in assessment?

T3: Teachers' role is very important. Well, my role and my students' role have completely been changed. We as teachers used to do almost everything. The teacher explains, instructs, decides, gives feedback, prepares the exams, and assess the students. Sure I still play a major role, but different. I am now a facilitator of students' learning, a monitor of their performance and a guide of their learning.

Interviewer: Could you please tell us what is the students' role in assessment?

T3: Students were passive learners. Students' role was only to take notes, memorize information, which teachers ask them to memorize, wait for teachers' instructions and behave accordingly. It is true that students now become active participants and can engage in the learning process.

Interviewer: Do you mean by this that students are able to undertake the responsibility for their own learning?

T3: I believe that students alone can go nowhere. I do not believe that our secondary school students are mature enough to lead and guide their learning by themselves. The teacher's guidance and direction is very necessary. I insist that the teacher should be always there to lead the learning process successfully.

Interviewer: In an ideal world how could you see the oral assessment techniques process occurring?

T3: ER…As assessment in education is vital since it helps teachers to explore the level of their students' understanding. The teachers are required to seek appropriate methods to assess their students. I believe that finding about students' abilities and understanding in speaking skills can not only obtained through tests or examinations. This formal method might have negative impact on students' performance. In fact, I can say that assessment is different from grading. When teachers give a grade to student's work, it indicates that the teacher symbolizing the quality of the student's work and s/he might make comparison with other students' work. Assessment can be occurred without being followed by grading or marking.

Interviewer: Could you please tell me how?

T3: Through initiating conversations and interactions between teachers and students and between students and students. Using this technique can help to identify the students' ability and understanding in an informal way.

Interviewer: Could you please tell us how you gather information about your students to assess their oral communication**?**

T3: well, I always try to create a discussion about a specific activity and provide opportunities to my students either to work in groups or in pairs so that I can explore every student's ability to pronounce the vocabulary and communicate orally.

Interviewer: Could you please tell us how you assess your students at the end of each speaking course?

T3: in fact, teachers do not pay great attention to speaking skills due to many difficulties. I myself assess my students by asking them to choose a topic and try to collaborate with each other and then make a conversation about the topic chosen or they can choose from the activities in the course book. In some cases, I prefer to do a test if I feel that there is no enough time.

Interviewer: What do you think fluency refers to within the context of EFL speaking assessment?

T3: Actually, fluency is how to pronounce correctly

Interviewer: Would you like to add anything about assessment to this interview that we have not mentioned?

T3: I just need to add that Libyan teachers need to be trained to use the new methods of teaching and learning such as communicative approach. Providing time and effort for preparing teachers through long academic educational courses are required. The focus of these courses should be on the content of the textbooks. The problem is that students always need to prepare for summative assessment in other skills and teachers try to accomplish what is required from them in the limited time.

Interviewer: Thanks very much for the valuable information that you provided.

APPENDIX R: FOLLOW UP TEACHERS' INTERVIEW

Teachers' Interviews	
Teacher (1)	
Interview date	**Length (Minutes)**
15-12-2015	45
Teacher (2)	
Interview date	**Length (Minutes)**
20-12-2015	50
Teacher (3)	
Interview date	**Length (Minutes)**
27-12-2015	43
Teacher (4)	
Interview date	**Length (Minutes)**
5-1-2016	46
Teacher (5)	
Interview date	**Length (Minutes)**
11-1-2016	42
Teacher (6)	
Interview date	**Length (Minutes)**
15-1-2016	39
Teacher (7)	
Interview date	**Length (Minutes)**
20-1-2016	41
Teacher (8)	
Interview date	**Length (Minutes)**
5-2-2016	35
Teacher (9)	

Interview date	Length (Minutes)
18-2-2016	44
Teacher (10)	
Interview date	Length (Minutes)
2-3-2016	51
Teacher (11)	
Interview date	Length (Minutes)
3-3-2016	55
Teacher (12)	
Interview date	Length (Minutes)
5-3-2016	34

APPENDIX S: BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHER' CLASSROOM OBSERVATION

Teacher's Name T.1	Observation's Date	Length (minutes)	Number of Students
First Visit	8-12-2015	42	29
2	10-12-2015	45	25
3	11-12-2015	43	25
Teachers' Name T.2	Observation's Date	Length (minutes)	Number of Students
First Visit	12-12-2015	45	30
2	14-12-2015	40	25
3	16-12-2015	46	24
Teacher's Name T.3	Observation's Date	Length (minutes)	Number of Students
First Visit	17-12-2015	39	29
2	18-12-2015	44	27
3	20-12-2015	41	28
Teacher's Name T.4	Observation's Date	Length (minutes)	Number of Students
First visit	22-12-2015	44	26
2	23-12-2015	39	28
3	25- 12-2015	42	25
Teacher's Name		Length (minutes)	

T.5	Observation's Date		Number of Students
First visit	26-12-2015	44	28
2	27-12-2015	45	26
3	29-12-2015	44	26

Teacher's Name T.6	Observation's Date	Length (minutes)	Number of Students
First Visit	30-1-2012	42	29
2	2-1-2016	45	25
3	3-1-2016	43	25
Teachers' Name T.7	Observation's Date	Length (minutes)	Number of Students
First Visit	5-1-2016	45	30
1	61-1-2016	40	25
2	8-1-2016	46	24
Teacher's Name T.8	Observation's Date	Length (minutes)	Number of Students
First Visit	9-1-2016	39	29
2	11-1-2016	44	29
3	12-1-2016	41	28
Teacher's Name T.9	Observation's Date	Length (minutes)	Number of Students
First visit	14-1-2016	44	28
2	15-1-2016	39	28
3	16- 1-2016	42	25
Teacher's Name T.10	Observation's Date	Length (minutes)	Number of Students
First visit	17-1-2016	44	28
2	18-1-2016	45	26
3	19-1-2016	44	29

T.11	Observation's Date	Length (minutes)	Number of Students
First visit	18-1-2016	44	26
2	19-1-2016	39	28
3	20- 1-2016	42	25

Teacher's Name T.12	Observation's Date	Length (minutes)	Number of Students
First visit	18-1-2016	44	28
2	19-1-2016	45	26
3	20-1-2016	44	30