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The Implementation of Competency-Based Approach in Algerian EFL Classes and The Impact of Team Work on Knowledge Construction

Case of Study :Khadidja Ben Rouissi High School , Medea .

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Submitted by :

Naziha SETTARI

Hadjer BENMERADI

Supervised by :

Abdelkader KERMZLI

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Dedication

This study is wholeheartedly dedicated to my beloved parents , who have been my source of inspiration , who tirelessly encouraged me and counseled me , who continually provide their moral , spiritual , emotional and financial support .

To my beloved brothers Ahmed, Anes , and Sofiane , to my lovely sister Aya the best future doctor . To my uncle El Hadi Settari and my manager at work Mr. Wassim Chikh Touhami for their endless support and care .To my favorite person on earth my best friend Hadjer .

To my uncles , aunts and cousins , this work is dedicated to you , thank you for your pieces of advice and encouragement throughout my whole journey .

Naziha SETTARI

First and foremost, I thank Allah for letting me live to see this thesis through. I dedicate my dissertation work to my family and friends. A special feeling of gratitude to my loving parents, whose words of encouragement and push for tenacity ring in my ears. Thank you for believing in me, for allowing me to further my studies. To My sisters Khadidja my second mother a very special thank to her , Soumia, Asmaa , Chaimaa, and my brother Omar .I also dedicate this dissertation to my aunties and loving friends who have supported me throughout the process. I will always appreciate all they have done.

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Abstract

The Competency-Based Approach is highly informed by The Socio-Constructivist Theory. It states that knowledge is to be created collaboratively by students, and it requires the learner to be socially and actively engaged in a group to co-construct knowledge. There is a remarkable shift from what has been settled for years as a traditional way of teaching, in which the teacher is the only provider of knowledge and the learner is regarded as a passive recipient. However, Teaching is no longer teacher-centered but student-centered. The aim of the present study is analyzing why teachers lack full training of Competency-Based Approach's key concepts and teachers' readiness to confront all the challenges in implementing the principles of the socio-constructivist theory. As well as the extent to which teacher's scaffolding can help students develop their skills and reach higher competencies and also lead to the creation of ZPD. The study used a mixed method as a research design. The research approach being used in this research is both qualitative and quantitative. As far as the means of data collection, semi-structured interview questions along with a questionnaire were used to obtain the desired data. These were administrated to five in-service teachers and a one pre-service teacher. The findings reveal that teachers received poor training of CBA which led to serious consequences which affected EFL classes negatively. Teachers are not at all informed neither about the principles of CBA nor about the socio-constructivist theory. It means that teachers are not well trained to confront the challenges they face and they are not well competent. On the other hand, teachers stated that there is a lack of learning and teaching materials, overcrowded classes and lack of motivation among students. All of these obstacles hinder the proper application of collaborative construction of knowledge.

List of Abbreviations

CBA : Competency-Based Approach

CBLT : Competency Based Language Teaching

CL : Cooperative Learning

EFL : English as a Foreign Language

ZPD : Zone of Proximal Development

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General Introduction

General Introduction

1. An Overview of the Research Topic :

The Algerian educational system witnessed a great reform by the implementation of a new system bearing the name of The Competency-Based Approach . It's worthy of notice to mention that this approach will be, all through our research, referred to as CBA. An educational reform that aims at keeping education abreast of globalization requirements . Competency Based Approach involves changes of paramount importance in the curriculum and instructional methodologies. It implies a shift of interest from a content based curriculum with theoretical understanding of concepts to a process-based curriculum with a collaborative co-construction of knowledge (socio-constructivist learning) .

This latter came to enhance and strengthen language learning and teaching in Algeria .CBA encompasses some considerable theories. According to the theory of social constructivism that emphasizes the collaborative nature of learning and developing individuals' interaction within culture and society ; it requires the learner to be actively engaged in collaborative knowledge construction process .

Thus, knowledge exists as a social entity where ideas and thoughts are brought to existence within the mind of the learners as a social product and a cognitively engaged individual as well . Vygotsky as a social cognitivist rejects the idea of separating learning from social context. He argued that all cognitive functions originate in social interaction and that learning do not simply comprise the assimilation and the accommodation of new knowledge by learners; it is a process by which learners are integrated into a knowledge community. Social interaction and collaborative knowledge perspective has to serve as a strong foundation of the Algerian Competency Based teaching methodology.

In Competency Based education, the learner is expected to do rather than they are expected to learn about so it encourages productive education that its central notion lays in collaborative engagement. This new adopted educational system suggests that productive and effective learning occurs

through collaborative learning where knowledge is constructed by the creation of zone of proximal development mediated by teachers scaffolding .

The ministry of Algerian education has since then put a lot of effort to make it functional and facilitates its application. Thus, Algeria has afforded considerable financial and human capacities to train and support teachers to guarantee that that would be competent enough and ready to handle the pedagogical approach .Teachers all across the country were sufficiently equipped with all the knowledge needed so effectively solve the development changes. Nevertheless, no remarkable research has been undertaken to check its implementation in the Algerian language classrooms and whether teacher have applied the socio-educational interactions to ensure collaborative knowledge construction process or not .

2. **Statement of the Problem** :

With the new educational reform and the need for absolute revisions in the pedagogical and instructional approach, teachers are in need of full training in order to grasp the necessary competencies so as to deal with the new teaching program . Although this latter is regarded as the first step to be accomplished for the sake of professional implementation of the curriculum , unluckily this training program has not yet witnessed any considerable effect on the immediate concerns of the teachers; one can think of possible reasons as maladjustment and lack of coordination of the major and minor stakeholders . Since teachers did not receive a sufficiently comprehensive training of CBA's teaching paradigm, teachers could not aptly apply Competency Based teaching approaches. This lack of training is due to the lack of understanding of the key concepts of socio-constructivist theory , which led to negative outcomes in EFL classes .

Although CBA enjoys a wealth of theoretical back-up, yet the down-to-earth instruments leading to the expected outcome tremendously lack. To mention just a few, one can think of the ways and means that

sustain **a**) collaborative learning, **b**) full engagement of the learners in meaning making within micro-social groups in the classroom, **c**) the basis upon which teachers could make use of formative evaluation through mediation, **d**) the possibilities offered to the teacher to successfully accompany his learners through scaffolding.

3. Research Questions :

The major questions that the study entails answering are :

1. To what extent can teachers' scaffolded and mediated interactions support collaborative knowledge construction process ?

2. Why do EFL teachers lack full training of CBA'S teaching and learning methods ?

3. How teachers perceive the socio-constructivist theory and the importance of team work in knowledge construction ?

Research Hypotheses :

We hypothesize that teachers training should be reinforced and intensified therefore they will be aware enough of Competency Based Language Teaching key concepts so that teachers can manage their classes better and use their skills to afford students with activities that go hand in hand with collaborative engagement in knowledge construction process .

Another assumption would be about teachers scaffolding which is a part of the Zone of Proximal development suggested by Vygotsky which is a set of skills or knowledge a student can not do himself but can do it with help the teacher's guidance. So in this way students are going to be involved and can build up their skill level and reach higher competencies.

4. The Aims and Objectives of the Study :

1 .To examine the extent to which classroom activities and discussions mediated by the utilization of teachers' Scaffolding, can possibly attain collaborative engagement in knowledge construction.

2. Whether teachers are well trained to confront such challenges in implementing the principles of socio-constructivist theory.

3. Diagnosing the teachers' understanding of the cooperative and team work learning method.

4. Offering some help to the teachers by providing some pedagogical suggestions that can best help them to implement the team work and cooperative learning method in a correct way during their EFL classes.

The objectives of the current study is to investigate why teachers lack full training in order to fulfill the requirements of the curriculum which stands for the socio-constructivist theory, thus there must be a rise of awareness among teachers concerning the importance of the presented idea . Therefore teachers receive fuller understanding in the ways to apply collaborative knowledge as well as successfully making them aware of teachers scaffolding in knowledge construction process . Also to investigate the effects of competency based approach teaching on students' interaction and team work in the classrooms .

5. **Research Structure and Design** :

The study adopts mixed research method for the analysis of data. We have combined both the quantitative and qualitative methods to interpret the results obtained. The research data are collected through a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview submitted to seven secondary school teachers of English who have been selected randomly.

6. Structure of the Dissertation :

The present study adopts the traditional simple model proposed by Paul Thompson in 1999. It consists of a general introduction , three chapters , and a general conclusion . The first chapter namely literature review consists of two main sections; the first sections is all about the underpinnings of CBA and CBLT as well the Algerian framework and teachers training . The second

section deals mainly with cooperative learning methods and procedures and teachers beliefs towards it and what hinders its implementation.

The two sections will serve as a framework to the analysis of data and the interpretation of the results. The second chapter is the Research Design; it seeks to provide a detailed description of the research tools used for data collection and analysis . The third chapter is entitled as Data Analysis, it shows all the collected data along with its discussion as it provides answers to the research questions and confirm or rejects the hypotheses .

Chapter one: Literature Review

Chapter one: Literature Review

The introduction:

The Algerian educational system adopted many methods and approaches for the sake of improving the quality of education and foreign languages as well. However, none of the implemented approaches could prove its effectiveness. There was an urgent call for an educational reform, a reform by which language teaching and English specifically can foster good communication allowing learners to develop their cognitive and social skills .

Competency-Based Approach (CBA) has been successfully implemented by the Algerian Government. The number one objective of CBA is to modernize and develop education so as to face the requirements of education. This approach enjoys a wealth of theoretical backup, one can mention the influence of the socio constructivist view of learning in particular the importance of meditation. Social constructivism teaches that all knowledge develops as a result of social interaction and language use, and is therefore a shared, rather than an individual, experience. Knowledge is additionally not a result of observing the world, it results from many social processes and interaction (Lynch, 2016).In order for collaborative knowledge construction to take place, knowledge has to be constructed cooperatively to strengthen the learner-centered instruction ; that is , CBA does not support the traditional way of instruction .

This chapter will give a general picture of competency based approach (CBA) in Algeria including its definition and framework. Also, this chapter will give a clear idea about cooperative learning strategy in teaching with the illustration of its features and types and how Teamwork can affect the knowledge construction process .

1.1 Competency Based Approach Framework :

Competency Based Approach believes that language learning should be approached from both an interactional and functional perspective.(Richards & Rodgers,2001). Benzerroug (2017) posits that CBA tends to apply the pedagogy of integration and define a number of essential competencies in each stage of learning , It is not limited to the combination of acquired knowledge but it aims at reinvesting the latter to solve problems through problem solving situations , therefore , we can say that teaching by integration is summarized in this idea " The whole is not the result of the addition of parts ". Chelli (2010) stated that teachers give instructions based on concepts in the hopes of fostering a deeper and broader understanding. Thus, CBA addresses what the learner can do about the language rather than knowing about the language. In the light of this perspective Aurebach (1986) listed some main features of the CBA which are :

1. The importance of social functioning : students have to be self-sufficient and autonomous individuals that can manage to cope with the requirements of the world .
2. A focus on life skills : language teaching can never be done in isolation , that is , CBA must teach the language as part of communication about concrete topics / tasks .
3. Task or performance-centered orientation: its focal point is what the students can do as a result of teacher's guidance and instruction .
4. Continuous and ongoing assessment : students are tested to see what are the skills they lack after teachers' instruction . Thus , students are tested again until full mastery is achieved which states that CBA is based on ongoing assessment .

CBA's pedagogy is then characterized by being an action oriented approach as the student is supposed to know how to deal with the language rather than just knowing about the language . CBA is a problem solving method to language learning in which the student deals with real life situations. In other

words CBA is all about learning through doing. Knowledge is constructed by interacting socially not individually. Hence, CBA is coined with the socio-constructivist theory of language learning and teaching .

1.1.1 Definition of the concept *competency* :

A competency is a set of skills , traits , motives and a body of knowledge that an individual entails using (Boyatzis , 1932) . On the light of this perspective, a competency is a know how to a act process , it implies using personal capacities to meet the demands of a certain task . Accordingly, from the same perspective of Boyatzis, Morwicki (1986) claimed that competency is comprised of the skills , attitudes , behaviors , knowledge needed for an efficient fulfillment of a task in a real life situation .

Hence, competency does not only focus on the ability to solve a problem, it also involves developing other skills necessary to perform well in society. These skills set itself apart from the other skills that are developed in a learning environment. It is a set of competencies that students must master in order to effectively use English in real life situations.

By way of illustration, Boukhentache (2020) said that in teaching a phone call , the teacher first needs to identify the various vocabulary for a successful task . He or she then determines the necessary skills that the students will need to perform this given task.

1.2 **Competency-based language teaching and learning :**

CBA design of teaching and learning was informed by the theory of socio-constructivism . It emphasizes on what the students can do with the language rather than knowing about the language . This teaching approach sees outputs of a great importance rather than the teaching process . The socio-constructivist perspective on learning which is advocated here is promoted

through project work which is the pillar of CBA, The students display the targeted competencies during a group work during a real-life task performance .

In the description of CBLT, the following are constructive points of view:

- Competency-based ESL curricula is "the most important breakthrough in adult ESL". The Center of Applied Linguistics (1983).
- By the 1990s, CBLT had come to be accepted as "the state-of-the-art approach to adult ESL by national policymakers and leaders in curriculum development as well" (Richards & Rodgers 2001:141)
- By 1986, any refugee in the United States who wished to receive federal assistance had to be enrolled in a competency-based program . (Aurebach 1986) .

According to what have been mentioned above , it has been argued that CBLT is designed to make learners function proficiently in society since language is associated with real life situations . Indeed, functioning effectively entails a good educational program thus effective teaching as well as learning.

1.2.1 Role of the Teacher under CBA :

CBA is learner-centered as well as action oriented , thus , teachers under a learner-centered approach are no more the detainers of knowledge, but facilitators and guides; They should be precise in what and how to assist students to well perform their tasks , it is about how to give formative instructions and to make each students grasp and understand the given task. According to Djalal (2017) a teacher should become more of a facilitator who helps the learners actively acquire language skills rather and the teacher is supposed to get his or her students fully immersed in the learning and teaching process . The teacher organizes students to encourage cooperation so that the

teacher is not the focus of the lesson and collaborative as well as autonomous learning is fostered . Patterns of interactions has to be varied by the teacher to ensure that all students are actively engaged and there must be a comfortable and challenging atmosphere created for collaborative knowledge construction to take place .

1.2.1.1 Zone of Proximal development :

Vygotskian socio-cultural psychology, and the zone of proximal development (ZPD) in particular, is commonly referred to as the theoretical underpinnings of scaffolding. He define ZPD as The distance between the developmental level identified by independent solution and the actual development stage under adult guidance or a more competent peer. Nevertheless, the interpretation of the concept and its implementation varies considerably from study to study. In accordance , The ZPD construct is a shorthand device that studies the cognitive development of participants in social interaction (“ Defining the Zone of Proximal Development in US Foreign Language Education ,“ 2002, p.1) .When learning is influenced by the social context, everyone's ability for learning is greater than the individual's definite capacity when learning is encouraged by someone with more experience. According to Vygotsky's theories, this range of a person's ability is known as the zone of proximal development and is critical. Learning in the zone of proximal development is a collaborative task in which the teacher monitors both the learning design sequence goals and the abilities of the student with assistance.

We look at how a child's performance is processed socially when we talk about working in the zone of proximal development . This includes the means by which the teacher reaches and meets the level of the child’s understanding and then leads the child to higher , culturally mediated level of development . This leads to the concept of tool mediation, or thinking about what cultural resources have been given for the child to appropriate and use independently in heir performance . It also takes into account the conditions

that have been generated for the tools to be internalized. Put another way, what approaches have been used to ensure that assisted performance is transformed into independent performance .Vgotsky(1978) demonstrated further that learners gain new strategies and experiences by engaging in cooperation and internalizing the effects of working together . Learning stimulates internal development that only works when the child communicates with people and objects in his environment .In light of this perspective ,Vygotsky developed a ZPD structure, the difference between what a person can achieve when acting alone and what the same person can achieve in acting with someone else's support.

1.2.1.2 Scaffolding :

Scaffolding, according to Wells (1999) is a way of operationalizing Vygotsky's (1987) concept of working in the zone of proximal development . He identified three main characteristics that distinguish educational scaffolding: 1) the fundamentally dialogic nature of the discourse in which knowledge is co-constructed; 2) the importance of the type of operation in which knowing is embedded; and 3) the function of artifacts that mediate knowing (Wells, 1999, p.127) .Scaffolding is a type of help that is intended to provide learners with the assistance they need to complete assignments and build understandings that they may not be able to handle on their own. Scaffolding is the kind and level of cognitive assistance that an adult may have for a child's development, anticipating the child's own internalization of mental functions. The primary aim of scaffolding in teaching is to reflect the ZPD feature of transfer of responsibility to the student (Mercer and Fisher, 1993). They stress the importance of teamwork between the teacher and the learner in the development of knowledge and skills. Some scholars consider the scaffolding metaphor to be limited in comparison to the concept of ZPD. Examples of scaffolding could be when the teacher provides the student with

different kinds of support e.g. hints encouragement, cognitive structures and reminders during the learning process .

1.2.2 Role of the learner under CBA :

Learners are no more spoon-fed nor passive recipients of information conveyed by the teacher . Learners are responsible of their learning which requires them to work in collaboration with their teachers. Since CBA is socio-constructivist the learner should go through a process of personal appropriation, questioning his own convictions, which leads him to revise his prior knowledge. He should compare his own representation with those of his classmates. Richards and Rodgers (2001) claim that the learner has to be able to perform the skills taught , he or she has to be fully aware of the various uses of the targeted competencies. Griffith & Hye-Yeon (2014) stated that even if students may initially resist this approach, they eventually learn to accept it and participate in the classroom. To have a successful classroom interaction, students must become more active participant, which means they have to rely on themselves more .

1.2 Competency-based approach in the Algerian educational system:

Improving the educational system is a challenge for all responsible authorities in the country, since education is the instrument by which future generations will form leaders. Ignored problems in any school system will in future society develop into more severe problems. With awareness of the seriousness of this sensitive sector , Algerian political makers are concerned with providing "relevant " training to future generations.

The Algerian educational system has been through many changes as well witnessing many changes to the most ‘said efficient ‘ teaching methods in

the world .None of the pre-adopted approaches proved its effectiveness as the students was a passive recipient and the teacher was regarded as the only provider of knowledge .Therefore , there was a dire need for a radical change in all the educational level in order to remedy the problems found in the previous system. The so-called ‘ teaching with objectives ‘ which as the previous adopted teaching method , relied mainly on teaching units to be accomplished in a given period of time , keeping the learners’ achievements marginalized , and this is when a teaching method adopting the CBA principles, or the Competency Based Approach was implemented in Algeria.

For Chelli (2010) CBA has been endorsed by the Algerian educational system to make more competent students ready to confront real life tasks and situations .In our country CBA was introduced in 2002 as a result of the educational reform in primary, middle and secondary schools. New textbooks and teacher documents were required which indeed were provided aiming at enhancing Teaching English as a Foreign Language in Algeria. This approach has caused confusion among the new teachers and learners about the role of CBA. It has also affected the preparation of the new teachers because of its sudden implementation.

1.4 Cooperative learning :

Johnson and Johnson (1999) underline a definition to cooperative learning as, “the instructional use of small groups in which students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning" (p.15). Reviewing this definition, they emphasize on the importance of using small teams as a successful teaching strategy in EFL classrooms, which involves students of various levels of ability, using a different learning activities to enhance their understanding of a subject matter.

By the same token, Johnson and Johnson(1994) stated, “Cooperative learning is of value for all students including those who have been identified as "at risk," "bilingual," "gifted," and "normal." All students need to learn and

work in environments where their individual strengths are recognized and individual needs are addressed" (p.12).Moreover, cooperative learning helps students build on their prior skills and become more confident to express their ideas and thoughts openly to their colleagues in the class.

According to Johnson and Johnson (1989),"there are three basic ways students can interact with each other as they learn. They can compete to see who is best; they can work individualistically on their own toward a goal without paying attention to other students; or they can work cooperatively with a vested interest in each other's learning as well as their own". In order for the teacher to assemble cooperative learning effectively, he needs to understand the basic elements that makes cooperation among students work, and the relevant usage of the soft skills of his students.

1.4.1 **Types of cooperative learning:**

Johnson and Johnson , two well known pioneers in modern methods of cooperative learning , have identified the three main types of cooperative learning : formal cooperative learning groups , informal cooperative learning groups and cooperative base groups (1994, p . 51-64) .

1.4.2.1 **Formal cooperative learning:**

In this type, students work cooperatively in groups on a specific task so as to complet an objective they are all targeting (Johnson, Johnson, & Holubec, 2008).

During this type, the teacher plays an important role as he :

1. Must make predecisions that are based on the social skills objectives and the academic goals he have for his students. He also helps determine the roles and responsibilities of each group member. Moreover, the arrangement of a room can help create resource interdependence. It

allows the teacher to monitor all of the group activities and provide them with an easy way to record their actions (Johnson & Johnson, 1994, as cited in *the Cooperative Learning Institute*, An Overview of Cooperative Learning, para. 9).

2. The teacher should also explain the academic task and the cooperative structure for his students. Students are expected to use social skills and develop positive interdependence as part of their academic success through the use of some strategies and concepts, teachers should help students develop the social skills that are necessary to complete the assignment, they may also discuss the social skills that were emphasized in the lesson and develop effective interaction patterns.
3. Monitor the students' achievement in completing the required task successfully. He must observe his students and provide them with help when it is needed (Johnson & Johnson, 1994, as cited in *the Cooperative Learning Institute*, An Overview of Cooperative Learning, para.11).
4. Teachers help students process how their groups performed. They also help students develop a plan for improvement. And also informs the groups with their goals and provides feedback that is aimed at improving pupils' skills (Johnson & Johnson, 1994, as cited in *the Cooperative Learning Institute*, An Overview of Cooperative Learning, para.12).

1.4.2.2 **Informal cooperative learning:**

Informal cooperative learning is a process where students work together to achieve a common learning goal in a short-term group setting. This type of learning method can be used for lectures, presentations, and clips. It is also commonly used to set an atmosphere that help for learning, help students predict the coming lessons, and sum up what they have already learned (Johnson & Johnson, 1994, as cited in *the Cooperative Learning Institute*, An Overview of Cooperative Learning, para.12).

The teacher during informal cooperative learning is supposed to keep the students engaged and motivated throughout the lesson. This can be done through the use of group discussions and bookends. There are two key aspects of this process that the teacher should consider in order to effectively utilize the informal learning group; a definite task and a specific product.

1.4.2.3 **Cooperative base groups:**

Cooperative base groups is a process where students work together to achieve a common learning goal in a long-term group setting, where they offer each other help and assistance in order to improve the quality of learning.

The teacher's role in establishing cooperative base groups is to form heterogeneous groups of four or more students. The groups should meet regularly to schedule a time when they will meet and to create specific agendas that will keep the groups on track (Johnson & Johnson, 1994).

1.5 **Knowledge construction process :**

Constructivists consider learning as an active process in which people create meaning that is adjustable by constructing on their base information and making new overall understandings (*international training center*,n.d,the process of constructing knowledge,para.1).Teachers should engage their students in the learning process in order for them to be more productive and creative by utilizing critical thinking skill to formulate new notions and concepts. Doolittle & Hicks stated that " people learn best when they are socially interacting within an authentic situation that is relevant to their prior knowledge and goals, and that fosters autonomous and self-directed functioning." (2012, p.86). Which means that student' interaction and participation in the class plays an important role in the process of knowledge construction.

1.6 Teamwork and Knowledge construction :

As a result of the alternative pedagogical system , the necessity for a modern teaching strategies nowadays becomes highly important in education so that teachers can fulfill all the requirements needed for a splendid construction of knowledge .

Collaborative learning (teamwork) is one of the best and supremely innovative method in teaching currently , Teams and teamwork help to push deep learning that happens through interaction ,problem solving, dialogue, cooperation and collaboration These learning methods promote the development of information as they are placed during a social experience with a team environment (Vygotsky,1978).

Vygotsky stressed the importance of the interaction between the learner and his or her environment, and presented the gap created between the learners' level of performance and the level of their own potential. He claimed that personal potential can be realized through a process of interaction with and support from the human environment and from various tools. This defined the optimal conditions in which reciprocal interpersonal activity could lead to intrapersonal mental development, in other words, the connection between cognitive functioning and social functioning. When trying to solve a problem in collaboration through an exchange of ideas, learners construct shared meanings which extend beyond the individual performance. The collaborative parameter and the social context of a meaningful learning process are expressed through group discussion based on prior knowledge and allow ongoing development of thinking (Rimor & Rosen, 2010, p. 3). In other words, learning must be combined with its proper social context and that can take place only by making students socially interacting with each other in the class through the appropriate use of cooperative learning strategy.

1.7 Features of Effective Teamwork in knowledge construction :

. The proper division of students in each group work: this main feature can play a significant role in achieving an efficient teamwork. ward (1987) stated,"Cooperative groups require students with diverse ability and characteristics to work together and learn from one another to accomplish assigned learning goals or tasks" (p.2).Teachers in the class must group students in an appropriate way in which each group must consist of pupils of different levels and abilities and not placing the highest achieving members in one group and the left low level members in other group.

. Active listening and understanding: team members must listen to each other ideas and thoughts in order to reach common understanding. Active listening builds strong relationships and, while it may not come naturally to many of us, it's an invaluable communication skill (Mulvania, 2020). Student in his group team can be an active listener by asking open-ended questions and also by commenting and giving feedbacks to his team members.

. A lucid goal to accomplish: having a clear common goal to achieve during group working will make the learning process more directed and easier. Scarnati (2001) indicated, "People enjoy regular interaction with individuals who have similar interests and goals ".This implies that the outcome of the students improves whenever there is a straight mutual purpose to reach.

. Clear communication: team members must talk and discuss their ideas and thoughts openly with each other .Regular open communication, in which group members share their thoughts, ideas, and feelings, is a must for successful group work. Unspoken assumptions and issues can be very destructive to productive group functioning. When students are willing to communicate openly with one another, a healthy climate will emerge and an effective process can be followed(*University of Waterloo*,n.d., Teamwork Skills: Being an Effective Group Member,para.3).

. Cooperation and assistance: Group working can make study more efficient and fun. Working with others enables you to pool your ideas and see problems from different perspectives (*University of Birmingham*,2021,Why Work in Groups,para.1). Students must share their ideas and cooperate together and not only rely on the best pupil to fulfill the required assignment.

Conclusion :

This chapter accounted for the concept of competency-Based approach by exploring its concepts, the main theories of Vygotsky concerning scaffolding and zone of proximal development, and how it was implemented in the Algerian educational system. It also included the definition and types of cooperative learning and how effective teamwork can impact the knowledge construction process of the student .

The role of the teacher within the CBA is basically to conduct his class as a group through his skills, to serve as a role model and a guide for the learner. In order to manage his learners, the teacher is expected to arrange learners in groups relying on the principles of cooperative learning, so as to structure a disciplined cooperative learning environment and to make sure that students in their small groups would work cooperatively. The ability to work cooperatively is a necessary skill that is often supported by the Competency Based Approach in EFL classrooms. Though the impact of CL in the academic, social, and psychological domains is important, its implication within the education system is often challenged due to some problems facing both the teacher and his students such as: students dislike group working, leadership conflict and problems of group management, time consuming, overcrowded classes, lack of school materials…etc.

Chapter two: Research Methodology

Chapter two: Research Methodology

Introduction :

This chapter is organized so as to answer the research questions and describes the methodology and procedures applied to achieve the objectives of this study, and exhibit the explanations for selecting particular methods over others.

This chapter will also discuss in depth the following components: the research design and plan ,the methodology used , study participants (samples) , procedures, and analysis method of the collected data.

The current research is characterized by the use of questionnaire and interview questions addressed to the teachers of EFL classes in Khadidja Ben Roussi High School . Thus, a brief description of teachers questionnaire and interview is provided. Finally, the researchers shed the light on the ethical issues that are adhered in conducting this work.

2.1 Research design:

As it is previously mentioned in chapter one , the reasons behind this study is to explore to what extent cooperative learning is implemented in the Algerian EFL high school classes and whether the Algerian teachers are fully aware of the competency based approach method in order to implement it appropriately in their classrooms . This research adopted the mixed methods hence it combines elements of both quantitative and qualitative research approaches . A mixed methods research design is a procedure for collecting, analyzing, and "mixing" both quantitative and qualitative methods in a single study or a series of studies to understand a research problem . The basic assumption is that the uses of both quantitative and qualitative methods, in combination, provide a better understanding of the research problem and question than either method by itself. (Creswell, 2012, p.535).

In this study, the researchers opted for an explanatory and descriptive approach . An explanatory research design is a correlation design in which the researcher is interested in the extent to which two variables (or more) co-vary, that is, where changes in one variable are reflected in changes in the other. Explanatory designs consist of a simple association between two variables. (Creswell, 2012,p.340).

2.2 Population sample and setting :

The study took place in Khadidja Ben roussi High School in the urban city of Wilaya of Medea . The participants under investigation are seven in service and only one pre-service secondary teachers in the academic year 2020 / 2021 . The target population is selected randomly ; there is no specific reason for choosing it . The study is undertaken to examine the extent to which classroom activities and discussions mediated by the utilization of teacher's scaffolding can possibly attain collaborative engagement and team work in knowledge construction and diagnosing their understanding of the cooperative and team work learning method . The study also aimed at checking teachers quality of training of CBA and what are the challenges that they are actually facing while implementing this approach so as to e able to offer some pedagogical suggestions and to raise awareness among them as well to help them use the so-called approach in the right way since the effectiveness of the CBA has been proven by many researchers . teachers from Khadidja Ben Ruissi High school helped us to reach the aims of our study .

2.3 Means of data collections :

For Singh (2006) " Collection of data is very essential in any educational research to provide a solid foundation for it " (p.213).Thus , to achieve our aim , which to is to investigate the quality of training of teachers about CBA and whether it is being implemented in their classes as well as the use of

cooperative learning to construct knowledge , our research relies on two tools of data collection : a questionnaire and a semi structured interview questions .

The questionnaire which is made of seven open-ended and close-ended questions is used as a technique to gather qualitative data about teachers' profile and their attitudes towards team work .

A questionnaire is extensively used as a useful method to gather data for a descriptive method. Kothari (1990) defined the questionnaire as : "A questionnaire consists of a number of questions printed or typed in a definite order on a form or set of forms. The questionnaire is mailed to respondents who are expected to read and understand the questions and write down the reply in the space meant for the purpose in the questionnaire itself. The respondents have to answer the questions on their own." (p.100) . Semi-structured interviews were held after granting teachers' permission and it was composed of seven questions . The data collected from the interviews were used to support the data gathered from the questionnaire . Interviews are used to deepen and prove the pre-collected data from the questionnaire . Interviews allow a researcher to get key information on difficult-to-obtain themes, such as beliefs and attitudes , and semi structured essays serves our study perfectly that's why they were essentially selected . This section was about the tools used to gather data for the research which gives the study its validity and reliability .

2.4 Tools of data collection :

To examine the collected data from the questionnaire and the interview questions we followed a mixed method approach which we defined earlier , and it mixes the qualitative and quanitative research tools . As to analyze the data collected from the questionnaire , we opted for the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences . As far as interview questions are concerned , we adopted critical discourse analysis to interpret and analyze the data .

2.4.1 Statistical Package for the Social Sciences :

For Landau and Everitt (2004), SPSS is a package that is mostly used in social sciences , so we adopted this tool to analyze the data collected from the questionnaire . The questionnaire questions are presented in percentages using SPSS shown in tables .

2.5 Limitation of the study :

The researchers were able to prove that cooperative learning was not being used appropriately in Algerian secondary schools , As well as the lack of training that teachers received . So there are some limitations that might be noted . The study was restricted only to one Algerian secondary school Khadidja Ben Rouissi High School in Medea city .Thus , future studies should take into consideration more participants from different schools , it may also includes students to generate more evidence on real implementation of CBA and cooperative learning . Since this study is characterized by the use of only two research tools, the need for other research tools are recommended for future studies.

2.6 Ethical issues :

This research was conducted by ensuring that ethical standards are being followed which any good research must lies on . in this sense, the researchers made sure that the rights of all participants during this work were protected and anonymous ,also participants were informed about the aim of the study and they were also supplied with full explanation about the content of the questionnaire and also the interview and fully aware of their role in this research. And all the procedures taken were legal and authorized from the

administration of both the university and the high school of Khadidja Ben Rouissi .Nachmias (1992) argues that :

" Participants should know that their involvement is voluntary at all times, and they should receive a thorough explanation beforehand of the benefits, rights, risks, and dangers involved as a consequence of their participation in the research project." (Cited in Cohen et al., 2000, p. 50)

By taking into consideration these ethical issues, the researcher is going to be able to conduct his investigation under suitable conditions without encountering any ethical problems which will prevent the continuity of his work .

Conclusion :

This chapter covered the various aspects of the study, such as the method used, the participants, and the findings. It also pinpointed some potential limitations as regards the methodology . Descriptive Statistical Method is adopted to quantify the data. It facilitates the process of analyzing and presenting the results . We opted for Critical Discourse Analysis as a way to check the validity of the hypotheses set in the introduction . The use of the two techniques of data analysis allowed us to give clear insights and widen the picture of how teacher's training really is and how well they use CBA's concepts in classroom practices . .

Chapter three: Data analysis

Introduction :

In this chapter , findings of the study are discussed and composed mainly of two parts . Section one examines teachers' consciousness about the significance of cooperative learning and the second section investigated teachers' understanding and awareness of CBA's central concepts and their implementation .

3.1 Teachers' Questionnaire :

The purpose of the teacher's questionnaire was the investigation of their consciousness about the significance of cooperative learning as a helpful teaching method and its use when teaching English to high school learners at Khadidja Ben Rouissi high school. As it is mentioned before ,the questionnaire contains Seven(7) items which are organized into two parts. The first part aims at gathering general data about the participants while the second part aims at investigating the participants' understanding of cooperative learning method and show to what extent the participants do incorporate the basic elements of cooperative learning during the group work .

3.1.1 Results and Interpretation of Teachers' Questionnaire :

Part one : general information

Item 1 : The first item of the teachers‟ questionnaire aims at gathering data about the teacher's gender.

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage %
Female	05	83
Male	01	17
Total	06	100

Table 3.1 : Teachers' gender

As the table shows, the percentage of female teachers is 83% however the percentage of male teachers is 17%. So, the number of female teachers in the high school is more than male teachers .

Item 02: Total number of years of experience in teaching the English language

Total number of years	Number of teachers	Percentage %
Lessthan 10 years	01	17
Between 10 and 20 years	03	50
More than 20 years	02	33
Total	06	100

Table 3.2 : Teachingexperience

The feedbacks of the second item show that the teachers who have more than 20 years of experience represent the rate of 33% , and the teachers who are between 10 and 20 years of teaching experience represent the rate of 50%. On the other side, one of the teachers has less than 10 years of teaching experience representing rate the of 17%.

Results interpretation of this item reveals that the rate of 83% are experienced teachers. Therefore, those teachers are more familiar with the old teaching approaches. In this sense, they are faced difficulties in implementing the new adopted approach (CBA) for which this approach, according to Miliani (2010), has generated uneasiness of teachers who are supposed to teach through it.», in the sense that its characteristics "are posing problems to the teachers who return systematically to their old ways and practices."(p 71).

Item 03: In your opinion, which approach do you think that is suitable in the EFL classes?

a) **Teacher-centered approach**

- **b) Learner-centered approach**

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage %
Teacherscentredapproach	02	34
Learnerscentredapproach	04	66
Total	06	100

Table 3.3: Teachers' preferences of teaching approaches

Responses of the third item show that four teachers, that is the rate of 66%, preferred the learner-centered approach rather than the teacher-centered paradigm, whereas two teachers that represent the rate of 34% preferred the teacher-centered approach. To justify their choice, 66% of the teachers who preferred the learner centered approach agreed on the same idea saying that besides being the newly recommended approach, it has positive impacts on the student's learning within the sense that it develops their skills by making them more active and autonomous. On the opposite hand, the other 34% who preferred the teacher-centered approach said that this approach is workable with low level students since it enables them to acquire the correct form of the language directly from their teachers and also because the majority of the students are passive learners and spoon fed.

The results of this item reveal that besides the fact that 66% of the participants are alert to the importance of learner-centered approach; the teaching practices in the EFL classes are still traditional since 34 % of the teachers confirmed that they like the teacher-cantered approach. Furthermore, the responses guarantee that the teachers still stick with the traditional belief that teachers are the sole source of information in the classroom neglecting the role of social interaction and collaboration that helps students in constructing their own knowledge. this may be one amongst the explanations behind not using cooperative learning by many teachers.

Part two: cooperative learning and teamwork:

Item 04: Based on your own observation, do your students enjoy the session with you?

a) Yes

b) No

If no, why? ……

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
Yes	6	100%
No	0	0%
Total	6	100%

Table 3.4: The general learning climate

The results indicate that all teachers, representing the rate of 100% said that their students are active and enjoy during the English session. This rate results the fact that teachers are doing their best to ensure that their methods of teaching are effective and enjoyable for the pupils . And also make sure to find a suitable teaching strategies to motivate and handle the low level students in the classroom .

Item 05: According to you, do your students like working:

a) Individually

b) Cooperatively

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
Individually	01	17 %
Cooperatively	05	83%
Total	06	100%

Table 3.5: Students' Preferable Method

According to the obtained results five (05) participants argued that their students prefer to work cooperatively because the majority of the pupils have low level in English, while one participant said that students like to work individually in the classroom .

This is clear evidence that cooperative learning method is highly recommended in the EFL classes since the majority of participants agreed that the overall level of students is low. That is to say, students are in need of a way which will enhance their academic achievement. That is why they chose for cooperative work since it offers a supporting atmosphere that makes low-level students feel successful which helps them overcome their negative attitudes towards learning the English language.

Item 06: How often do you use group work in your classroom activities?

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
Always	00	00
Sometimes	06	100%
Rarely	00	00
Never	00	00
Total	06	100%

Table 3.6: Frequency of group work

The obtained result show that sometimes all the teachers use team work. This shows that teachers have an idea about cooperative method and may be have the readiness to use it at any time. However, it may be said that they still chose for other methods like an individualized work or competition to fulfill their learner's needs. Indeed, group work shows positive effects on developing pupils" language skills. Therefore, and to urge good results, group work needs to be carefully structured.

Item 07 : Are all of your students actively involved in the group ?

a. Yes
b. No

If no why ? .....

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
Yes	02	34%
No	04	66%
Total	06	100%

Table 3.7: students involvement in the group work

As indicated in the results, two out of six participants only representing the rate of 34% said that their students are actively involved within the group work .in the other hand four teachers with the rate of 66% stated that their students remain passive during the use of cooperative learning strategy in the classroom and rely on the others who are active in the group. According to the results, most of the students in the classroom do not like to be involved within the group work and remain passive due to some reasons the teachers stated such as the lack of confidence and not mastering the English language very well . One of the participants said that " some group members lack confidence thinking they are slow learners. Thus they do not contribute

much in the group work. Others do not like English, so they have no interest to show with their colleagues ". Other teacher indicated that " Not all learners enjoy working in groups . Furthermore, some pupils think that group work means dependence and reliance. Slow learners depend mainly on their peers".

Item 08 : Do you have full understanding of cooperative learning to implement it appropriately?

a. Yes
b. No

If no why?.....

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
Yes	04	66%
No	02	34%
Total	06	100%

Table 3.8: Rate of teachers 'ability of implementing cooperative learning appropriately.

The given data reveal that four (04) teachers representing the rate of 66 % have a full understanding of the cooperative learning method to implement it successfully in the classroom. However, two (02) teachers which represent the rate of 34 % assert that they can not implement it appropriately in the class due to some factors. This indicate that although 66% of the participants show their readiness to use cooperative learning in their classes, the other teachers are either unwilling to use it preferring other teaching methods such as competition, or they have little or no knowledge about its use in their classes .One of the participants who opted for the answer (No) stated that " cooperative learning is not only about arranging students into groups. It needs serious preparation and positive response from learners to be fruitful ". Other teacher declared that " the shift from a traditional classroom to cooperative learning method is demanding in accordance with the syllabus".

Item 09: is cooperative learning a helpful instructional strategy?

a. Yes
b. No

If no why ? .....

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
Yes	05	83 %
No	01	17%
Total	06	100%

Table 3.9: Teachers' perception of cooperative learning.

The results showed that most of the participants representing the rate of 83% agreed that cooperative learning is a helpful and successful instructional strategy to be used in the EFL classrooms . While one of participants with the rate of 17% disagreed with the idea that cooperative education is a helpful method to use during the lesson . According to the results the majority of the participants agreed on the usefulness of cooperative learning in the classroom hence it Improves critical thinking of the pupils and higher their self esteem and confidence and Raise their achievement . It also helps to Build a positive relationships among students and create a wider circle of friends. It is also important for creating a learning community that values diversity, and Provide experiences that develop both good learning skills and social skills.

Item 10 :do you use cooperative learning method at the expense of other strategies?

a. Yes
b. No

If no why ?... .....

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
Yes	02	34 %
No	04	66%
Total	06	100%

Table 3.10: teachers willingness to use cooperative learning method rather than other strategies.

The given date showed that two participants only with the rate of 34% agreed on using cooperative learning method in the classroom ,in the other hand four (04) teachers prefer using other strategies in delivering their lessons rather than cooperative learning method stating that cooperative learning method can be sometimes ineffective in over crowded classes as most of the

Algerian classrooms . Then teachers encounter the problem of class and time management. Thus, other strategies need to be adopted for a more effective learning and teaching process. Like instead of dividing the class into groups , teachers can simply ask students to work in pairs.
Other problem facing the Algerian EFL teachers is the educational system that requires the coverage of the curricula at the expense of the learner's requirements and needs .

3.2 Teachers' Interview questions :

Part two of data analysis is about the interviews we had with teachers . The questionnaire aimed at investigating teachers' consciousness about the significance of cooperative learning , hence interview questions purported at checking the extent to which teachers were quite aware and prepared to implement CBA teaching methodology in their classroom practices . This interview is composed of 7 questions that aims at investigating teachers' understanding of CBA's fundamental concepts which are central to this research and whether or not they are implementing them in real life practices .

3.2.1 Results and interpretation of teachers' interview questions :

Q1 : Have you been trained to implement the CBA ?

" No , I have not been trained "

Extract from teacher 5 interview

" Yes of course , we have been trained "

Extract from teacher 1 interview

" No unfortunately , if only teachers had been provided adequate learning so as to develop high level of motivation in the educational process of pupils or students "

Extract from teacher 2 interview

" I have been poorly trained "

Extract from teacher 3 interview

" Yes , yes I have been trained to implement CBA "

Extract from teacher 4 interview

Only two teachers said that they have been trained to implement the CB approaches which means they received formal training and they are aware of its main concepts so as they would be able to implement it in their classrooms . The remaining three teachers said that they have not been trained at all and only one said that she received poor training but they also said they attended some few seminars where CBA was tackled but broadly . This means that teachers may not have implemented this approach in their classroom practices which leads us to ask them the following question .

Q2 : Are you implementing Competency –Based Education in your classroom practices ? if yes how ?

" No I'm not "

Extract from teacher 5 interview

" we do our best to implement this approach but in fact as you know because of the bad conditions and classroom size it is impossible to implement it "

Extract from teacher 1 interview

" Only occasionally , I honestly believe that CBA is inapplicable to a limited degree since classroom conditions are not favorable , I mean size , subject , area and students style of learning . Based on what have been mentioned above , all teachers including those who said they were trained said that they are not implementing the approach which is due to classroom conditions that inhibit them from it applying appropriately . This is because they are not fully aware of the basic concepts of the latter , and that it was hard for the to use it and they only rely on their own past experiences to teach .

Q3 : How do you define the term competence ?

" Competence is a skill , a power of knowledge someone has to do a given job well "

Extract from teacher 5 interview

" The quality of being able to do certain tasks "

Extract from teacher 2 interview

Almost all untrained teachers failed to define the concept competence and they believe that it means a set of skills that someone uses to do a certain task as well as being able to memorize what the teachers says which is totally wrong . Besides the two other teachers who claimed that they were trained defined it as a set of thinking skills and abilities that a learner use to construct knowledge on their own or with their peers .

Our findings then revealed that untrained teachers failed at giving the right definition , which in return led us to ask them the following question .

Q 4 :How do you define the term collaborative process of knowledge construction ?

Based on what the teachers responded to the already asked question , the untrained teachers failed at defining the concept so we invited them to reflect more and to try to link it to their teaching experiences and readings . There responses were like follow :

" I think it's an environment in which learning is made through collaboration between learners . i,e . group work rather than done individually that makes the process of learning successfully by reaching the right objective " .

Extract from teacher 5 interview

" is a process by which learners join intellectual efforts and share knowledge "

Extract from teacher 4 interview

" it involves a variety of educational approaches including joints intellectual efforts or students –teachers together , usually students are working in groups and this is what we are doing in our classrooms and I find it very helpful and fruitful "

Extract from teacher 2 interview

All teachers defined the concept of knowledge construction as a process by which efforts are joined by students in order to negotiate ideas to creat knowledge . To build any type of knowledge, students must take various steps ,keeping with the fundamental socio-constructivist view which stated that the social the physical and the cognitive were parts of the same larger processes that also underlined second language (L2) development

(Atkinson 2002) . Thus construction is a comprehensible mechanism composed of interactive structures such as team work , mediation tool , ZPD

and internalization. And these are potential indications that will help student s to co-construct knowledge .But Throughout the whole interview teachers mentioned two important issues which always inhibit them from implementing team work appropriately during their classes which are classroom size and the heavy syllabus that is to be done or the end of the year . But they stressed on the importance of collaboration in order to construct knowledge because it is of a great help for the students to be independent and rely on themselves rather than being spoon fed and regarding the teacher as the only source of knowledge and information .

Q5 : Zone of proximal development refers to the difference between what a learner can do without help and what he or she can achieve with guidance and encouragement from a skilled partner . Thus the term " proximal " refer to those skills that the learner is close to mastering . How often do you apply formative evaluation along the line of ZPD ?

There was a common agreement among teachers that the terms we mentioned during the interview were hard to understand even for those teachers who received some kind of training , as a result there was a real need from us to further explain what these terms are in order for them to be able to answer , thus a definition was introduced at first before asking the question .

" I personally think that formative evaluation needs being smart and skilled to be realized . First , I try my best to check and see how my learners are doing and adjust if needed though different stations of the lesson . "

Extract from teacher 5 interview

" No I am not applying it at a high degree , I think that I am just helping my students and working in groups but maybe at a very low rate or degree "

Extract from teacher 2 interview

" Formative evaluation along the ZPD is applied whenever the teacher intends to help learners identify their strength and weaknesses and targets areas that need work or even to recognize where the learners are struggling and address problem immediately , thus it must be applied at the end of every lesson or at least every sequence "

Extract from teacher 3 interview

When the definition was provided , to some extent teachers could give logical answers to the questions asked and said that the creation of ZPD and the formative evaluation along the line of ZPD is really important as it helps students to collaborate during team work . But all of them said that they do not use it very often .

We asked teachers a question that has a relation with ZPD also which is

Q 5.1 : In which setting it is more favorable to you to assist your students positively cross ZPD ? individual work or group work ?

" Assisting a learner positively cross ZPD can have effective results in groups because the targeted learner will show more interest and involvement with peers . "

Extract from teacher 3 interview

All teachers agreed on the fact that a good way to assist the students positively cross ZPD has to be done in group work rather than done individually as it aids

those who need help to be fully immersed in the group work and thus would benefit from their competent peers .

A new concept is now introduced and we also provided a clear definition for teachers to better understand what is it really about . And all teachers agreed on the fact that these concepts were central to CBA but could not identify them . We invited teachers to reflect on the concept of " Scaffolding "

Q 6 : Scaffolding consists of the activities provided by the teacher , or more competent peer , to support the student as he or she is led through the zone of proximal development . How close or far is your classroom practice to this definition ?and how do you intend to be a scaffolder ?

" Yes I am a scaffolder , You never give learner something he does not know , has no relation with the previous one so the teacher has to link lessons and go step by step which is a process and a teacher has also to be at help , a guider . "

Extract from teacher 1 interview

" I do no really know what this term is really about , but since you said that the teacher functions as a guider of course I do help and guide my students and this actually what the teacher is meant to do "

Extract from teacher 4 interview

As shown in the extracts above , teachers are not really aware of what is scaffolding in its real meaning because for them scaffolding or being a scaffolder entails controlling the students and guiding them as well as delivering information to them whereas scaffolding is more demanding than

their traditional roles . It entails making the learners collaborate to co-construct knowledge and reach a common understanding .

Q 7 : What if any comment can you express about ZPD ?

" Zone of proximal development is a beneficial and fruitful method but it is not obvious to adopt it un real learning conditions , but I am doing my best to know more about it "

Extract from teacher 2 interview

" It is a new word for me actually but we have already dealt with it because I was practicing it with out being aware of it and I urge teachers to use it "

Extract from teacher 1 interview

There was a common consensus among all teachers that the concept ZPD was new to them and hard to be implemented in their classes as it is very demanding and it requires a very skilled teacher as well as good training quality .

To conclude , the findings of the questionnaire reveal that teachers are not aware of team work (cooperative learning) and how it actually functions and how to deal with students as well during the process of cooperative learning . Their answers were not justified and they said that they follow a traditional way of grouping students and their teaching style is not kept abreast of the new demands of cooperative learning methods . Which means that cooperative learning is not appropriately applied in their classes . On the other hand , during the interview held with teachers , most of them showed that they do not

have a full understanding of the underlying concepts of CBA and thus they failed at defining most of its concepts and they are not applying it in their classrooms . Furthermore , they said that they follow a traditional way of teaching students in which they try to meet the needs of their students in their own way . They stated various factors that inhibit them from the right implementation of CBA such as time limits and large classes as well as students level which led to their incapacity from implementing this approach although many studies proved the effectiveness of CBA and cooperative learning .For them this approach seems to be very demanding and it requires a very skilled teacher and a reinforced training and it requires as well students to be motivated and to have some pre-acquired competencies to build on . Even though some teachers lack knowledge about CBALT , two teachers only showed positive reactions about it , they insisted on the dire need of raising awareness among teachers about the importance of this approach as well as the mediated tools used to cooperatively co-construct knowledge such as scaffolding and ZPD , but for them and in order to reach successful implementation of this approach and in order for this approach to be relative there have to be the availability of the necessary conditions . In this respect , Mohr et tal (1973) points to importance of the necessary materials for an effective implementation of this new approach.

Pedagogical implications :

Teachers encounter many difficulties that hinder the successful implementation of CBA ranging from overcrowded classes to lack of cooperation among students to time management . Consequently , some considerable measures should be taken into account to help teachers best implement this approach :

1. Teachers must be involved in various in service training workshops that are designed to help them develop their skills in the area of continuous improvement and curriculum development .
2. Schools should be provided with the necessary materials and technology to prompt for the effective implementation of CBA .
3. Class size should be reduced so as to foster the good implementation of CBA .

Conclusion :

The discussion of the data obtained from the questionnaires and the interview answers the questions and the hypotheses set at the very first beginning of the study and rejects none of them since teachers do really lack full training of CBA and do not have good understanding of the socio-constructivist theory and the importance of team work in knowledge construction.

General Conclusion

General conclusion :

This work was divided into three chapters aimed at testing the implementation of competency-Based approach teaching method, and the utilization of cooperative learning in the Algerian EFL classes in order to see how teachers apply it in their classes. In order to realize this objective, there are methodological procedures used to test a hypothesis which states that CBA as a method of teaching and cooperative learning as a strategy of learning is not appropriately implemented in the Algerian EFL high school classes. The structure of the research is designed into two parts: theoretical part and the practical one. At the end of the study, the outcomes of the investigation were provided to be discussed to arrive at a conclusion about the stated hypothesis.

To conclude, the present research indicated that language EFL classrooms are a decent venue for the implementation of competency-Based approach as a learning strategy for successful language teaching. But the results of this research showed that most of the Algerian EFL teachers' lack full training of CBA as a result of so many factors such as the training was only theoretical without any practical procedures. Good training of CBA will provide them with the proper teaching skills where they can create excellent opportunities for their learners to collaborate and create zones of proximal development where they may share and build new understandings. Hence the necessity for training, training must concentrate on highlighting the importance of collaboration work and therefore the ways to promote the creation of ZPD for collaborative knowledge construction. Collaborative knowledge construction requires sustained negotiation and argumentation between the teacher and his/her students. Negotiation and argumentation processes are held to trigger collaborative construction of meaning and hence learning. According to Johnson and Johnson (1994), "How teachers structure student-student interaction patterns has a lot to say about how well students learn, how they feel about school and the teacher, how they feel about each other, and how

much self-esteem they have". Within the present context of classroom learning, teacher training, the size of classes, task types and teachers' scaffolding are important factors that needed to be managed for successful collaboration and also the way learners engaged in classroom exchanges, particularly exploratory exchanges. They influenced the way teachers and learners jointly engaged within the different classroom discussions.

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Appendices

Appendices

Appendix 1: Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear teacher :

The following questionnaire is designed to investigate the utilization of team work in the Algerian EFL classrooms under Competency-Based Approach framework . It is an endeavor to know whether teachers implement the collaborative learning to construct knowledge appropriately in their classrooms . Thus , you are kindly requested to take part in this questionnaire by ticking the appropriate answer and justifying it whenever necessary . Your responses will be used for this research . Help from you will be profoundly valued .

Part one : General information

1.Gender :

A .Female ☐

B .Male ☐

2. Total number of years of experience in teaching the English language ☐

3 . According to you , which approach do you think is suitable for EFL classes ?

a) . Teacher-centered approach ☐

b) . Student-centered approach ☐

Part two : Cooperative learning and team work :

1 . Based on your own observation , Do your students enjoy the session with you ?

a) . Yes ☐

b) . No ☐

If it is no why ?

……..

……

2 . According to you , do your students like working :

a) . Individually ☐

b) . Cooperatively ☐

3 . How often do you use group work in you classroom activities ?

a) . Always ☐

b) . Sometimes ☐

c) . Rarely ☐

d) . Never ☐

4. Are all of your students actively involved in the group ?

a) . Yes ☐

b) . No ☐

If it is no, why ?

……..

……

5. Do you have full understanding of cooperative learning to implement it appropriately ?

a) . Yes ☐

b) .No ☐

If it is no, why ?

……

……

…….

6 . Is cooperative learning a helpful instructional strategy ?

a) . Yes ☐

b) . No ☐

If it is no, why ?

……

……

…….

7 . Do you use cooperative learning method at the expense of other strategies ?

a) . Yes ☐

b) . No ☐

If it is no, why ?

……

……

Appendix 2: Teachers' Interview Questions

1 . Have you been trained to implement Competency-Based Approach ?

2. Are you implementing Competency-Based Education in your classroom practice ?if yes how ?

3. How do you define the term competence ?

4 . How do you define the term collaborative process of knowledge construction ?

5 . Zone of proximal development refers to the difference between what a learner can do without help and what he or she can do with help of a skilled partner . Thus , the term " proximal " refers to those skills that the learner is " close " to mastering . How often do you apply formative evaluation along the line of ZPD ?

5.1 . In which setting it is more favorable to you to assist your students positively cross ZPD ? individual work or group work ?

6 . Scaffolding consists of activities provided by the teacher or more competent peer to support students as he or she is led through the zone of proximal development . Ho close or far is your classroom practice to this definition ?and how do you intend to be a scaffolder ?

7. What if any comment can you express about ZPD ?