University of Adrar
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Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment for the Requirements of Master Degree in Linguistics and Didactics

An Overview of English Language Assessment In the Algerian 3rd Year Secondary School Classes (Adrar a Case Study)

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Academic Year: 2013/2014

I dedicate this work to my parents, my husband and all members of my family

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to Mr. Reda Boukli for his guidance

I am grateful to all my teachers, who have provided me with

Extensive information about English

I am grateful also to my close friends, for their help and support

And to all people who provided assistance via different means with special reference to all

teachers of English in the high schools of Adrar

Thank you All.

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List of Abbreviations

CBA: Competency-Based Approach

CBALT: Competency-Based Approach to Language Teaching

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ELT: English Language Teaching

TOEFL: Test of English as a foreign language

General Introduction

Assessment in education can be defined as the methods and approaches used to collect information aiming at making decisions related to teaching and learning. It is an integral part of the teaching and learning process. Scholars, like Phillip Race, insist that the most important role the teachers do to or for their learners is assessing their work. Assessment results influences students' entire life. Moreover, it affects the individual as it affects the educational system and the society as a whole. Thus, it is important to understand how the assessment process works.

The procedures and techniques used in assessment have been constantly ascertained by scholars and researchers. Their aim has been to guarantee the suitability, particularity and fairness of the assessment tools. In addition, they want to ensure that the assessment process results in the right impact on all aspects of the teaching, learning process. On the other hand, teaching approaches have witnessed evolution. The shift of the teaching approaches from structural, teacher- centered, audio-lingual, discrete-point teaching methodologies towards learner centered, and humanistic communicative methodologies has determined new assessment procedures.

Like all other countries, Algeria has been affected by the new approaches to teaching. In 2002, the Algerian educational system has shifted from a teacher centered approach to a learner centered approach. Assessment which has been for many years considered an external part of the teaching and learning has become, under the competency-based approach, an integral part of instruction and the engine of teaching and learning. This new approach to teaching has called for assessment approaches that are humanistic by introducing new assessment postulates, procedures, and techniques. For example, it has introduces informal evaluation measures including peer and self-assessment logs and portfolios.

This research work attempts to shed light on the issue of assessment and its implementation in the Algerian third year secondary school classes. In order to explore such an issue, our study will be conducted with reference to the third year English curriculum, text book and Baccalaureate tests. These three components are important in any educational program and they decide either its success or failure. The third year in the secondary school is important for the learners because it is a clincher between learning in the high school and carrying out the studies in the university therefore it was chosen for this research work.

This research work entails three chapters. The first chapter is an overview of the theoretical issues related to assessment mainly the fundamental concepts of measurement and the difference between them; the relationship between teaching, learning and assessment and the types of assessment. Types of assessment especially peer and self- assessments are given great attention because they are going to help us in exploring assessment related issues in the third year curriculum and text book. Testing is also emphasised because it provides the theoretical bases for analysing the Baccalaureate tests. The chapter ends with describing the criteria of a good test which are also significant in this research for the same previously mentioned reason.

The second chapter explores the way assessment is integrated in the English syllabus, curriculum and text book. It starts with providing an overall image about the status of English in the world then in Algeria. This chapter also deals with the Algerian educational reform that has introduced the competency based approach and its consequences in the teaching and assessment of the English language for the third year classes. This chapter ends with a general description and analyses of the Baccalaureate exam paper.

The third chapter is practical it was carried out using a questionnaire sent to all the teachers of third year classes in the city of Adrar. It aims at discovering how assessment is perceived and practiced by teachers. Teachers experience the issue of assessment in the classroom, thus, their opinions arguments and feedbacks can be helpful as far as the central objective of the present research is concerned.

Chapter One

1.1 Introduction

English Language assessments are widely used to collect information for decision-making purposes. These uses of language assessments and the decisions that are made have consequences for the individuals, programms, institutions and organizations. Society as a whole will be affected by the decisions taken. Before tackling the practical issues related to assessment in the third year secondary schools in Algeria, a conceptual foundation is needed. Thus, this chapter is devoted to introducing some basic notions and issues in language assessment: the relationship between teaching, learning and assessment, fundamental concepts of measurement; types of assessment; testing and lastly the criteria of a good test. Testing and types of assessment are valued because they are important in both describing the role of assessment in the 3rd year secondary school syllabus and describing the Baccalaureate exams.

1.2 The Relationship between Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Assessment plays a major role in how students learn, their motivation to learn and how teachers teach. The teacher analyses information about student's achievement and identifies learning needs and objectives. Then, he gives learners the opportunity to learn what they need. After that, he designs tests or assignments to determine the extent to which students have reached their goal. At the end, the teacher interprets the results in order to improve the courses. This process is also going to help the teacher in discovering what lacks in his methods and what goes right. This point is well clarified by Bachman " In educational programs, the results of assessments are most commonly used to describe both the processes and outcomes of learning for the purposes of diagnoses or evaluating achievement, or make decisions that will improve the quality of teaching and learning and of the program itself"(2004:6).
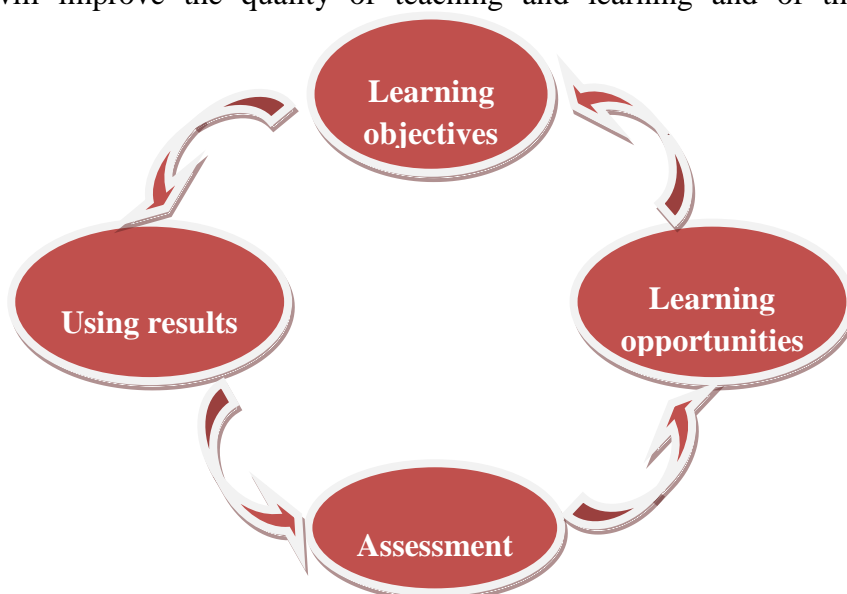
Figure 01: Teaching/ Learning/ Assessment Cycle (Suskie, 2012 in Penn State's

1.3 Fundamental Concepts of Measurement

In the field of language testing and educational measurement, the term "assessment" is used with a variety of different ways and meanings. It is used interchangeably with the terms "measurement", "test", and "evaluation" to mean collecting information. In his book *Fundamental Considerations in Language Testing*. Bachman argued that in practice these terms refer to the same activity, however, they have distinctive characteristics (1990:18).

1.3.1 Measurement

According to Bachman's definition measurement is "The process of quantifying the characteristics of an object of interest according to explicit rules and procedures" (1990:18). Measurement is one type of assessment that has three distinguishing features: quantification, characteristics, and explicit rules and procedures.

Quantification means assigning numbers, this feature distinguishes measures from non-quantitative assessments like verbal descriptions(for example, very good).Measurement and measures are used to assess the abilities of the human being (for example, grammatical knowledge, strategic competence or language aptitude) and not the human being himself. Similar to other types of assessment, measurement must be based on explicit rules and procedures (for example criteria for scoring). These procedures make a link between the unobservable abilities measured and the observable performance (numbers assigned).There are different types of measures including tests.

1.3.2 Test

Carol defines a test as "…a procedure designed to elicit certain behaviour from which one can make inferences about certain characteristics of an individual" (1968: 46 qtd in Bachman, 2004: 9). Thus, a test is a measuring instrument that tries to bring out a special sample of performance .Test developers design tests that result in performances that enable them to make inferences about the characteristics of test takers.

1.3.3 Evaluation

Evaluation can be understood as one of the uses of assessment. On the one hand, it includes making value judgments and decisions on the basis of information. On the other hand, collecting information to draw decisions is the goal of language assessments. Decisions concerning teaching and learning depend on the ability of the decision maker and the quality of the information upon which the decision is based. In their book *Classroom-Based Evaluation in Second Language Education*, Fred Genesee and John A. Upshur said that "Second language evaluation is primarily about decision making. Indeed the overall purpose

of second language evaluation is to make sound choices that will improve second language teaching and enhance second language learning" (1996: 4).

1.3.4 Assessment

There is no agreement on the meaning of the term assessment. It has been used with a variety of different meanings in the fields of language testing and educational measurement. Certainly there is no standard usage of the term. It is used in many different ways, in many different contexts, and for so many different purposes (Cizek, 1997:8). Some educationalists regard assessment as the methods and procedures employed in collecting information about learners' performance others think that assessment is a medical instrument "used by a physician "for diagnosing and treating the person's condition" (Ibid, 8-9).

For the purpose of this research, Bachman's definition is adopted, assessment is thought of broadly as the process of gathering information about learners in a given object of interest according to procedures that are systematic and substantively grounded. Systematic means that the ways of designing and implementing assessments are clearly described and can be repeated by other people. "Substantively grounded" means that assessment must be built upon known theories about the nature of language ability, language use or language learning, or accepted and current practice in particular field (Bachman, 2004:7)
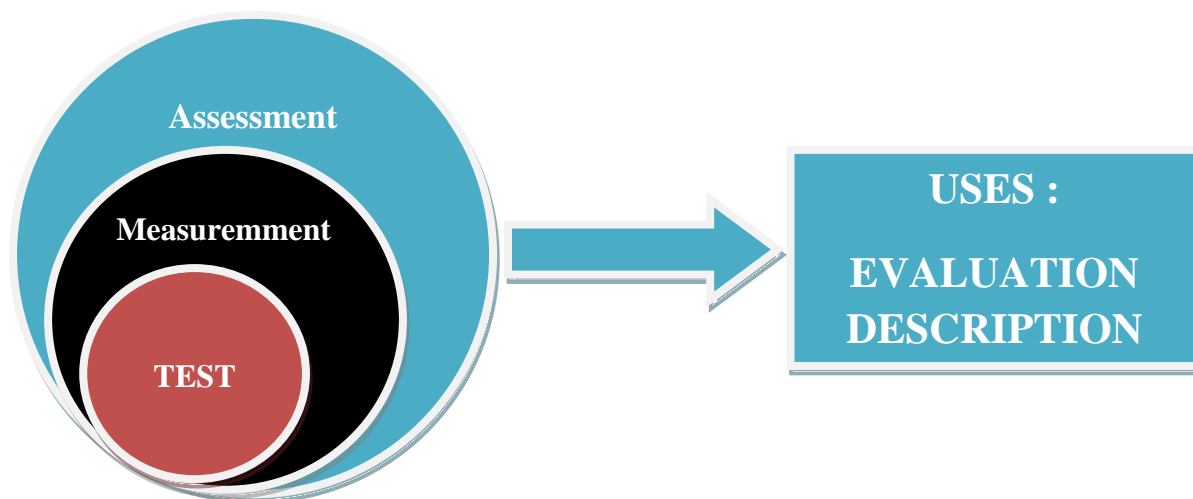
Figure 02: Relationships among Assessment Measurement, Test and Their Uses for Description and Evaluation in Different Settings (Ibid: 10)

1.4 Types of Assessment

Assessment can best be defined by describing its different types; it is divided into: (1) formative and summative assessment (2) informal and formal assessment and (3) self and peer assessment.

1.4.1 Formative and Summative Assessment

Formative assessment is generally carried out throughout a course or project. Thus, it provides feedback and information during the instructional process, when the learners are forming their competence and skills. Formative assessment is used to measure both the learner's and the teacher's progress. For example, when introducing a new activity in class, through observing the learners, the teacher can decide to use it again or not. Formative assessment is mainly used to identify points that need more clarification and improvement. Effective formative feedback affects what the students and the teacher do next; it is the most powerful type of assessment for improving student performance. There are ten main features of formative assessment:

1. Requires students to take responsibility for their own learning.
2. Communicates clear, specific learning goals.
3. Focuses on goals that represent valuable educational outcomes with applicability beyond the learning context.
4. Identifies the student's current knowledge /skills and the necessary steps for reaching the desired goals.
5. Requires development of plans for attaining the desired goals.
6. Encourages students to self-monitor progress toward the learning goals.
7. Provides examples of learning goals including criteria or rubrics that will be used to evaluate the student's work.
8. Provides frequent assessment, including peer and student self-assessment and assessment embedded within the learning activities.
9. Includes feedback that is non-evaluative, specific, timely, and related to the learning goals, and that provides opportunities for the student to revise and improve work products and deepen understandings.
10. Promotes metacognition and reflection by students on their work.

Table01: Characteristics of Formative Assessment (Cizek, 2010:8 in NCTE Position).

Summative assessment is distinct from the formative one in its function and time of occurrence. Amon used the following example to illustrate this idea "When the chef tastes the sauce it is formative assessment; when the customer tastes, it is summative". Summative assessment seeks to provide evidence of what learner' got at the end of a specific term of learning i.e. it measures the level of success or proficiency that has been obtained at the end of an instructional unit, by comparing it against some standard or benchmark.

The important stages of learners' development are marked by summative assessment. It should be formally recorded in the form of scores and marks. The Baccalaureate exams are the most known forms of summative assessment in the Algerian educational system. Summative assessment has eight importance types:

- Examinations

- Final examination.

- Term papers (drafts submitted throughout the semester would be formative assessment).

- Projects (project phases submitted at various completion points could be formatively assessed).

- Portfolios(could also be assessed during its development as a formative assessment)

- Performances.

- Student evaluation of the course (teaching effectiveness).

- Instructor self-evaluation

(Adopted from, PDC Formative and Summative Assessment)

1.4.2 Informal and Formal Assessment

Formal assessments, as the name implies are formal ways of assessing the learner's performances. It usually involves a written document as test, quiz or paper. On the one hand, a formal assessment has standardized methods of administering the test. They, also, make use of formal methods of grading. On the other hand, informal assessments are all tools that can evaluate learner's performance without including standardized test and scoring patterns. It can be an expression like: "Good work or that was really good", it occurs during instruction and without recording results –all kinds of tests are formal assessments but this is not true vice versa.

1.4.3 Self and Peer Assessments

Self and peer assessments are strategies that belong to formative assessment. They are both teaching and assessing strategies at the same time.

Self-assessment is making judgments about the progress of one's own learning. It derives its theoretical justification from a number of principles of second language acquisition: autonomy and intrinsic motivation. Autonomy is the ability of the learner to set his/her own goals inside and outside the classroom, to pursue them without the help of others and to monitor that pursuit. Intrinsic motivation means that the learners engage in the activities for their own sake and not because they lead to extrinsic reward. Intrinsically motivated behaviours bring internally rewarding consequences, feelings of competency and self-determination. Autonomy and intrinsic motivation are considered as the primary foundational stones of successful learning. (Brown 2003:164).

Peer assessment is based on similar principles of second language acquisition; the most obvious one is cooperative learning i.e. learners capable of teaching each other something. Peer assessment is only one tool of the huge number of tasks and procedures used in the domain of learner centered education.

Researchers (such as Fred Genesee and John A. Upshur) insist that peer and self-assessments are very important for various reasons. They increase learners' involvement and responsibility for their own learning and help them to set realistic goals for themselves. This is particularly important in the learner-centered classrooms where students direct their own learning activities. Learners' self-involvement is going to increase their autonomy and motivation. (Ibid)

Like all other techniques of language teaching and assessing, peer and self-assessments have some drawbacks. The main one is subjectivity; learners are sometimes either very severe or self-flattering. In addition, learners who are still in the process of acquisition would not have the necessary tools to assess themselves or others.

1.4.3.1 Types of Self-and Peer-Assessment

There are mainly five categories of self-and Peer-assessment: (1) direct assessment of performance, (2) indirect assessment of performance (3) metacognitive assessment, (4) assessment socio-affective factors, and (5) student self-generated tests.

1.4.3.1.1 Assessment of a Specific Performance

In This type of assessment, the student is supposed to evaluate his/her performance either in oral or written production, the evaluation occurs directly after the performance. For instance, after making an oral presentation, the learner (or a peer) fills a checklist that measures performance on a defined scale.

1.4.3.1.2 Indirect Assessment of General Competence

This type of assessment is used to evaluate general ability i.e. various performance. It takes a longer time than that of direct assessment .For example, assessment of competence many includes a lesson of five days. It ignores smaller, unrepeated mistakes.

1.4.3.1.3 Metacognitive Assessment

This kind of assessment has the purpose of not only evaluating past performance but, also, setting goals for the future. It is useful for fostering intrinsic motivation. Metacognitive assessment can occur in the form of journal entries, choices from a list of possibilities, questionnaires, or cooperative (oral) pair or group learning the example below was offered by Smolen, Newman, Wathen, and Lee (1995 adopted in Brown 2003: 272-4). It is an assignment of making "goal cards" Written by a middle-school student.

1-My goal for this week is to stop during reading and predict what is going to happen next in the story.

2- My goal for this week is to finish writing my superman story.

After one week, the same learner filled the back of the same card. It is his self-assessment.

The first goal [help] me understand a lot when I'm reading.

-I met my goal for this week.

1.1.3.1.4 Socio-affective Assessment

This type of self-and peer-assessment requires the learner to look at himself from a psychological perspective. He tries to discover and examine the affective factors in his learning. When the learner identifies and assesses the mental and emotional obstacles to learning, he plans to overcome them. In the following example, the test taker must indicate preference for one statement over the one on the opposite side:

I don't mind if people laugh at me when I speak	ABCD	I get embarrassed if people laugh at me when I speak
I like rules and exact information	ABCD	I like general guidelines and uncertain information

(Adopted from Brown 2003: 275)

1.4.3.1.5 Student-Generated Tests

This type is not classified definitively as self-or peer-assessment, the teacher is supposed to engage the learners in the process of test preparation. Many researchers (such as Gorsuch (1998) and Murphy (1995) argue that student –generated tests can be productive, intrinsically motivating, autonomy-building processes (Ibid).

1.5 Testing

According to Brown a test can be defined as "a method of measuring a person's ability, knowledge, or performance in a given domain" (2003: 3). Brown's definition has three important components. First a test is a method. Thus, it involves a set of techniques, procedures, or items which must be explicit and structured, for example, a multiple –choice question with prescribed correct answers. Second a test involves measuring. Tests may be used to measure general abilities or specific competencies. The results or the measurements of a test are treated differently. For example, in a classroom-based short answer essay test, the teacher may only provide a marginal comment, whereas, in large-scale standardized tests, he provides a numerical score.

Third, tests are designed to measure the learner's ability, knowledge, or performance. Testers should have background knowledge about the test takers to design them an appropriate test. Fourth, a test measures learners' performance i.e. to which extent they are able to speak, read or listen to a language. Finally, a test measures a given domain. For example, a vocabulary test may focus only on the words covered in a particular lesson or unit.

1.5.1 Approaches to Language Testing

The evolution of language –testing approaches has been influenced by teaching methodology ranging from behaviorists' contrastive analysis testing to today's interest on authentic, valid instruments.

1.5.1.1 Discrete-Point and Integrative Testing

Discrete-point and integrative testing are two approaches to language testing that had been widely used throughout the1970s and the early1980s however, these approaches still occur today. Discrete-point tests are tests that measure the components of language (skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing and several units of language of phonology graphology, lexicon, syntax and discourse) separately. This approach was based on the assumption that language can best be tested by breaking it into its component parts.

Discrete-point testing was approved of in measuring linguistic competence for beginners or when a great importance is given to accuracy, however, it was criticized for

many shortcomings. First, it decontextualizes language and this creates confusion for test-taker. Second, it is too mechanical. Finally, it neither encourages communication nor develops language competence.

The developments in linguistics and the growing interest on communication authenticity and context brought with it the integrative approach to language testing; this approach is based on the assumption that language competence is a unified set of abilities that cannot be assessed separately. Cloze test and dictation test are examples of this approach. Cloze test is a reading passages (about 150 to 300 words) in which words are missing. The test-taker is supposed to put the right word on the blanks. Supporters of this approach claim that the ability to supply appropriate words in blanks requires a number of abilities that lie at the heart of competence in a language knowledge of vocabulary, grammatical structure, discourse structure reading skills and strategies and an internalized expectancy grammar.

In dictation tests, learners listen to a passage read aloud by an administrator and write what they hear. The passage is divided into three parts. In the first part, the reader does not make pauses; in the second part long pauses are made between all phrases. In the third part, the reading is at normal speed thus, test-takers have time to check their writing. The indivisible approach to language testing which suggests that language four skills should be tested in an integrative way became known as the unitary trait hypothesis.

1.5.1.2 Communicative Language Testing

The previously mentioned approaches to language testing give great importance to linguistic competence. By the mind-1980s, the attention moved to how the learners use the target language in actual (authentic) real-life situations. Teachers, influenced by the emergence of the Communicative Language Teaching, wanted to know if their learners are able to transform competence into performance. Morrow said that:

> "The very essence of a communicative approach is to establish particular features of context, in order to test the candidate's ability to use language is appropriate terms of a particular specification .While it is hoped that the procedures discussed will indeed be revealing in those terms, they cannot strictly speaking reveal anything of a candidate's ability to produce language that is appropriate to a situation different in even one respect from that established"

(Morrow, 1977:53 qtd in Miguelbengoa, A Short History of Testing)

Communicative language testing approach advocates argued that language testing that does not include evidence of performance tells the users of the test results nothing useful. This approach emphasizes the importance of language in use. Morrow summarized the

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characteristics of communication interaction that were found lacking in traditional tests as follow (Ibid).

1. Interaction: In the vast majority of instances, language is based on interaction, but this is not sampled in most tests.

2. Unpredictability: The processing of unpredictable data in real time is a vital aspect of using language.

3. Context: Language forms vary in accordance with context [such as physical environment, role, status, attitude, register and formality].

4. Purpose: Learners must recognize why something has been said and respond appropriately.

5. Authenticity: How a learner copes with language [so, for example, finding out how learners cope with simplified texts tell us little about their communicative ability].

6. Behaviour-based: Participants on the basis of behavioral outcomes judge the success or failure of interactions, and, strictly speaking, no other criteria are relevant

1.5.2.3 Performance-Based Assessment

Performance assessment or authentic assessment is an approach to language testing in which learners are required to perform a task rather than select an answer from a readymade list. It involves oral production written production, open-ended responses, integrated performance and other authentic and interactive tasks. In interactive tasks, learners are measured in the process of performing the targeted linguistic acts. For example, the test-taker might be asked to listen to someone else and respond appropriately.

Performance-based assessment is based on Contextual Teaching and Learning. The latter is built upon inquiry based-learning, constructivism, questioning learning communities, authentic assessment, problem-based learning, work-based learning and service learning. According to performance-based assessment, teachers have to gather information that may improve the learner's achievement, define what learners do not understand, relate learning experiences to instruction, and combine assessment with teaching. Performance-based assessment is often criticized for being time consuming and expensive.

Performance-based assessment includes three types: performances, portfolios, and projects. Performances include open-ended or extended response exercises. These are questions in which learners are going to investigate topics in oral or written forms. For

example, learners might be asked to describe their observation from a science experiment. Portfolios are selected collections of a variety of performance-based work. It might include a student's 'best pieces' and the student's evaluation of several pieces. Projects are extended tasks, they might be assignments that require continuous effort in a single work area and may take several hours.

1.6 Test Types

English language test types are classified according to their purpose or objectives. There are mainly five types: language aptitude test, proficiency test, placement test, diagnostic test and achievement test. Classroom teachers are concerned with the last three types.

1.6.1 Language Aptitude Tests

Language aptitude tests are tests that try to predict the extent of learner's success in learning a foreign language before the latter is exposed to it. They measure the general ability to learn a foreign language (Geoffrey et al 1980:157).

1.6.2 Proficiency Tests

According to Douglass Brown, proficiency tests are tests that "…test global competence in language" (2003: 44). It tests the overall ability and it is not limited to one course, curriculum, or skill in the language. Proficiency tests are summative in nature. Thus, they are not used to provide diagnostic feedback. Test of English as a foreign language (TOEFL) is one example of proficiency tests, it tests language ability in the four skills and it is widely used in the United States. (Ibid: 158).

1.6.3 Placement Tests

This kind of tests is used to place students in the right class i.e. in a particular level in the curriculum, it is usually based on syllabuses and materials the students will deal with after the placement. Placement test examines grammar, vocabulary and both the productive and the receptive skills (Harmer: 321).

1.6.4 Diagnostic Tests

This kind of tests has a formative nature. It is designed to discover the points that the learners have difficulties in during a course. Diagnostic tests look back over previous instruction with a view to modifying future instruction" (Geoffrey et al 1980:156)

1.6.5 Achievement Tests

Achievement Tests usually occur at the end of a unit or term of study. They are based on classroom lessons, units or a total curriculum. Their role is to determine whether the course objectives have been met, however, they also play an important formative role. (Ibid)

1.7 Tests Formats

Classroom teachers employ two types of tests formats: selected-response formats and constructed-response formats. Selected-response items require test-takers to select a response from available alternatives. The latter include multiple-choice, true-false and matching items. Constructed-response items require students to construct a response .It involves filling-in-the-blank, short answering essay items, performance assessments and portfolios.

There is no format that is superior to the other; both of them have strengths and weaknesses. True, false items are quick, objective, efficient and easy to score; however, they are criticized for emphasizing rote memorization without understanding, limiting the amount of information gained and giving learners the opportunity to answer 50 % of items by random chance (Ibid). Matching items formats are widely used because they are easy constructed and able to measure a lot at the same time. However, their weakness relies on being restricted to factual information. Moreover they are subject to guessing.

1.8 The Criteria of a Good Test

Lyle F.Bachman and Adrian S.Palmer argued that the most important quality of a test is its usefulness (2009: 17). Test usefulness includes six test qualities: reliability, construct validity, authenticity, Interactiveness, impact and practicality.

Usefulness = Reliability + Construct validity+ Authenticity + Interactiveness

+ Impact + Practicality.

Figure 03: Usefulness. (Ibid: 18)

Reliability and validity are called measurement qualities because they provide the major justification for using test scores as a basis for making decisions. The other qualities can be found on the other components of a learning programme. For example, we can study the impact of a given learning activity or the practicality of a teaching approach.

1.8.1 Reliability

Reliability is a quality of test scores, a reliable score is a score that is consistent i.e. the same results are gotten repeatedly. Apart from the ability measured, there are other factors that influence performance and cause measurement errors for example, fatigue and anxiety. If

a student receives a low score on a test one day and a high score on the same test two days later, this means that there are no consistent results, and these scores cannot be considered reliable indicators of the individual's ability. (Bachman, 1990:24)

1.8.2 Construct Validity

Tests are designed to measure the learners' abilities. The scores are analyzed and interpreted by the test developers. The interpretation cannot simply be asserted as valid; it must be demonstrated and justified. The justification that the test developers provide are evidence of construct validity i.e. evidence that the test scores reflect the area of language ability that they want to measure, Bachman and Palmer said that "the term construct validity is therefore used to refer to the extent to which we can interpret a given test score as an indicator of the ability(ies), or construct(s), we want to measure" (2009: 21).

1.8.3 Authenticity

Authenticity is defined as the degree of correspondence between the characteristic of a given language test task and the characteristics the same task taken in authentic situations i.e. context in which the test taker will use the language outside the test , real word situations(Bachman,2009:301) This relationship is demonstrated in figure 04.

Figure 04: Authenticity (Bachman and Palmer, 2009: 23)

In addition to authenticity, construct validity has a relation with the use of language in real life situation. The interpretations about language ability in the testing situation are generalized to the context of real life use. This relation is represented visually in figure 05.

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                    ┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
                    │      SCORE INTERPRETATION            │
                    │  Inferences about          Domain    │
                    │  Language ability            of      │
                    │  (construct definition)  generalization│
                    └─────────────────────────────────────┘

   C                              ▲                          A
   o                              │                          u
   n                    ┌──────────────────┐                 t
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   t                    │   TEST SCORE     │                 e
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  │   Language    │────────────────────▶ │ Characteristics│
  │   ability     │                      │ of the test task│
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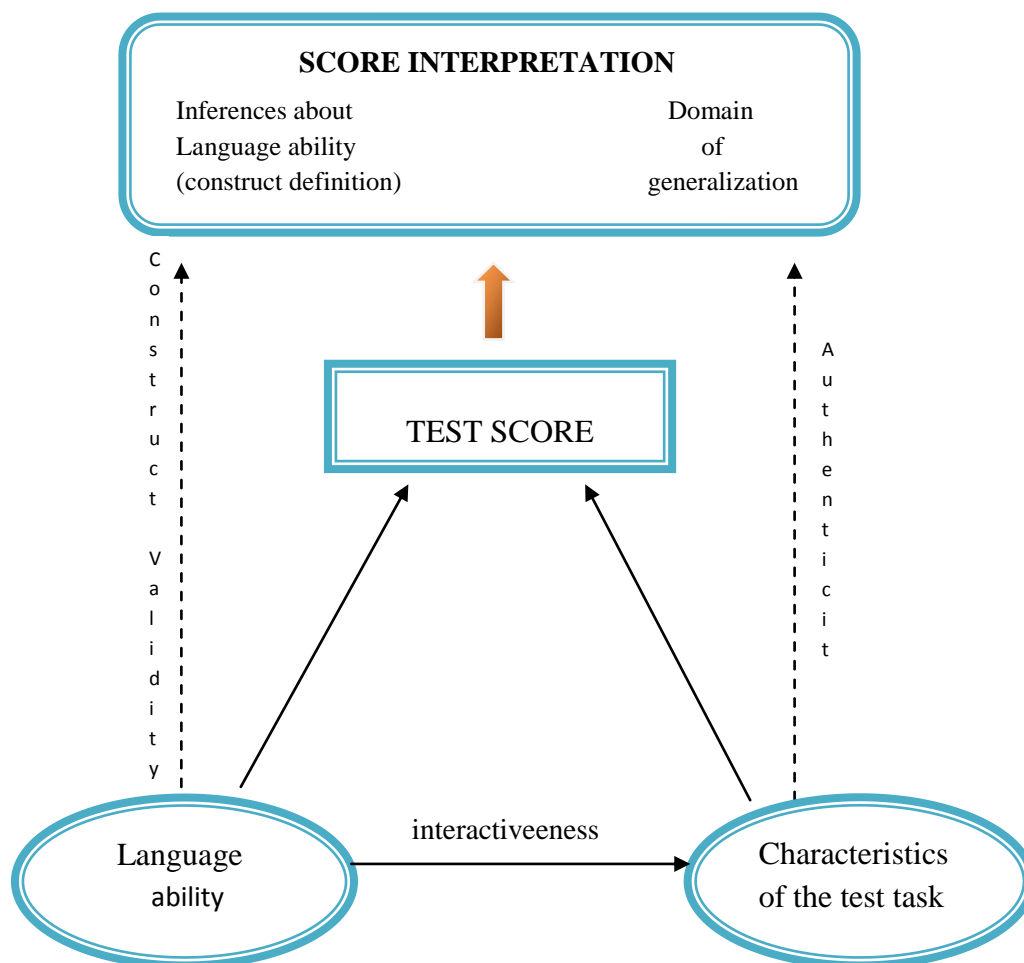
Figure05: Construct Validity of Score Interpretations (Ibid: 22)

1.8.4 Interactiveness

Interactiveness is the extent and type of involvement of the test taker's language ability, topical knowledge, and effective schemata in accomplishing a test task (Bachman and Palmer 2009: 25). For example, a test task in which learners have to relate the topical content of the test input to his own topical knowledge is said to have a great deal of Interactiveness. Authenticity and interactiveness are relative thus; we cannot say that a test is 'authentic' or 'interactive'
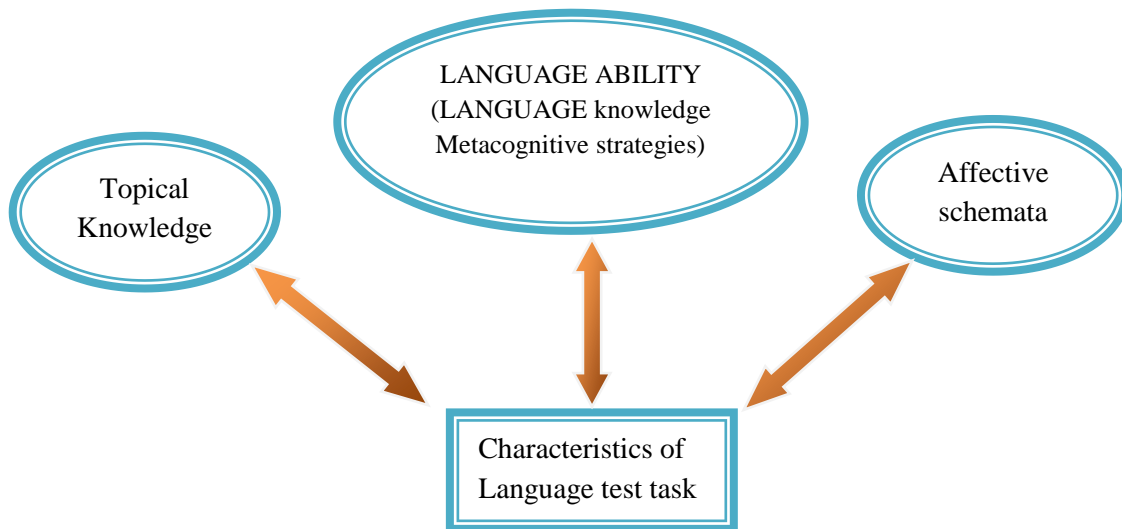
Figure 06: Interactiveness (Ibid: 26)

1.8.5 Impact

A test has an impact on society both in the micro- and the macro levels. It affects the individual test taker as it affects the educational system and the society as a whole; this is the quality of the test that is known as the impact. Test developers have to think about what might happen as a result of their use of a test for a particular purpose.

1.8.6 Practicality

Unlike the other qualities of tests, practicality deals with the ways in which the test will be implemented in a given situation. It is the relationship between the resources that will be required in the design, development and use of the test and the resources that will be available for these activities. Practicality is "The extent to which the test is really usable by teachers with limited time and resources at their disposal" (Geofferey et al 1980: 162)

1.9 Conclusion

Assessment is an integral and internal part of the teaching and learning process. Decisions related to the assessment of learners are very important because they are related to a wide spectrum of issues, including assigning grades, evaluating the suitability of textbooks, assigning students to appropriate classes and deciding on the design and content of classroom tests. In order to carry out these tasks, teachers need awareness and understanding of assessment techniques and instruments. The following chapter attempts to investigate the implementation of assessment in the 3rd year curriculum and text book.

Chapter Two

2.1 Introduction

Great importance was given to assessment in the new methodologies of teaching English as a second or foreign language. New approaches to language are built upon considering assessment practices as part of the daily classroom teaching. Given the fact that the Algerian educational system has adopted a new approach to language teaching, Algerian high school teachers have the task of linking instructions, curriculum and assessment in order to meet their teaching objectives. This chapter is going to explore the role of assessment in the third year secondary school curriculum, textbook and the Baccalaureate exams

2.2 The Status of English in the World

English language today has become a lingua franca, a means of international communication. It is taught as a second language in most countries and it is the universal language for business, technology, tourism and entertainment. Statistics show that 3 quarters of the world's mails telexes and cables are in English and more than half of the world's technical periodicals are in English. Moreover, 80% of information stored on world's computers is in English. As a result, learning English has become vital nowadays.

2.3 The Algerian Educational Reform(s)

The Algerian authorities   are increasingly becoming aware of the raising status of the English language in the world. The Algerian National Charter of 1976 notes that English is a means of facilitating constant communication with the world and gaining access to modern sciences. English in Algeria is taught as the second foreign language. Algerian learners start studying it starting from their first year   in the middle school until their 3rd year in the secondary school. Moreover, English is included as a module in each discipline studied at university.

On July 2002, the Algerian Ministry of National Education launched an educational reform programme involving the three levels of education (the primary, the middle and the secondary schools). The aim was to prepare the learners to be competent in their real life tasks. The reform programme introduced a learner-centered approach to learning, unlike the teacher-centered approach previously used as illustrated by the former Minister of education "… tout comme il est évident que l'élève est au centre de l'action educative; réforme de l'éducation et innovation pédagogique en Algérie" (Boubaker Ben Bouzid, *Réforme De L'éducation Et Innovation Pédagogique En Algérie*). The new approach to teaching is grounded on competency-based approach and constructivism.

According to constructivist pedagogy, learning is an active and subjective process for the construction of meanings and knowledge. It emphasizes the role of the learner who is an active constructor of knowledge and not a reproducer of externally transmitted information. Teaching practices should help the students develop the ability to engage in independent learning, for which competence in metacognition and learning strategies are important. "…knowledge is not passively received, but it is actively built up by the cognizing subject. That is, as much as would like, we cannot put ideas in students' head, they will and must construct their own meanings." (Wheatley 1991: 10 in CDTL 2006). Constructivist pedagogy emphasizes on the construction of knowledge as on the knowledge constructed. Learners have to be vital in planning, monitoring and evaluating their learning. It also insists on helping language learners to develop memory strategies for vocabulary learning, cognitive strategies, communication strategies and social strategies.

A competency is the ability to transform a range of skills and knowledge learned in a particular situation, and use them in other situations that may differ. Competency- based approach is based on the idea that learning can be made more durable and useful by linking learning carried out at school with varied and relevant context-of-use (*Document D'accompagnement Du Programme D'anglais De 3ème Annee Secondaire* 2010:10). Students are going to develop intellectual, linguistic and problem solving capacities in school; the latter will enable them to deal with cognitively and pragmatically challenging situations either in or outside school. This approach fosters the leaners' motivation because learning is going to be relevant in their real-life situations.

Concerning the teaching of English, the Algerian educational reform program is centered on t students and the development of their capacities in order to enable them to acquire competency in English. Students are required to learn how to speak, listen to, read, write and re-use what they have learnt in new situations.

The change in the approach of teaching has resulted in changes in assessment principles. The reform aims at methods and procedures. Mohammed Chaib Draa, director of calendar and guidance argued that "It varies from the previous rating pattern in terms of principles, goals and objectives" translated from, official bulletin of the ministry of National Education, March 2010). Brahim Abassi states that

> "Le nouveau dispositif, d'évaluation pédagogique : des fondements conceptuels aux implications dans les pratiques évaluatives. Cette nouvelle orientation de la pédagogie des implications très fortes sure le système d'évaluation dans la mesure

où toute pratique évaluative, même intuitive, révèle une conception de l'apprentissage et donc de l'enseignant"

(*L'APC dans système éducatif algérien* : 207).

In other words, the educational system has changed from a testing and examination culture to an assessment culture. This point is well stated by Xavier Rogiers as follows.

"Ces éléments de changement qui fondent la nouvelle vision de d'orienter la rédaction d'une série de   circulaires d'application et à expliciter les principes organisateurs du nouveau dispositif …L'approche par les compétences conduit à considérer l'évaluation, et en particulier l'évaluation formative, comme partie intégrante du processus d'apprentissages … L'évaluation sert à vérifier la progression des apprentissages dans une perspective d'aide, à faire des diagnostics précis pour révéler les progrès accomplis et les difficultés rencontrées par l'apprentissage, à reconnaitre le niveau de développement des compétences, à orienter ou réorienter les interventions pédagogiques de l'enseignant et à entreprendre des actions appropriées de régulation de remédiation "

(Ibid: 53)

The Ministry of Education develops the secondary school curricula. Curricula proposals are discussed by discipline-based commissions which include teachers that are selected throughout the country on the basis of curricula experience. However, the final decision regarding the contents of curricula remains in the hands of the Ministry of Education. Curricula, then, are approved, nationwide and compulsory (local or regional variations are not allowed). Inspectors control the implementation of the curriculum. (Karima Lakehal 2010:242)

From a theoretical perspective, assessment, in the new approach of teaching in Algeria, is no longer seen as tests given to learners at the end of the teaching-learning sequence in order to assign marks for administrative purposes where the test taker's role is to recall content stored in a given discipline or mechanically apply rules for solving exercises. It is viewed as part of the learning process. In addition, great importance is given to formative assessment and its tools for example, peer- and self-assessment, portfolio assessment and journals (idea or reaction written by the students and assessed by the teacher).

2.4 The Curriculum

English curriculum of third year secondary school (all streams) is composed of eleven parts.

It starts with an introduction of the new syllabuses for third year classes written by the general director of secondary education where he defines the competency-based (CBA) approach and states the reasons behind its implementation in Algerian secondary schools.

The introduction was written by the general director in the mother tongue; however, all of the following parts are written in French.

The second section of the curriculum deals with the aims of teaching English in Algerian secondary schools. It states that the purpose of teaching English in high school is "d'aider notre société à s'intégrer harmonieusement dans la modernité en participant pleinement et entièrement à la communauté linguistique qui utilise cette langue pour tous types d'interaction"(9).

The third section is concerned with the objectives of teaching English for 3rd year classes. There are three main components: language and communication objectives, methodological and technological objectives, socio-cultural and socio-professional objectives. Language and communication objectives provide the learners with a solid linguistic base, enabling the learners to communicate in English and enabling them to successfully pursue higher education in English.

Methodological and technological objectives involve consolidating the intellectual abilities of the learners (such as analysis, synthesis and evaluation) encouraging reflection at all learning stages, teaching the students the rational use of technologies, promoting the learners' learning strategies and self-assessment, teaching the students the rational use of oral or written English documentation and strengthening the methods of thought and work acquired in the first and second years.

The socio-cultural and the socio-professional objectives contain encouraging the integration of themes studied in other subjects to integrate all the learners: stimulating the curiosity of the learners and contributing to their openness by exposing them to different cultures especially the culture of the English speaking world, and finally, allowing the learners to move towards a working life at the end of the school curriculum.

The fourth part of the curriculum states the input profile of the 3rd year student. Upon their enrolment in 3rd year classes, learners are supposed to be able to produce a statement of 15 lines talking about something that has a relation with the presented oral or written text. On the other hand, the fifth part of the syllabus deals with the final objective that students must attain at the end of the 3rd year in secondary school (output profile of the 3rd year students). Learners have to be able to write twenty lines message in a selected type of written discourse (descriptive, narrative, argumentative, expository, injunctive etc.). The following part of the curriculum deals with the integration of competency-based approach (CBA) in the

educational system of Algeria. It states that the pedagogy of integration implemented in the CBA, involves self-assessment, peer-assessment and co-evaluation.

After discussing the CBA approach, the curriculum deals with the skills that the 3rd year learners are supposed to master, they are three main skills: Interacting orally/ interpreting messages (oral/writer) and delivering messages.

The eighth point discusses the competencies' resources. The above mentioned skills are practiced using the following resources:

1- Learning situations (project outcomes) and situation of integration (learners' outcomes). For example, learners may write a report on human civilization from a movie or write a programme of action to start on association of high school students.

 2- Language /knowledge content: It includes function and grammatical structures, vocabulary pronunciation, genre (such as literary, science), and writing (spelling, punctuation, cohesion…etc.).

3- Skills and strategies outcomes: It means how learners are going to behave in a learning situation such as asking questions, answering, agreeing or disagreeing with a speaker, asking for clarification; summarizing, making project plan, organizing the work, guessing the meaning of a word, giving instruction, manipulation technology etc.

4- Intercultural outcomes /social outcomes: It concerns the learners' social and intercultural behavior in a learning situation such as working in pairs or groups, sharing information, learning from others, respecting others' points of view, being tolerant and meeting deadlines.

Before dealing with evaluation, the curriculum presents the projects proposed for each stream.

2.4.1 Assessment in the Curriculum

 The last part of the curriculum deals with assessment issues. It divides assessment into three types; they are translated in the table below with their characteristics.

Type of assessment	Characteristics
Diagnostic assessment (l'évaluation diagnostique)	- Gives an overview of the knowledge and skills of students. - Occurs at the beginning of a period of learning - Measures the skills of the students coming to 3AS. - Helps in planning the work (such as revision)
Formative assessment (l'évaluation formative)	Integrated in learning and can be done at any time. Note necessarily rated Must involve students in various oral and written tasks.

	The evaluation criteria and procedure must be communicated with the learner thus; they become responsible for their own learning .He becomes aware of his progress, shortcomings, and the importance of regular and consistent work.
Formative assessment (l'évaluation formatrice)	It involves one student or more. Enable learners to know their level. It has three types:1-"la co-évaluation" (it is done by the learners and the teacher) "L'évaluation mutuelle" (peer-assessment) the learners assess each other based on the criteria proposed by the teacher. "L'auto-évaluation" (self-assessment). The student criticizes his/her own work
L'évaluation certificative ou summative (Summative assessment)	- Best known and most practiced by the school system. - Related to the official guidelines of testing - Comes at the end of a fixed period of learning - Reflects the degree of individual learning through marks. - Allows making decisions (ranking, moving, success or failure in examination Allows to certify the proficiency

Table02: Types of Assessment Included in the 3rd Year Curriculum

2.5 Assessment in the Syllabus

The syllabus contains five parts each deals with assessment. It starts with diagnostic evaluation and it is estimated to take one week for all streams. The second part takes place at the end of the five-first units. It has three parts: skills and assessment strategies, language assessment and presentation of project work. Each type of the latter is supposed to take one hour for the scientific classes. For literary classes two hours are devoted for skills and assessment. The third part is the exams occurring at the end of each semester. The last unit (unit number six) ends with "évaluation, remédiation pédagogique et exercices" estimated for four hours.

2.6 Discussion Concerning Assessment in the 3rd years' Curriculum and Syllabus

As illustrated above the 3rd year curriculum states clearly the objectives behind teaching English for 3rd year students. This curriculum is elaborated from competency based approach which gives more importance to knowing how-to-do. However, what we remark here is that the objectives are stated as declarative knowledge for example, "Apprendre à l'élève l'utilisation rationnelle de la documentation orale" (3AS Syllabus: 08) "…Renforcer la réflexion"(ibid). The latter objectives should have been declared as behavioural objectives for example "Les éléves vont apprendre comment…" (Akli 2010:67). Expressly

"Behavioural objectives take the idea of describing learning outcomes" (Richards: 2001,139 qtd in Ibid). These two different types of objectives are assessed differently. Behavioural objectives should be assessed using the performance-based approach discussed in the previous chapter.

The curriculum distinguishes four types of assessment as mentioned before: Diagnostic assessment, formative assessment, summative evaluation and "L'évaluation formatrice". The first-three mentioned types are clearly defined in either the curriculum or the literature concerning assessment. The last type, in the curriculum, is said to include "peer-assessment" "self-assessment" and "co-evaluation"; however, in the assessment literature, these types are included in formative assessment. Brown stated that "Most of our classroom assessment is formative assessment: evaluating students in the process of forming their competencies and skills with goal of helping them to continue that growth process…self- and peer-assessments are among the best formative types of assessment" (2003:6).

Analysing the curriculum reveals that it stresses the role of formative assessment "L'évaluation est un processus intégré à toute forme d'apprentissage" (3rd year curriculum:25) "Elle doit être planifiée en même temps que l'enseignement" (*Document D'Accompagne du Programme D'Anglais de 3éme Anne Secondaire*). However we remark that there are no guidelines that help the teacher in using these types of assessment. There are only definitions of the different types without explanation about assessing project works and the strategies that should be used in self- and peer –assessments.

Concerning the syllabus, assessment sections are included at the end of each unit, bearing in mind that each unit lasts for more than five weeks. Moreover, there is no reference to remedial work or enrichment activities which allows us to ask the question: what is then the purpose of this assessment? The syllabus did not take into account the slow learners who are in need of remedial work, or the good learners who need enrichment activities. In addition, in the competency-based approach teachers are supposed to develop and measure the learners' skills however the criteria for assessing skills are not mentioned in the curriculum. The only guide of assessment that third year teachers have is the examiners guide which "aims at supplying the teachers with some information and recommendations to help them prepare their pupils for the Baccalaureate English paper. It also provides useful guidelines for building Baccalaureate useful tests" (Examiners Guide: 1). Great importance is clearly given to summative assessment which is typical to traditional approaches to language teaching and assessing.

2.7 New Prospect

2.7.1 Definition

New Prospect is the title of the 3rd year text book. It complies with English syllabus for 3rd year laid out by the National Curriculum Committee of the Ministry of National Education in March 2006. It consists of six thematically based units. Each unit is divided into three main parts. The first part is the presentation of project outcome. The second part contains two sequences; each of them contains two or three sections subdivided into rubrics. Sequence one holds two parts: listen and consider and read and consider.

The second part of the unit is composed of five sections research and report, listening and speaking, reading and writing, projects and assessment. It is followed by a break containing a song or a poem.

New Prospect focuses mainly on communicative language teaching which engages learners in real communicative situations. It aims at developing the learners' competencies of interaction, interpretation, and production; its tasks are of the same type found in the Baccalaureate examination (*Teacher's Book* p10). It is worth mentioning that the project work has been omitted from the curriculum of 3rd year students in response of the slimming down of the syllabuses that the Ministry of Education has issued in July 2008. Mr. Heroin Mohamed the current inspector of English in Adrar argues, in a seminar held on 15 December 2013, that project works have been cancelled because of time constraints. He also argued that writing one essay each sequence is sufficient.

2.7.2 Assessment in New Prospect

New Prospect contains sections called assessment at the end of each unit; the entire book contains 6 sections. These parts assess both language skills and strategies. It involves two kinds of evaluation, self-assessment bearing on the functions and language components; and objective assessment bearing on the skills and strategies.

Self-assessment is implemented in the learning logs that each unit ends with. Learners are asked to show how well they perform by giving illustrative examples of the language items cheklisted in the learning log. Next, learners are asked to tick next to each item to indicate what they think their level of performance is. There are three levels provided in the learning logs: "very well", "fairly well", and "Not well", the following table is an example.

I can	Very well	Fairly well	Not well
A. uses the present continuous passive in descriptions. B. give advice to someone using modals ought to/ should, had better or their negatives C. express obligation and prohibition using must or its negative from. D. express result using so+ adjective+ that and Such+ adjective+ noun+ that. E. express hypothesis/condition using provided/ Providing that, as long as. G. asks for and gives opinion. H. express wish and regret using I wish, its high time+ Simple past. I. form opposites with prefixes dis-, il-, im-, in- etc. J. form nouns by adding suffix -ty to adjectives. K. recognizes and use stress shift in words having the same root E.g. economy → economy → economical. L. pronounce words ending in –ics correctly.	✔		

Table03: Assessment Checklist Used in the Textbook (*New Prospect*, 2006:72)

Language items included in the table have been learned during the unit. At the end, learners are asked to hand a copy of the learning log with examples on a separate page to their teachers; the aim is to inform the teacher about the learners' progress and points of weakness.

In the second part of the assessment section, learners have to answer the test handed by the teacher, each teacher has to select a suitable text from the resources portfolio and devise questions and tasks related to it. The tests are modelled on the Baccalaureate (BAC) exam samples. The aim is to make the learners acquainted with the instructions used in the BAC exam.

Learning logs are one of the basic characteristics of the learner-centered approach; they give learners the opportunity to enhance their motivation, responsibility and autonomy. On the other hand, it provides the teachers with useful information about the extent to which

their approach to teaching is suitable. However there are some remarks about their implementation in the textbook.

Every sequence in *New Prospect* starts with stating its objectives however, the objectives stated have no behavioural components as the example below illustrates.

Language outcomes
-Expressing wish and desire with wish and it's high time
-Asking for and giving advice and warning using should, ought to and better
- Making a public statement (New Prospect 2006:46).

Therefore it is not surprising that the assessment logs included at the end of the unit evaluate language components separately. This approach to language assessment, discrete-point items assessment, is traditional and does not conform to the CBA implemented in the curriculum.

Assessment sections in *New Prospects* occur at the end of each unit. Thus they are summative not formative assessment. They are not followed with remedial work for learners who still have difficulties in achieving the objectives or enrichment tasks for learners who are able to succeed in achieving the objectives. The use of self-assessment in a summative way contradicts the European instruction which uses self-assessment as a formative tool. Geeslin (2003) did not approve of using self-assessment in a summative way; he states "It is not necessary, nor advantageous, that this be the case. Evaluation should provide regular feedback, not a summative step in the instruction process but rather, an important formative part of development. (qtd in Akli 2011:146).

Moreover, assessing language items separately is an old approach to language teaching and does not correspond with the curriculum.

2.8 The Baccalaureate Exams

2.8.1 Definition

At the end of their 3rd year in the high school, Algerian learners are supposed to pass an official and national exam in all major subjects. It is designed by the National Ministry of Education and its name is the Baccalaureate (BAC) exams. The Baccalaureate exams are important because their results are going to decide whether the learners have the right to carry out university studies or not.

2.8.2 General Description

The Baccalaureate exams are written. Learners are not tested on their oral abilities. Concerning the exams of English, learners are given the opportunity to choose between two

subjects and 30mns is added to the time of the exam towards this purpose. The form, the content and the tasks of the exam aim at assessing the test takers' knowledge and skills in reading, vocabulary, grammar, functions and writing. The test paper contains two main parts. Part one is reading which has two main sections: "Comprehension" and "Text Exploration". Part two is "Written Expression" and it is counted out of 05 points whereas the first part is counted out of 15.

Comprehension and Interpretation, section A in the first part, checks the understanding of the reading passage through a number of comprehension-type tasks. The second section of this part, text exploration, tests knowledge and use of language through activities related to the reading passage or a similar topic. Its tasks test learners' on grammar, sound system, discourse, vocabulary and morphology. The table (01) in the index of Guidelines for Preparing a Baccalaureate Exam Paper, included in the index gives more details.

The written expression is considered a situation of integration. It should be meaningful, motivating, close to the learners' level, within a situation of communication and supported by some hints at guide the learners as the following table shows. The learners have the opportunity to choose between two topics in this part.

Criteria	Indicators
1.Relevance	Learner's/test takers' production aligns with requirements of a situation: *format*: a letter/ e-mail /invitation/instructions … *objective*: to inform/ to describe/to complain… *targeted language*: functional language and vocabulary
2.Semantic Coherence	Meaningful Logic in the information given Originality and development of ideas Organization : well-structured sentence &paragraph
3.Syntactic Coherence And Correct Use of Linguistic Elements	Correct use of grammar: tenses, word-order, subject-verb agreement Spelling, capitalization and punctuation
4.EXCELLENCE (Creativity + Vocabulary Wealth)	New ideas, varied vocabulary items, absence of repetitions and redundancy, legible handwriting, neatness.

Table04: Assessing Situation of Integration (*Examiner Guide* 2010: 10)

2.8.3 Analysing the Baccalaureate Exam Sheet

The questions in the BAC test paper starts with "Read the text carefully and answer the following activities". The activities that follow are mainly multiple-choice tasks. The first activity is generally for the purpose of identifying the type of discourse (descriptive, narrative…) or identify the type of text (letter, conversation…) the learners have to tick the right answer as the following examples illustrate

1- Circle the latter that corresponds to the right answer.

The text is:

a)- Narrative   **b)-** Expository   **c)-** Prescriptive

(BAC, June 2013 Literary Stream)

1- Circle the latter that corresponds to the right answer.

The text is:

a)- a newspaper article   **b)-** an extract from a book   **c)-** a website article

(BAC, June 2013 Scientific Stream)

These types of questions might be answered only through guessing, there is nothing that proves that these questions have been answered through understanding, making analyses or inferring. Thus, these types of questions are not reliable. Moreover this kind of questions is not challenging for the learners.

These tasks are normally followed with true/false questions which are used to help the learners understanding the text as exemplified below

2- Are these statements true or false? Write T or F next to the letter corresponding to the statement.
   a- Hubble space telescope retransmits pictures to astronomers
   b- NASA celebrated the twentieth anniversary of Hubble here on Earth
   c- Hubble is useful to provide NASA with necessary data.
   d- The 1985 space mission was unsuccessful

(BAC, June 2013)

True-false items do have a number of advantages. They are quickly assessed and easy to score however 50% of the items are answered correctly by random chance. The learner may answer, correctly the activity without understanding the text. This kind of activities ignores language function and problem-solving thus, they do not differ from the traditional approaches to language assessment. Author Storey said that "Only the trifler and the uniformed pretend to measure anything with the relatively invalid, unreliable and subject-to-set true-false item" (adopted in Bradfied and Moredock 1957). True-false items can be made more reliable by asking the test-takers to justify their answers; their justification is going to prove their understanding of the text. The task below is an example

2- Are these statements true or false? Justify the false ones

A-Very few students in England and Wales go to private schools.
B-In state schools, parents must pay for everything.
C-Most of the primary schools are mixed sex.
D-At the age of 11 children go to comprehensive schools or grammar schools

(BAC, June 2008).

The first part of the exam paper contains three or four selected-response items (as table 01 in the index illustrates) which are not reliable because they are subject to guessing and test only low order skills. Selected response-items are followed with "wh" questions which are of the constructed-response formats and they assess the learners' understanding of the text. Moreover, "wh" questions require the learners to construct their own responses so they give the corrector the opportunity to assess the learners' writing skills such as the adequacy of the sentence and language. Below are examples of "wh" questions adopted from BAC, 2013.

3-Read the text and answer the following questions according to the text:

a- When did Hubble telescope start to work?
b- Is the writer interested in astrology? Justify from the text.
c- Why is the Hubble telescope important?

(Scientific stream subject one)

3- Read the text and answer the following questions according to the text:

a- How many pupils attend elementary and secondary schools?
b- What has the ideal of equal opportunity brought to America?
c- Why are Americans willing to give more money to education?

(Literary stream subject one)

Section B in the first part is consisted mainly of constructed-response formats it starts with questions related to vocabulary: matching words with their definitions, matching words and their synonyms/opposites or finding synonyms/opposites in the passage as the following examples illustrate:

1- Find in the text words that are opposite in meaning to the following:

a) - disagree (§$_2$)   **b)** - illiterate (§$_3$)   **c)** - to take (§$_3$)

(BAC 2013: Literary stream)

1- Find in the text words whose definition follow:

a) - done on purpose(§$_1$)
b) - things that shock or offend people (§$_2$)
c) - lack of knowledge or education (§3)

(BAC 2013: Literary stream subject N° 02)

1- Match the words with their definitions:

Words	Definitions
1- degrees	a- money given by a government to help students
2- grants	b- Connected with skills, knowledge.
3- vocational	c- given by official decision a prize
4- awarded	d- grades given by a university to someone who has passed an examination

(BAC 2013: foreign languages)

In the first two examples the context is going to help candidates to infer the meaning of the words, if they have not encountered before. Thus they are going to rely more on thinking rather on guessing. On the other hand, the third example might be answered only through guessing thus it is not reliable. This approach to testing language out of its context is similar to the traditional approach and it is named discrete-points test (it has been explained before). The following task in the text exploration section is usually related to morphology and it is presented in a table where learners have to fill in. The following activity is an illustrative example.

2- Complete the chart as shown in the example

	Verb	Noun	Adjectives
Example	to educate	Education	educational
	……………..	Qualification	…………………………..
	…………….	………………………..	specialized
	to respect	…………………………	…………………………..

(BAC 2013: foreign languages subject 02)

In order to answer this activity, learners are going to relay on recalling what they have seen before concerning lexis and word-formation. It is a challenging activity and it is reliable however the examples given may lead learners to deduce the answer and this affects the reliability of the task (Akli 2010:107).

Concerning the sound system the tasks are in general: classifying the words according to the pronunciation of the final "s", the final "ed" or their stressed syllables as the tasks below exemplify.

4- Classify the following words according to the pronunciation of the final "s"

Colleges- qualifications-students- courses

/s/	/z/	/iz/

4- Classify the following words according to the pronunciation of the final "ed"

Borrowed- practiced-avoided- explained- pointed- worked

/t/	/d/	/id/

4- Classify the following words according to their stressed syllable

Accuse-information-honest- newspaper

1st syllable	2nd syllable	3rd syllable

In order to answer these questions, the learners have to recall phonetic items. The problem in such tasks is that even if the learners have answered correctly, it does not prove that they know the results indeed, they may only have guessed the answer, so these tasks lack reliability.

The last activity in text exploration is either filling gaps with the appropriate words or reordering the sentences to make a coherent paragraph. Examples are provided below.

5- Reorder the following sentences to make a coherent paragraph

> **a-** and then take special national examination
>
> **b-** in order to be accepted to a university
>
> **c-** During the last two years of the high school
>
> **d-** The students specialized in college preparatory courses

5- Fill in the gaps with only four words from the list

Various- listen - make- communication- events –important
Every exciting thing happens. For example, there might be a…1….meeting in
your town or a special event at your school. Journalist covers these…2…and report
them through the media. The audience can follow what is going on in...3...parts of the
world. It is important for them to…4…sure facts and accurate.

It is worth mentioning that the first activity does not tape into any kind of knowledge moreover, it is unreliable because it may be subject to guessing. Ordering the sentences is a kind of mechanical drill that was used in the behaviourist approach to language teaching. Concerning the second example, filling the gaps with words is constructed- response format; however, giving the learners a list of words to choose is going to relate it to selected-response format.

The last part of the BAC exam paper is the written expression. Candidates have to choose between a guided and an open ended topic as the examples below represent.

Choose ONE of the following topics

<u>**Topic One:**</u> Use the following notes to write a composition of 100 to 120 words on

The differences between state schools and private schools
State schools: -restricted to primary, middle, secondary sectors
                        -Free of charge
                        -Crowded classes/ hard to control
Private schools: - expensive/pay fees
                        - Less accessible/low income families
                        - Small classes/ easy to control

<u>**Topic Two:**</u> Write a composition of 100 to 120 words on the following topic:

Most Algerian companies look for profit but don't care about ethics in
    business. If you were appointed manager of one of these companies, how
    would you fight unethical practices

(BAC 2013 foreign languages)

In essay writing, candidates are supposed to combine a variety of language items such as lexis, language forms, tenses, punctuation, and spelling to express their ideas accurately on a given topic. They are going to show their communicative ability. Thus, written expression is a type of performance-based assessment (discussed in the first chapter). However, the guided-topic (like the first example given) is much easier than the open-ended task. Consequently, it is less challenging and less reliable. (Akli 2010:189).

2.9 Conclusion

This chapter has examined the means of implementing assessment in the 3rd year secondary school class i.e. its integration in the approach to language teaching, the curriculum, the syllabus and the text book. We have also examined the BAC exam sheet. Needless to say, that like all educational programmes around the world, the 3rd year programme has positive and negative aspects. Concerning assessment, the objectives of learning English are clearly stated both in the curriculum and in the textbook; however, these objectives should be restated in a way that integrates behavioural components. The curriculum should precise the manners by which formative assessment should be carried out. Project work is an important method of formative assessment; it should not be omitted. The

curriculum, also, should provide criteria for assessing language skills. The text book is approved of because it includes all forms of instructions that third year learners may encounter in their BAC exam paper. Discussing the topic of assessment only from a theoretical perspective is not sufficient. The following chapter is going to give a closer look by taking the teachers' opinion about it.

Chapter Three

3.1 Introduction

So far this research work has dealt with English language assessment from a theoretical perspective. This third chapter comprises the empirical phase it explores teachers' attitudes towards assessment and how it is carried out. It is unlikely to carry out a research work on one of the components of the teaching process without including teachers. Teachers, due to their experience, are likely to enrich this research with their impressions, opinions arguments and suggestions.

3.2 Research Aims

Assessment is an integral part in English language teaching especially within the competency- based approach. Therefore, knowing how it is carried out and its role in teaching third year classes is relevant. This study attempts to describe and explain how English language is assessed by the third year teachers in the city of Adrar. It tries to bridge the gap between the way assessment is included in the 3rd year syllabus and the way teachers perceive and implement it. In addition, it attempts to drive teachers' attention to some areas of language assessment that they might have overlook. This research work emphasises the role of assessment in the teaching and learning process in the Algerian secondary schools.

3.4. Research Procedure

This research was conducted in the form of a case study. The only research instrument used is the questionnaire. This questionnaire was introduced to all high schools teachers in Adrar city. In the city of Adrar, there are six high schools that involve twenty three teachers of English distributed according to the following table.

High school	Number of teachers
-Belkin El Tani	4
-Cheik Ben Abd Al Karim Maghili	4
-Abi Hamed Al Ghazali	4
-Khaled Ben Walid	3
-Al Mojahid Guerout Bouaalam	4
-Technicom Hakoumi Laid	4
Total Number	**23**

Table 05: Number of Teachers in the High Schools of Adrar City

Teachers' questionnaires include twenty-seven questions that investigate teacher's beliefs, beahviours, and suggestions concerning the assessment of third year classes. It is divided into two parts; the first part includes five questions seeking personal information,

whereas the second part contains twenty-two questions dealing with assessment related issues. The majority of the questions included are multiple choice questions in order to facilitate the process of answering ;however, the teachers were occasionally required to justify the motivation behind answering some of their questions. Teachers were handed the questioner that is composed of five pages and were asked to answer it at home in order to have time to think and answer objectively. The questionnaires forms were then collected, analysed and interpreted as demonstrated below.

3.5 Questionnaire Analyses and Interpretations

As mentioned before, the questionnaire includes twenty seven questions which are divided into two parts. The first part is devoted to the teachers' personal information about diploma, gender, years of experience and experience in assessment. The results are the following.

When asked about their qualification in English, all informants said that they have a Licence in English as demonstrated in the following chart.
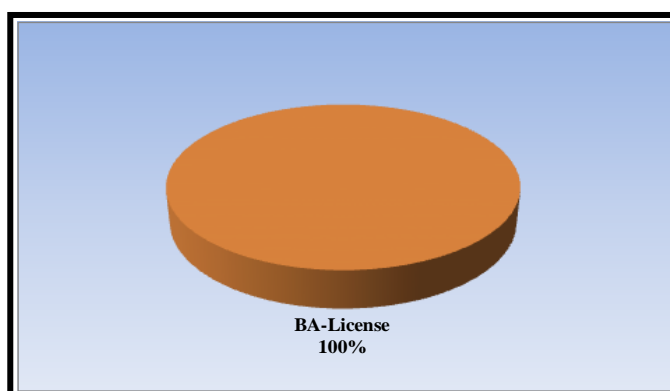
Pie-chart 1.1: Teacher's degrees (diploma)

When observing the chart we remark that all of the teachers of third year classes in Adrar city have a License in English. This is a good sign which means that our informants are qualified to teach English in the high school. The informants' answer concerning their sex is demonstrated in the chart below.

Answer	Number of Informants
Male	4
Female	19

Gender: please specify
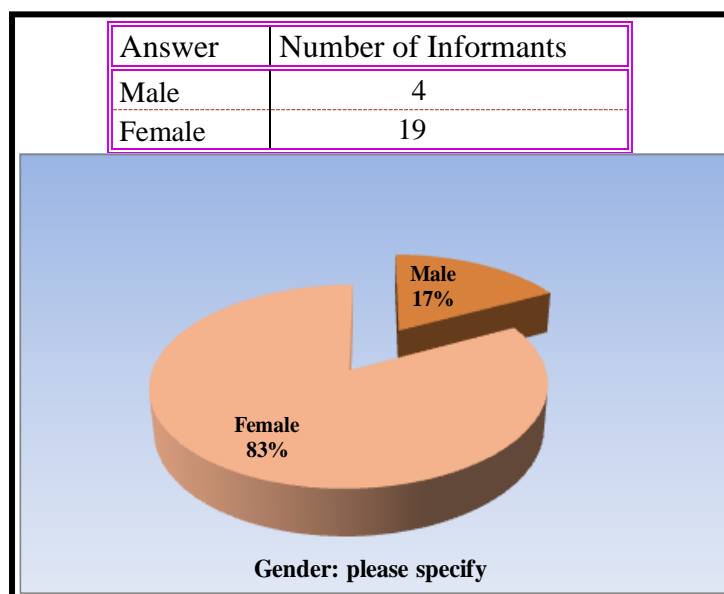
Pie-chart 1.2: Rate of Male and Female Teachers

The chart above demonstrates that analysing the questionnaire has revealed that the majority of the informants, 83% of teachers, are females while only 17% are males.

Answer	Number of Informants
Less than 5 years	5
Between 5 and 10 years	9
Between 10 and 15 years	4
More than 15 years	5

Teaching Experience: how long have you been teaching?
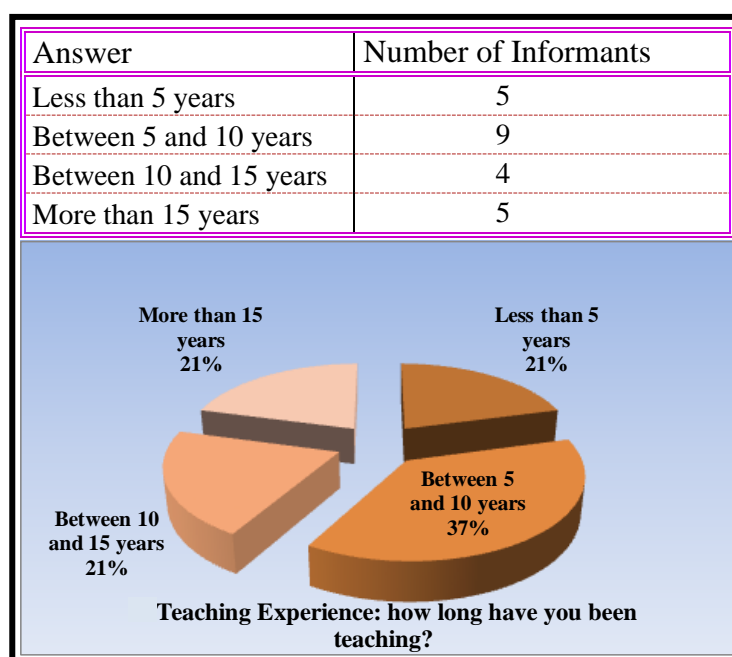
Pie-chart 1.3: Years of Experience in Teaching.

The pie-chart 1.3 above shows that 37% of the informants' years of experience are between 5 and 10 year whereas 21% of informants have an experience ranging from 1 to 5 years; this will be very helpful for us because 58% of informants have taught after the educational reform of 2002. This means that they have experienced only the competency-based approach to language teaching. 21% of informants have enough experience on the competency-based approach and the approach that precede it. The last category of teachers

can be very helpful for us because they have experienced different approaches to language teaching thus, different approach to language assessment.

The last question in the first part of the questionnaire was if the teachers had received any training in assessment, the results are as follow.

Answer	Number of Informants
Yes	14
No	9
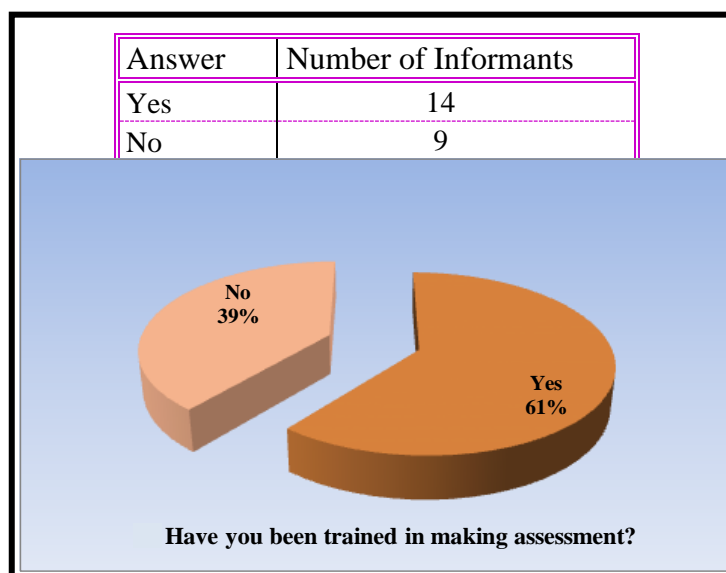
Pie-chart 1.4: Teachers' Training in Assessment

Interestingly 61% of informants answered yes and 39% have answered no, they did not receive any training concerning assessment. When asked (teachers who answered with yes) by whom they were trained 22% of the teachers said that they were trained at university whereas 78% said that they were trained by inspectors of English as it is illustrated in the chart below.

Answer	Number of Informants
Teachers at university	3
By inspectors	11
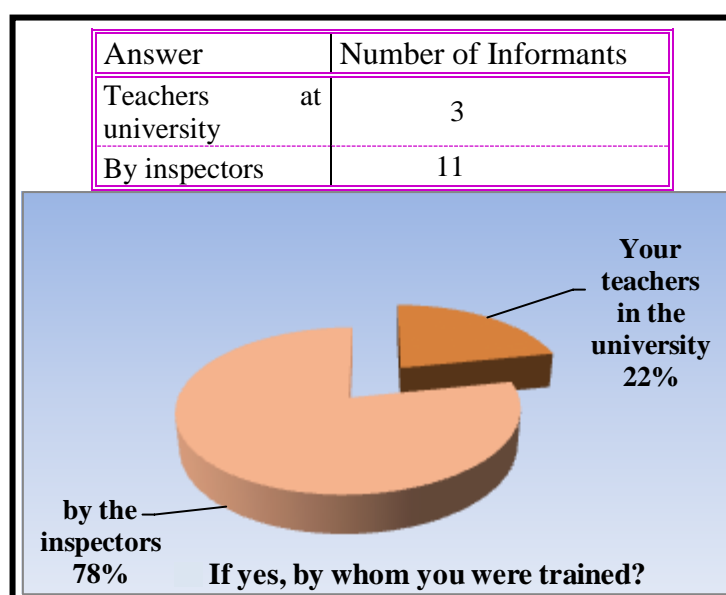
Pie-chart 1.5: University and Inspectors' Training of Teachers on Assessment

Informants also were asked if there are other people who have trained them, 10 informants said that their colleagues also have helped them.

The results show that 61% of the teachers have been trained in assessment. However we cannot ignore that 39% of the teachers can be considered as assessment illiterate. Pophan (2004 in Christine et al) and Stiggins (2002 in ibid) defined assessment literacy as an understanding of the principals of sound assessment.

Assessment literacy is crucial for language educators, both from a practical and an empirical perspective. First, English language teachers who have solid background in assessment are going to integrate it in their instruction, and this is a key feature of teaching English as a foreign language. Testing specialists argue that teachers must be able to recognize different purposes and types of assessment to use them appropriately.

Second, assessment is a widespread feature of most educational systems in the word toady researchers have found that 50% of the teachers' time is spent engaged in assessment or assessment related activities (stigagins 1995 quoted in Ibid). Thus, it is necessary for them to know as much as they can about assessment. This is going to result in increased test validity and teachers are going to be able to interpret and communicate their results more effectively to all stakeholders involved in the process.

From an empirical perspective, Rogier (2009: 2) said that every teacher is involved with assessment and testing in some form or another. "Studies have shown that assessment in the classroom is important to the instructional process (Mertler; 2003; Stiggins and Chappuis, 2005), is pivotal to student education (Popham, 2006), and that when assessment is implemented effectively student achievement is improved (Compbelle and Collins, 2007)" (Ibid: 3).

Stiggins (2007:2 in ibid) said that people who are assessment literate are able to understand the difference between sound and unsound assessment, evaluation; and communication practices. Those who are assessment literate:

✓ Understand what assessment methods to use in order to gather dependable information about students' achievement.

✓ Communicate assessment results effectively, whether using report cards grades, test scores, portfolios, or conferences, and

✓ Understand how to use assessment to maximize student motivation and learning by involving students as full partners in assessment, record keeping, and communication

<div align="right">(Christine et al 2012:2).</div>

The aforementioned assessment skills that any assessment literate teacher is supposed to master lead us to think: even if 3rd year teacher has received training in assessment to what extent this training has been beneficial and to what extent the teacher has been able to implement it in his classroom. This is going to be explored when reporting the results of the questionnaire.

Two of the twenty three informants included in this research have not taught 3rd year classes before. Thus, they could not answer the second part of the questionnaire. The second part of the questionnaire contains twenty two questions. Their aim is to explore the essential issues related to assessing 3rd year classes mainly: types of assessment used, tools used for assessment, areas of language assessed and opinions of teachers about the reliability and the validity of the English BAC exams.

Firstly teachers were asked if they think that assessment is important. As expected all of our informants said that assessment is important for their learners as it is illustrate below.

Answer	Number of Informants
Yes	21
No	00

Yes 100%

Do you think that assessing learners is important in teaching?
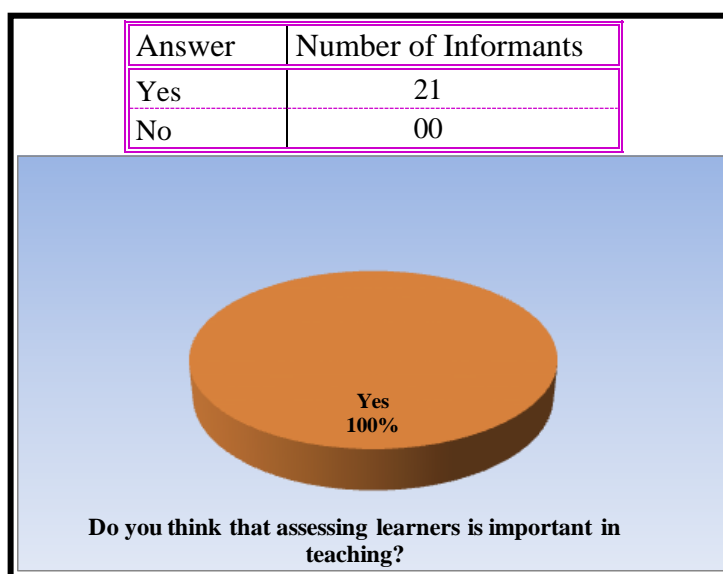
Pie-chart 2.6: Teacher's Assessment of Learners.

All teachers have answered yes when they were asked if they assess their learners. These results show that the teachers are aware of the effective role of the assessment in the teaching and learning process. When asked to justify their answers, 33% of informants said that assessment is important because it informs them about the level of the learners. In addition 33% of the informants argued that assessment can help the teacher to discover the points that their learners have not grasped yet. Therefore, it needs remedial work. Only 24% of our informants have argued that besides giving them information about their learners, assessment also is used as a feedback to teachers concerning their teaching methodology. Unfortunately, 5% of informants have decided not to answer this question.

Teachers, who are simply interested in knowing the level of their learners, are consequently giving more importance to summative assessment which does not help much in enhancing the teaching and the learning process, especially in a learner-centered approach.

Answer	Number of Informants
It informs about the level of the learners	7
To discover the points of weakness of the learners	7
A feedback to teachers	5
Did not answer	2
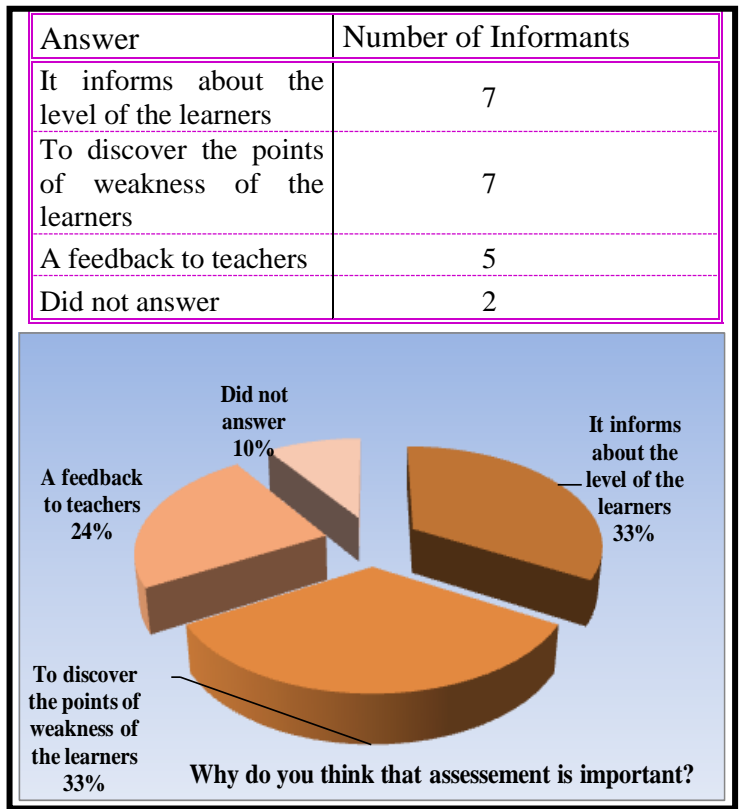
Pie-chart 2.7: Reasons behind the Importance of Assessment.

When asked which assessment tools teachers prefer, they answered as illustrated in the chart that follows

Answer	Number of Informants
Tests	15
Classroom activities	6
Project	3
Multiple tools	5
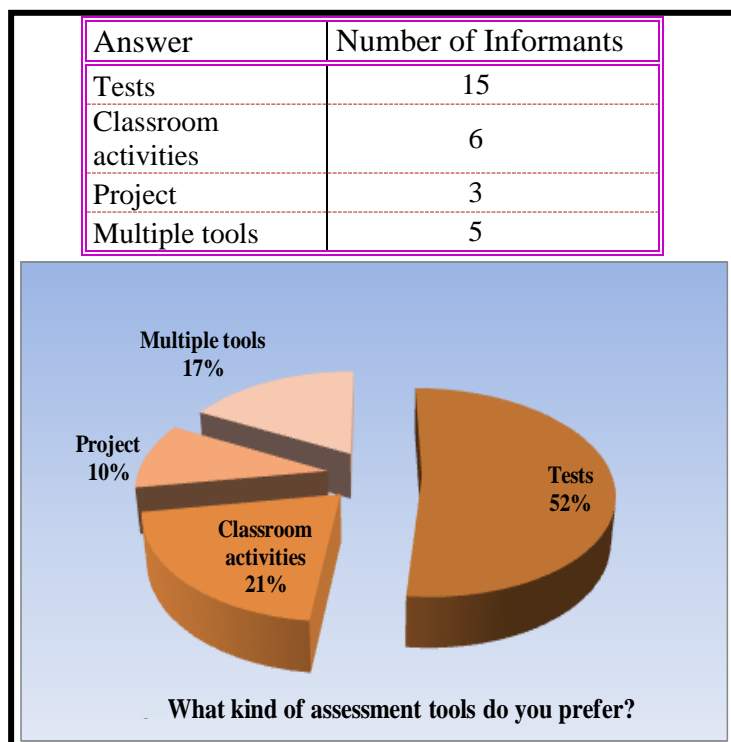
Pie-chart 2.8: Types of Assessment Preferred by Teachers.

Surprisingly, 52% of informants prefer using only tests for assessment. It is worth mentioning that sticking only to test in a learner.-centered approach is not appropriate. Tests are not the only tool of formative assessment which is the pillar of competency-based approach as illustrated in the second chapter. In the other hand, 21% of informants prefer daily classroom activities. This means that they are giving more importance to formative assessment and this is a positive aspect in assessing their learners, 17% of informants use multiple tools in assessing their learners. They think that a combination of effective means help them better in gathering data relative to their learners and its use as a unique instrument cannot reach this goal. Only few numbers of informants, 10%, prefer assessment using project work. The majority of teachers prefer tests as assessment tool. This means that they still stick to the old approach to language assessment.

When asked if they ever assign projects to their learners, teachers answered with no because it was omitted by the Ministry. When asked if they find project work beneficial and whether they want to include it, many of the informants, 57%, answered yes as the pie-chart shows.

Answer	Number of Informants
Yes	12
No	9
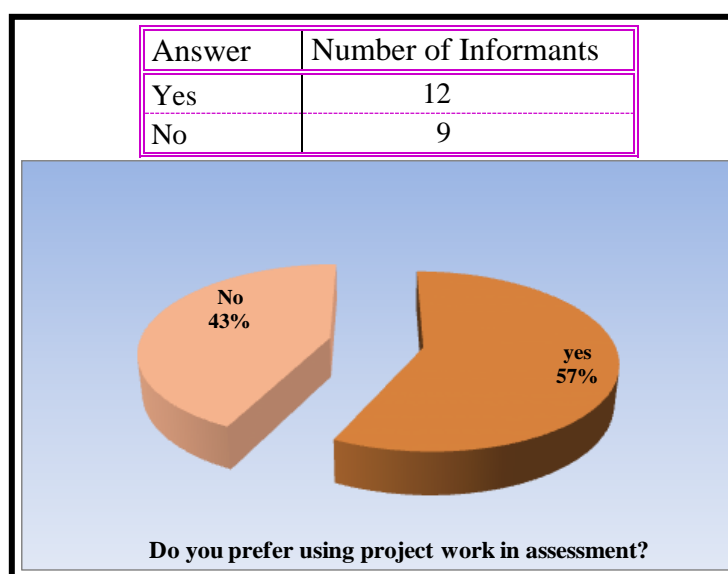
Pie-chart 2.9: Teacher's Use of Project Work.

Teachers whose answer is no argued that project works are not reliable because learners usually do not relay on themselves in accomplishing the project work. It is generally copy and paste from the internet.

When asking the teachers how many times do they assess their learners the purpose was to discover if the teachers are giving importance to formative or summative assessment the results are illustrated in the following pie-chart.

Answer	Number of Informants
In each lesson	5
Sequence	6
Unit	8
Semester	4
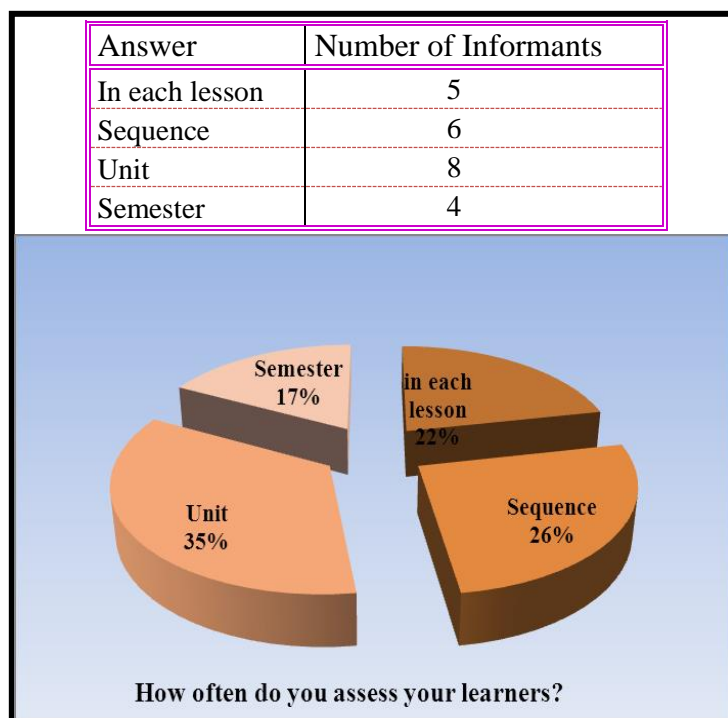
Pie-chart 2.10: Time of Assessing Learners

The questionnaire results show that 52% of the teachers focus only on summative assessments that occur at the end of each semester or unit. Focusing only on summative assessment is a traditional approach to language assessment and it does not fit the principals of the educational reform. In Algeria "evaluation is integrated into all learning processes. It determines the level of competence achieved by learning as it progresses ....evaluation may be diagnostic, formative and summative" (Translated from the curriculum of the 3rd year classes: 25).

Thus, teachers need to include all types of assessment while teaching. When making use of formative assessment teachers; through remedial work, can help learners achieve good results in achievement tests. Moreover, formative assessment helps teachers in improving their approaches by discovering the approaches that better fit their learners. Only 48% of informants recognize the importance of formative assessment and apply it in the classroom with different frequencies 22% assess their learners each lesson whereas the majority (26%) assess their learners each sequence.

When asked if they use the assessment results in designing their courses, 89% answered with yes and 11% answered with no. This result can be considered satisfactory however, when asked how many times they use assessment results in designing their courses the majority of teachers answered with sometimes. The charts below illustrate these results.

Answer	Number of Informants
Yes	17
No	2

No
11%

Yes
89%

Do you use the assessment results in designing your courses?
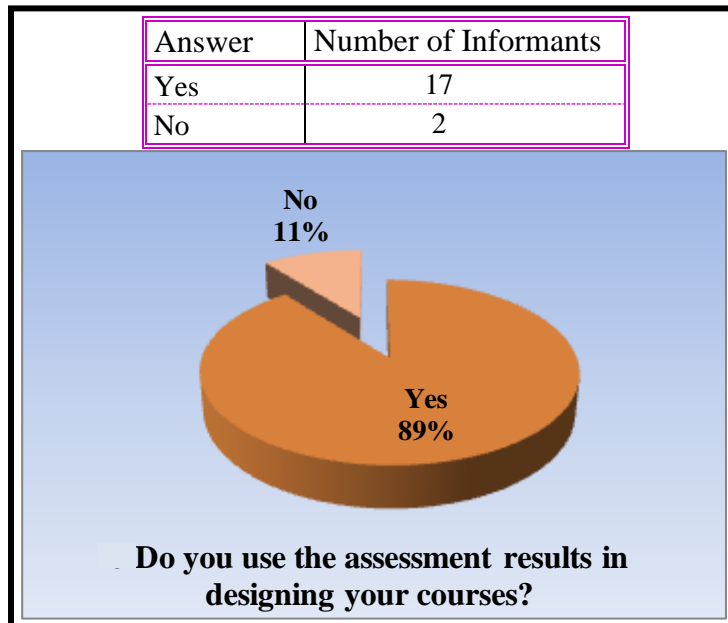
Pie-chart 2.11: using assessment results in designing courses

Answer	Number of Informants
Anlways	7
Sometimes	10
Rarely	00
Never	1

never
5%

Anlways
39%

Sometimes
56%

How often do you use assessment results in designing your courses?
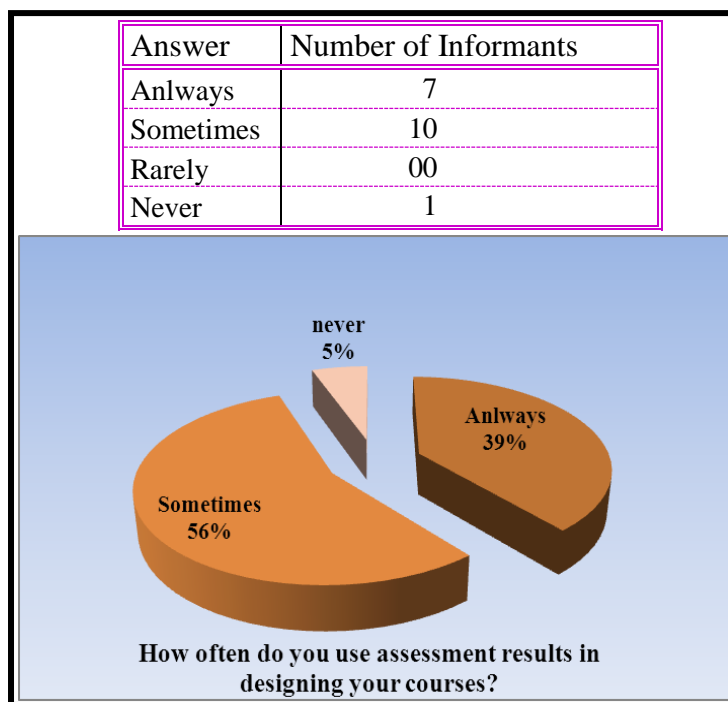
Pie-chart 2.12: The Frequency of Using Assessment Results in Designing Courses

When asked if they have found the instructions concerning assessment included in the syllabus satisfactory, the majority of informants said no as the chart blow demonstrates. Teachers did not approve of the assessment sections included in the syllabus for different reasons.

Answer	Number of Informants
Yes	6
No	14

Do you find the instructions concerning assessment included in the syllabus satisfactory?
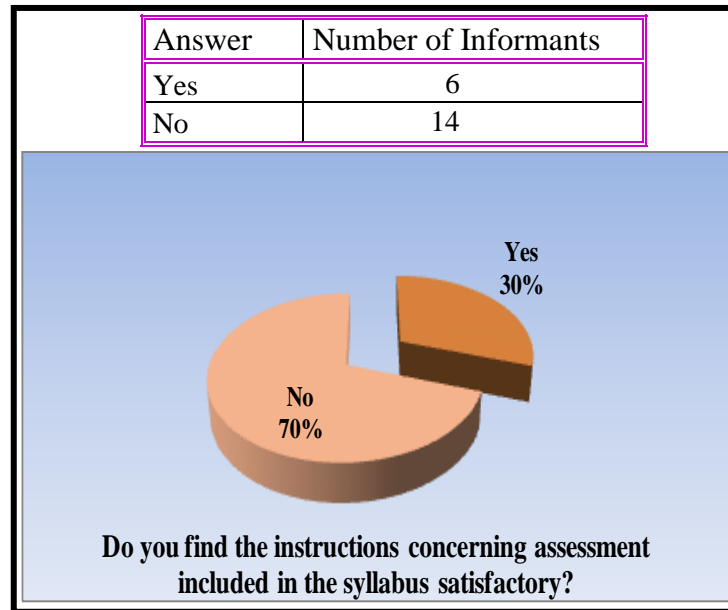
Pie-chart 2.13: Instructions in the Syllabus

Some informants argue that these instructions are not enough, not sufficient for elaborating lessons and there are always problems in assessing the learners. Others think that these instructions are satisfactory because they are well set, and they do not have problems in designing subject to learners and scoring them. One of the informants did not answer this question.

Teachers were asked if they have found the assessment sections included at the end of each unit in the course-book beneficial. Some informants (38%) answered with yes whereas the same number of informants said that they don't know because they have not given it attention before. Only 24% of the people questioned have said that these sections are not beneficial as illustrated below.

Answer	Number of Informants
Yes	8
Do not know	4
No	5

No
24%

Yes
38%

Do not know
38%

Do you find the assessment sections included at the end of each unit in the course book beneficial?
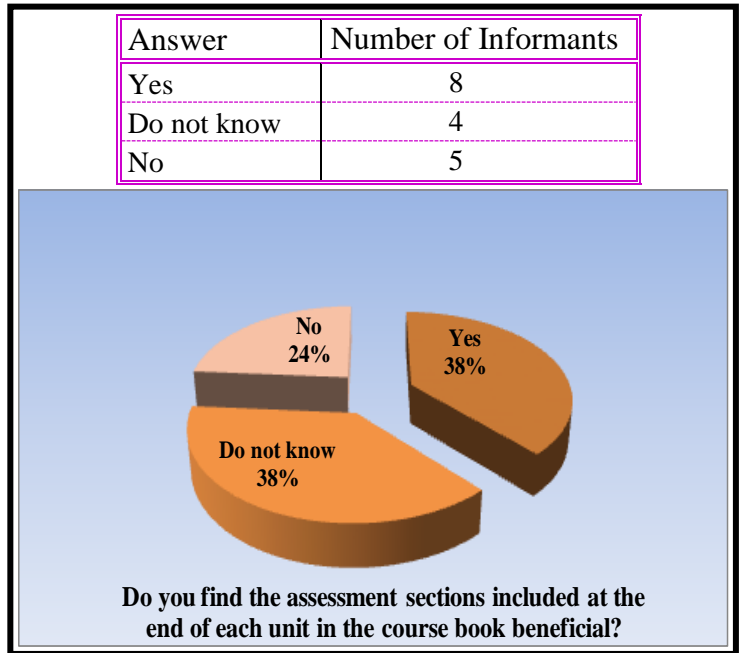
Pie-chart 2.14: Instructions in the Course Book

The questionnaire results reveal that 55% of the informants think that peer assessment is important whereas 45% argue that it is not important. Surprisingly, 45% of the teachers ignore the fact that peer assessment is the cornerstone of the curriculum that they are teaching is not a result that can be neglected. Teachers are in desperate need of training on assessment principles and methods to be able to carry out their job effectively. The chart below represents the results found.

Answer	Number of Informants
Yes	11
No	9

No
45%

Yes
55%

Do you think that peer assessment is important in teaching?
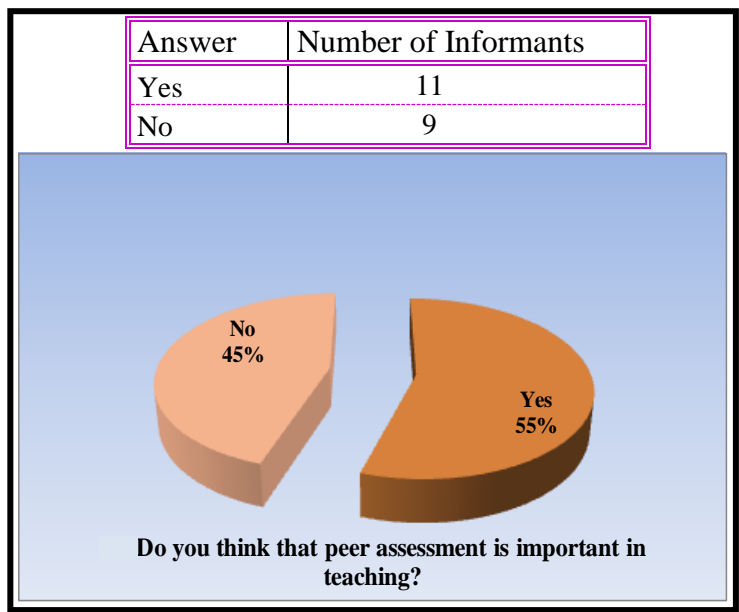
Pie-chart 2.15: The Importance of peer Assessment

When asked if they encourage their learners to assess each other the majority of teachers said no as the chart below demonstrate. This question has confirmed that teachers ignore the important role of peer assessment in the teaching and learning process.

Answer	Number of Informants
Yes	7
No	13

Do you encourage your learners to assess each other (peer assessment)?
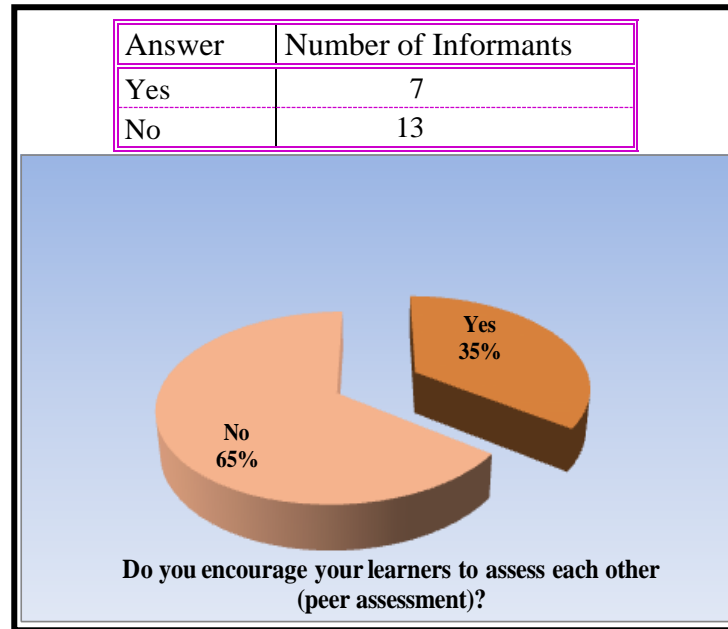
Pie-chart 2.16: Teachers' Encouragement of Peer Assessment

To discover the relevance of self –assessment in 3rd year classes in the city of Adrar, teachers were asked if self –assessment is important. Interestingly, 81% answered yes as the chart below presents.

Answer	Number of Informants
Yes	21

Do you think that learners' self-assessment is important in teaching?
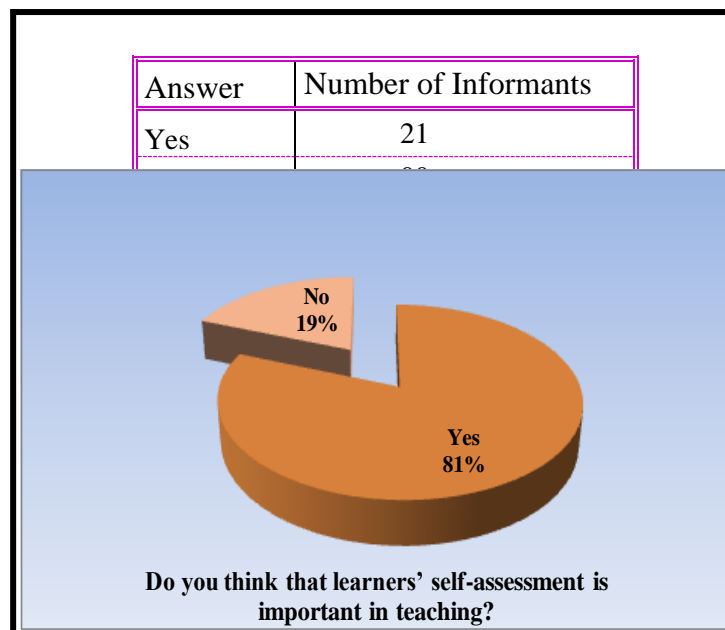
Pie-chart 2.17: the importance of self-assessment

This result shows that English language teachers are aware of the importance of self-assessment. In addition, the results show that 57% of teachers of English language in high schools help their learners by suggesting strategies of self-assessment as the chart below present.

Answer	Number of Informants
Yes	12
No	9
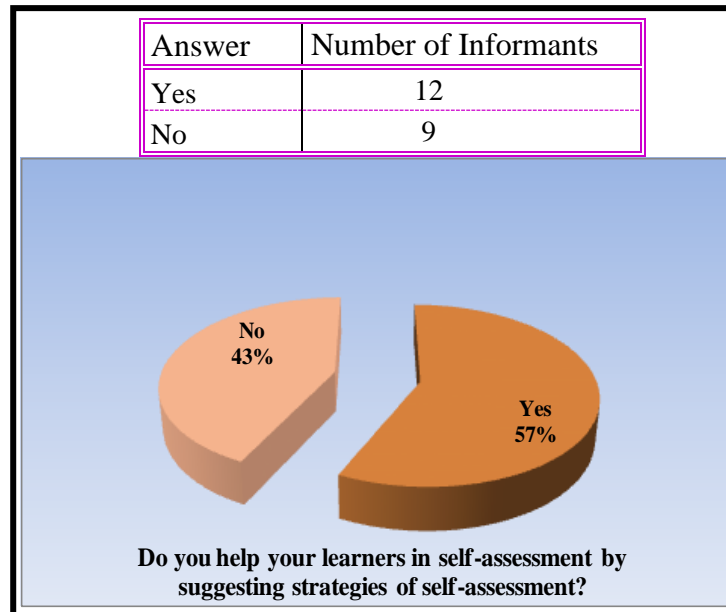
Pie-chart 2.18: Teachers' Encouragement of Self –Assessment

When asked to justify why self-assessment is important only 47% (out of 80%) of informants have answered. They said that self-assessment helps learners to discover their own errors. Thus, they will always recall their self-correction. Moreover, learners will know their level and this is helpful. Some teachers said that they encourage self-assessment outside the classroom because there is no time inside the classroom. Other teachers argue that learners are not capable to assess themselves because they do not have the necessary strategies.

When asked if they encourage their learners to tick in the assessment check list included at the end of each unit, the majority answered no as illustrated below.

Answer	Number of Informants
Yes	8
No	13
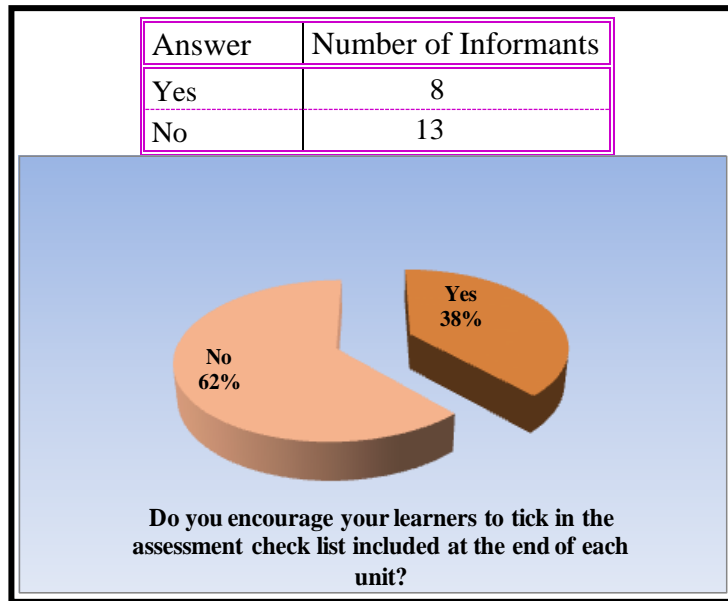
Pie-chart 2.19: Assessment Cheek List Included at the End of Each Unit

Moreover, only 9% of teachers who encourage their learners to tick on the assessment check list do that frequently as illustrated below.

Answer	Number of Informants
Anlways	1
Sometimes	2
Rarely	3
Never	4
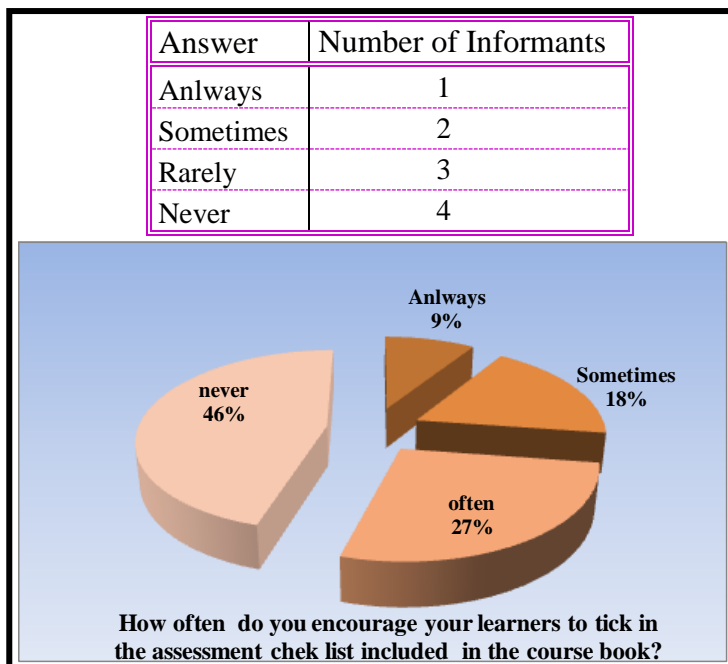
Pie-chart 2.20: Frequency of Making Use of the Assessment Check List

When asked to justify their answer, 50% of informants said that they do not think giving learners the opportunity to tick in the assessment check list is important. Some teachers, 35% said that there is no time for such activities and 15% said that the assessment check list is useless.

Answer	Number of Informants
Not Important	10
Time Not Sufficient	7
Not Beneficial	4

Not Beneficial
19%

Time Not
Sufficient
33%

Not
Important
48%

Justify your answer?
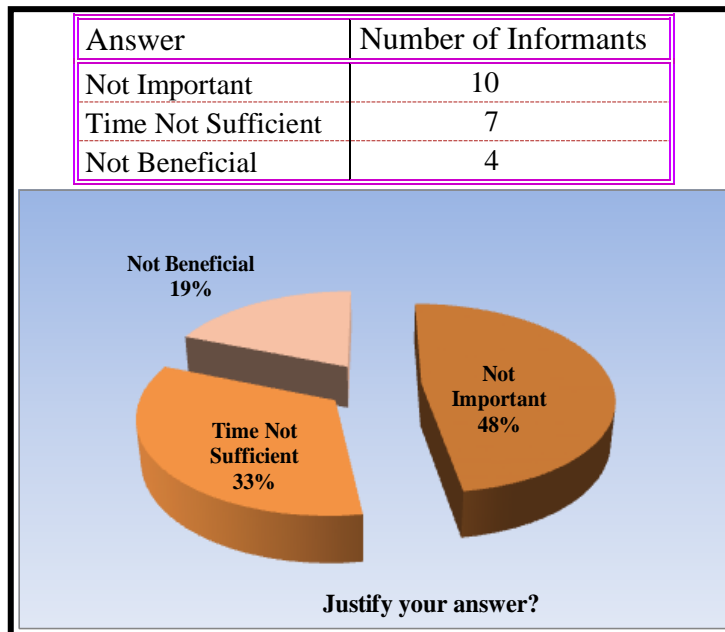
Pie-chart 2.21: Teachers' Opinion on The Assessment Check List Occurring in the Text Book.

In order to discover if the teachers give importance to developing the learners' skills they were asked to tick in the box the area of language that they think that their learners need to learn more. Their answers are presented in the following pie-chart

Answer	Number of Informants
Grammar	11
Pronunciation	13
Listening	12
Reading	14
Vocabulary	11
Communication	11
Speaking	12
Writing	20

Grammar
11%

Writing
19%

Pronunciatio
n
12%

Speaking
12%

Listening
11%

Reading
13%

Communicati
on
11%

Vocabulary
11%

In which area if language do you think learners need to learn more?
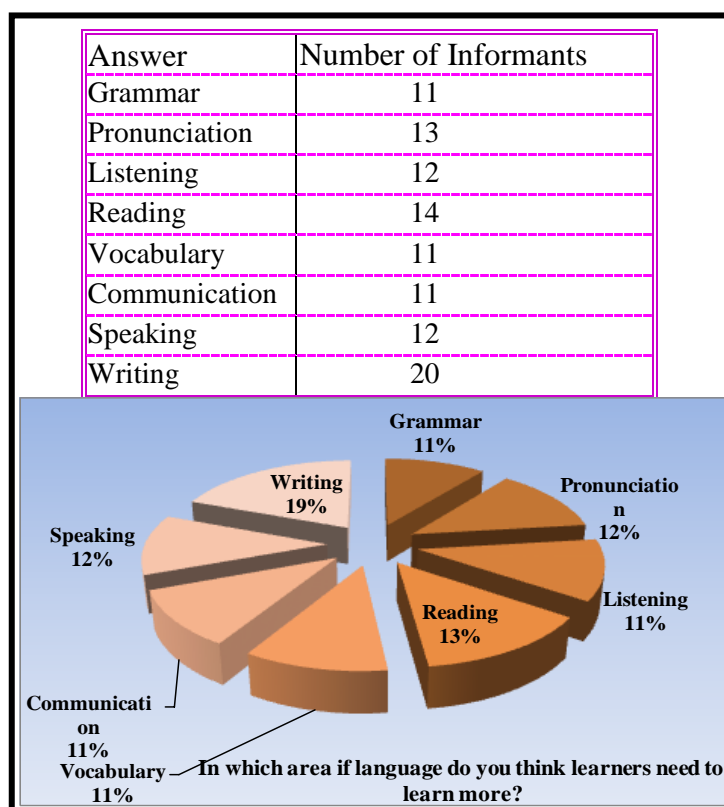
Pie-chart 2.22: Areas' of Language Given More Importance by Teachers.

The results show that teachers give more importance to developing the learners' language skills. Writing was given 19% of the teachers' interest, reading 13%, speaking 12%, listening 12%, communication 11% and finally grammar and vocabulary 11%. On the other hand, when the teachers where asked in which area of language they think that their learners need to be assessed, vocabulary and grammar were given advantage over pronunciation and listening as the chart below exhibits.

Answer	Number of Informants
Grammar	12
Pronunciation	4
Listening	5
Reading	11
Vocabulary	10
Communication	6
Speaking	7
Writing	15
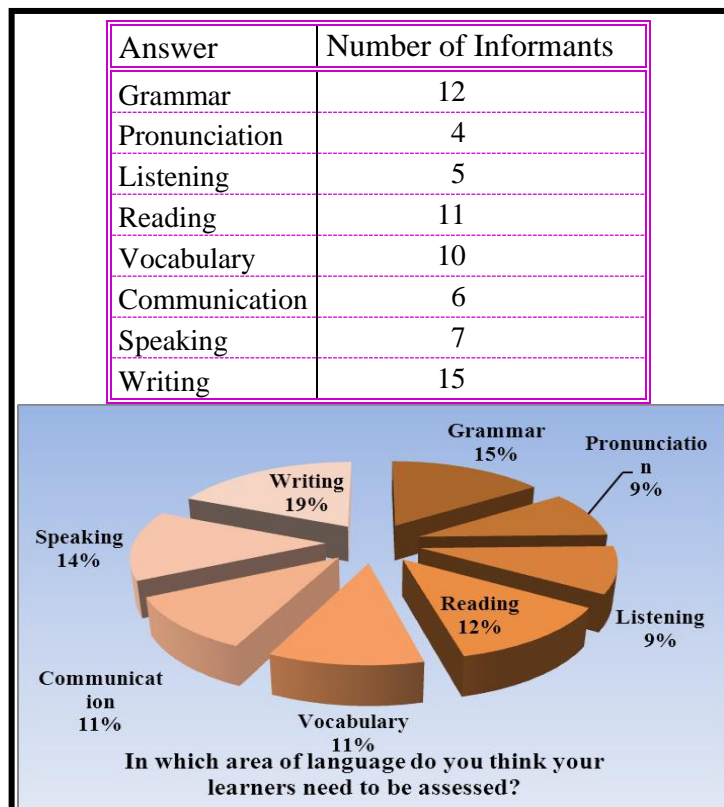
Pie-chart 2.23: Area of Language Teachers Prefer to Assess.

The chart above reveals that teachers give great importance to primary skills whether in teaching or assessing. Writing was given 21% and reading 16%. Primary skills are very important but they should not be developed at the extent of listening and speaking. Giving importance to grammar and vocabulary over communication reveals that teachers are more concerned with accuracy which makes them gravitate more towards the traditional approach to language teaching.

When asked if they like designing subjects to their learners, all informants answered yes as we can see in the chart below.

Answer	Number of Informants
Yes	21
No	00

Yes
100%

Do you like designing subjects to your learners?
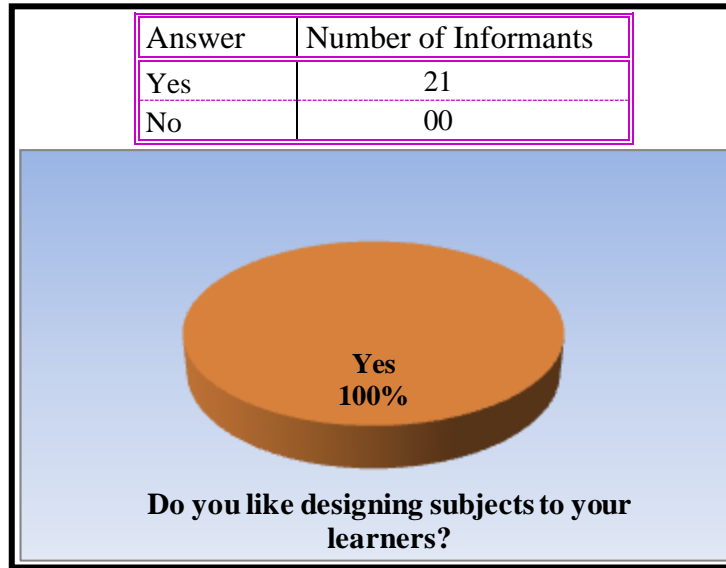
Pie-chart 2.24: Teachers' Interest in Designing Tests.

When the teachers were asked to justify their answers five did not answer and the restgave different reasons. Some said that they like to evaluate their work (teaching) through evaluating their learners, some said that the teacher knows his learners so his is the most suitable person for assessing them, others said that they like designing subjects only because it is their duty.

Teachers then were asked if the Baccalaureate tests are reliable. Surprisingly, the majority of teachers think that the BAC exams are reliable as the chart below demonstrates. When asked to justify 42% of informants did not answer. Some teachers said that they are reliable because they are well set and learners are trained in such kinds of questions. Others said that the BAC tests are not reliable because learners are going to be stressed.

Answer	Number of Informants
Yes	14
No	4

No
22%

Yes
78%

Do you think that the Baccalaureate tests are reliable? (Reliability refers to the extent to which assessments are consistent i.e. there are no difference whether a student takes the assessment in the morning or afternoon; one day or the next…etc.)
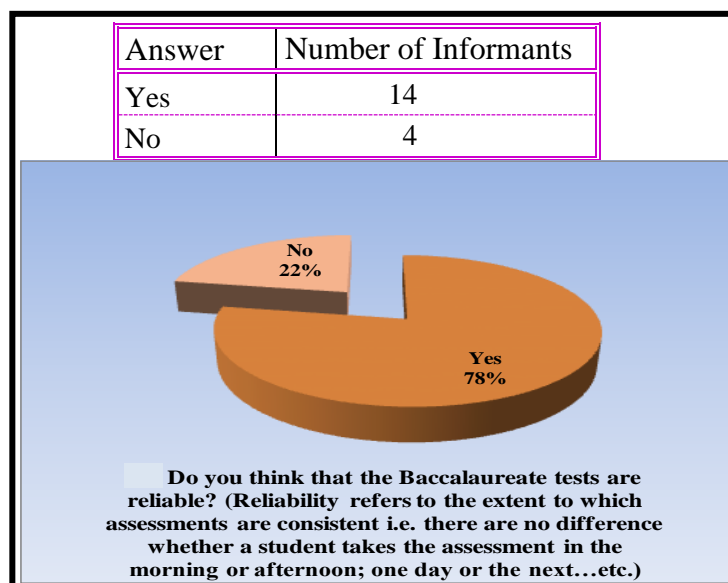
Pie-chart 2.25: The Reliability of the BAC Tests.

Teachers were given another question related to the BAC tests; they were asked if it is valid. Three informants did not answer but the said that the BAC tests are valid as it is illustrated below.

Answer	Number of Informants
Yes	12
No	6
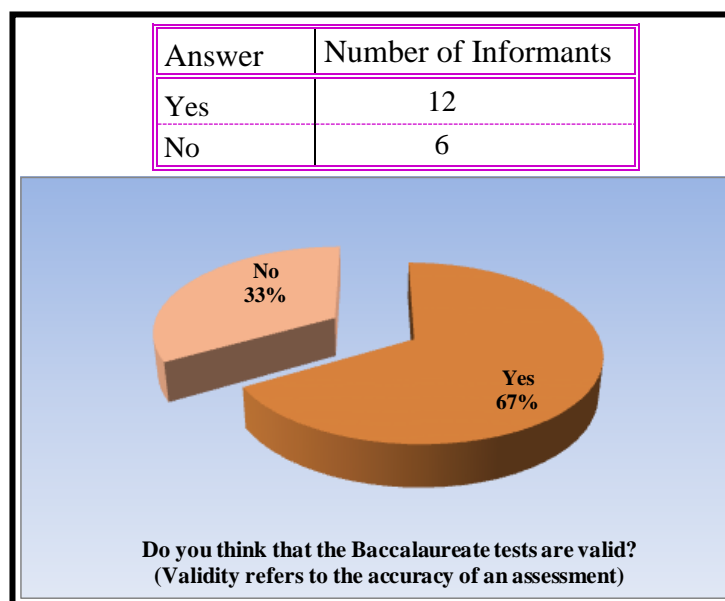
Pie-chart 2.26: The Validity of the BAC Tests.

When asked to justify their answers 42% of the informants did not answer. One group among informants said that the BAC tests are valid because they are set according to instructions and guidelines that are valid and well-studied. The second group of informants said that the BAC tests are not valid because they are not well-designed, do not cover the entire syllabus, don't measure all the skills, very easy and are not challenging.

A test is said to be valid when it measures what it says it measures. In other words, test what you teach, how you teach. From examining the BAC test paper we have discovered that it is mainly composed of discreet-points items and multiple-choice formats. It does not reflect the competency-based approach implemented in the curriculum. Moreover, the BAC test does not assess the learners' speaking and listening abilities

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter has been designed to include and describe the empirical phase of this study. It has examined how assessment is perceived and implemented by some High school teachers in Adrar. It is worth mentioning that these teachers show great deal of awareness and willingness to change assessment behaviours towards more reliable methods despite the lack of training that they suffer from. Any teacher is able to learn how to construct reliable valid assessment tools. All what they need is training and experience. Training in how to assess students' performance should be through conferencing, reading and learning logs,

performance of tasks and portfolios. They also need training on cooperative learning and team evaluation. Aderson and Clapham (1995) said that "the construction of class-based tests requires less specialist knowledge and is related for more closely to the devising of class exercises" (Quoted in Kassim Shaaban 2001: 3).

General Conclusion

Assessment is a fundamental part of teaching and learning; it helps in providing an image of the learners' progress, achievements and to identify the next steps in learning. The present research has dealt with assessing English language in the Algerian 3rdyear secondary school classes. The first chapter addressed assessment from a theoretical perspective defining different measurement terms, assessment types, testing, approaches to language testing and the measures of effective tests. Understanding the principles of sound assessment is beneficial; therefore it is regrettable that there are no programs that provide teachers with the necessary theoretical bases and training in English language assessment. Such kind of training helps teachers in making assessment a positive contributor to the teaching/learning process.

The second chapter analyses how assessment is implemented in the three most important components of any educational program i.e. the curriculum, the text book and the BAC exams. The analyses uncover positive aspects and drawbacks that show important facts related to assessing third year secondary school classes.

The curriculum states clear objectives and stresses the importance of assessment especially formative one in teaching and learning; it has also defined the different types of assessment; however it does not include any hint about how formative assessment should be carried out. Moreover, the curriculum encourages developing the learner's skills without providing guidelines or a grading system that help teachers in achieving these objectives. The assessment sections that are included in the syllabus occur at the end of each unit and are not followed with remedial work which means that they have a summative nature, this type of assessment is not much helping for teachers and learners.

The text-book includes self and peer-assessments. This can be a positive aspect however self-assessment is adopted in the American way, at the end of each unit, this type of assessment is not approved of and it has as a summative nature. The learner's log contains discrete-points and does not assess learners' skills.

The BAC exams are generally praised for including only the instructions that learners are used to however, the majority of its activities are selected response formats which are subject to guessing and cannot be entirely reliable. It also assesses language separately and out of its context which contradicts the CBA which aims at preparing learners to use language in real life situations. Thus, BAC tests cannot be valid because they do not measure what they are supposed to measure.

Competency based approach has been adopted in Algeria. It stresses the role of formative assessment. Thus, assessment procedures cannot be separated from the teaching/learning processes. It should be an integral part of the instruction process. Teachers can alter their assessment approach by using assessment as source of information both for themselves and for learners; they should follow assessment with corrective instruction and giving learners second chances for remedial work.

Tests and exams should reflect the teaching approaches, teaching methods, teaching materials and the teaching objectives. Algerian learners should have performance-based assessment; it is going to help them in developing their skills. Assessment based mainly on discrete-points items and selected-response test formats are no longer appropriate for the objectives of the 3rd year curriculum. In addition, Baccalaureate exams should include tests designed for assessing learners' speaking and listening skills. Because they are important in communication and including them in the BAC exam is going to enhance the learners' motivation for studying them.

The Algerian educational system, as it has shifted to learner-centered culture, is supposed to move to an assessment culture. The teacher should not be considered as the only one responsible for learner's assessment. He may benefit from involving his colleagues and students. Making use of multiple assessment tools also can be very helpful.

To conclude, assessment is a powerful tool that aims at improving both the teaching and the learning process; it should be well manipulated by stakeholders. This can occur by setting clear objectives, gathering information about learners, and providing constructive and corrective classroom instruction.

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Appendices

Appendix 01

Teacher's questionnaire

QUESTIONNAIRE INTENDED FOR TEACHERS OF ENGLISH IN THE   SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF ADRAR CITY

Dear Colleague,

Carrying out a survey for my master dissertation on the students of the 3rd year classes. I call upon your help and your teaching experience. You are kindly requested to answer the following questionnaire related to the teaching and the assessment of your learners of *3rd year classes*. Please tick the appropriate box (✔) or make full statements when necessary. Feel free to add any comment.

Mrs. Djelaila Selwa

I-Personal Information

1- Qualification: do you have?

B-A license ☐

ITU ☐

PEM ☐

2- Gender: please specify

Male ☐

Female ☐

3- Teaching Experience: how long have you been teaching?

Less than 5 years ☐   Between 10 and 15 years ☐

Between 5 and 10 years ☐   More than 15 years ☐

4- Have you been trained in making assessment?   Yes ☐   No ☐

6- If yes, by whom you were trained?

Your teachers in the university ☐   by the inspectors ☐

- If there are other answers, please, write them here

……..

II-Questions Related to 3rdYear Classes

1-Do you think that assessing learners is important in teaching? Yes [ ]   No [ ]

Please, justify your answer

……………………………………………………...

....

....

2-Do you assess your learners?   Yes [ ]   No [ ]

3- What kind of assessment tools do you prefer?

Tests [ ]   Classroom activities [ ]   Project [ ]   Multiple tools [ ]

Please, justify your answer

………………………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………

4- Do you assign projects to your learners?   Yes [ ]   No [ ]

Please, justify your answer

………………………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………

5- Do you think that project work is beneficial?

Please, justify your answer

………………………………………………………………………………………………

6- How many times do you assess your learners?

In each lesson [ ]   Sequence [ ]   Unit [ ]   Semester [ ]

7-Do you use the assessment results in designing your courses?

Yes ☐   No ☐

 8- How often?

    Always ☐   Sometimes ☐   rarely ☐   never ☐

Please, justify your

answer:………………………………………………………………………………………….

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………

9-Do you find the instructions concerning assessment included in the syllabus satisfactory?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

- Please, justify your answer

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………

10- Do you find the assessment sections included at the end of each unit in the course book

beneficial?

   Yes ☐   do not know ☐   No ☐

11- Do you think that peer assessment is important in teaching?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

-Justify

your…………………………………………………………………………………………

…….

12- Do you encourage your learners to assess each other (peer assessment)?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

- Please, justify your answer

…...
....
....
....

13- How many times do you give your learners the opportunity to assess each other?

In each lesson ☐   Sequence ☐   Unit ☐   Semester ☐   Never ☐

14- Do you think that learners' self-assessment is important in teaching?

Yes ☐   No ☐

15- Do you encourage your learners to assess themselves (self-assessment)?

Yes ☐   No ☐

- Please, justify your answer

…...
....
....
....

16- Do you encourage your learners to tick in the assessment check list included at the end of each unit?

Yes ☐   No ☐

17- How often?

Always ☐   Sometimes ☐   often ☐   rarely ☐

Please, justify your answer

……………………………………………...
....
....

18-In which area of language you think your learners need to learn more?

Grammar ☐   Pronunciation ☐   Listening ☐   Reading ☐

Vocabulary ☐   Communication ☐   Speaking ☐   Writing ☐

19- In which area of language you think your learners need to be assessed?

Grammar ☐   Pronunciation ☐   Listening ☐   Reading ☐

Vocabulary ☐   Communication ☐   Speaking ☐   Writing ☐

20-Do you like designing subjects to your learners? Yes ☐   No ☐

Please, justify your answer

……………………………………………...

....

....

21- Do you think that the Baccalaureate tests are reliable? (Reliability refers to the extent to which assessments are consistent i.e. there are no difference whether a student takes the assessment in the morning or afternoon; one day or the next…etc.)   Yes ☐   No ☐

- Please, justify your answer

…...

....

....

....

21- Do you think that the Baccalaureate tests are valid? (Validity refers to the accuracy of an assessment i.e. whether or not it measures what it is supposed to measure. For example, let's imagine a bathroom scale that consistently tells you that you weigh 130 pounds. The reliability 'consistency' of this scale is very good, but it is not accurate 'valid' because you actually weigh 145 pounds)

                Yes ☐   No ☐

- Please, justify your answer

…...

....

....

22-What do you propose to improve assessment of English in the 3rdyear secondary schools in

Algeria?..

....

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………

- If you have any additional comment, please write it.

....

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR COLLABORATION**

Appendix 02

PARTS OF BAC PAPER	TYPOLOGY OF TASKS	TYPICAL INSTRUCTIONS	OBSERVATIONS	TEXT LENGTH & NUMBER OF TASKS		
				L.E	L & philo	Sc.exp/ M/ TM/G.E
PART ONE Reading **A. Comprehension/ Interpretation LE-LP 07 points Sc-Exp-M-TM-GE 08 points**		**Read the text carefully and do the activities.**	This instruction is to be put above the text.			
	.choosing/giving the general idea of the text	.Choose/give the general idea of the text.	Giving(for L..E only)	Text of 200-250 Words	Text of 180-200 Words	Text of 120-180 Words
	.answering MCQ	.Write the letter which corresponds to the right answer.				
	.T/F statements	.are these statements true or false? write T or F next to the letter corresponding to the statement .				
	.locating the right paragraph	.In which paragraph is it mentioned that…?				
	.Filling a table with information from the text.	.Fill in the following table.				
	.putting ideas in the right order according to their occurrence in the text.	.read the text and put the following sentences in the order they appear in the text.				
	.answering comprehension questions.	.Answer the following questions according to the text.		5 to6 different activities	4 to5 different activities	4 to5 different activities
	.choosing /giving a title to the text.	.Copy the title you think is the most appropriate/give a title to the text.	Giving(for L.E only)			
	.identifying type of discourse.	Circle the letter that corresponds to the right answer. The text is: a)descriptive, b)narrative…				
	.identifying type of text.	Circle the letter that corresponds to the right answer. the text is : a(a letter, a conversation)…				
	.Cohesive markers	.Who/what do the underlined words refer to in the text?				

Appendix 02

PARTS OF BAC PAPER	TYPOLOGY OF TASKS	TYPICAL INSTRUCTIONS	OBSERVATIONS	TEXT LENGTH & NUMBER OF TASKS		
B. Text Exploration **L.E- 07 points** **L.P- 08 points** **Sc-Exp-M-TM-GE : 07points**	.Matching words from the text with their definitions.	.match words and definitions.	**Lexical items essential for the understanding of the text and those likely to be used in written expression should be included in the activities.**			
	.Finding words in the text whose definitions are given	.find in the text words whose definitions follow.				
1.Vocabulary and Morphology	.Matching words and their synonyms/opposites.	.Match words and their synonyms/opposites.				
	.Finding synonyms/opposites in the passage.	.Find in the text words that are synonyms/opposites to the following.		**05 Activities** 1from each:	**05 Activities** 1from each:	**05 Activities** 1from each:
	.Deriving nouns/adjectives/ verbs from words in the text.	.Complete the chart as shown in the example.		-voc1 -morpho1	-voc1 morpho1	-voc1 morpho1
	.Giving opposites to words in the text keeping the same root.	.Give the opposites of the following words keeping the same root.		-gram1 Sound sy1	-gram1 Sound sy1	-gram1 Sound sy1
	.Dividing words into roots and affixes.	.classify the following words in the table.		Discour1	Discour1	Discour1

Appendix 02

PARTS OF BAC PAPER	TYPOLOGY OF TASKS	TYPICAL INSTRUCTIONS	OBSERVATIONS	TEXT LENGTH & NUMBER OF TASKS		
2.Grammar	combining statements with connectors provided.	Connect each pair of sentences with one of the words given. Make changes where necessary.				
	Asking questions to the underlined words.	Ask the questions which the underlined words answer.	**The activities must cover a variety of grammar points and should not be limited to reported speech, conditionals or active/ passive voice.**			
	Paraphrasing with prompts given.	Rewrite sentence B so that it means the same as sentence A.				
	Supplying the correct form(s) of the verbs in a given passage.	Give the correct form(s)of the verbs in brackets.	**Give a short passage, not unrelated sentences.**			

Appendix 02

PARTS OF BAC PAPER	TYPOLOGY OF TASKS	TYPICAL INSTRUCTIONS	OBSERVATIONS	TEXT LENGTH & NUMBER OF TASKS		
3.Sound system	Matching pairs that rhyme.	Match pairs that rhyme.				
	Classifying words according to final **'ed'** or **'s**	Classify the following words according to the pronunciation of the final**'ed'** or **'s'**.				
	Underlining the silent letter in a word.	Underline or write the silent letter in each of the following words				
	Stress pattern.	Classify the words according to their stressed syllable .				
	Number of syllables.	Classify the words according to the number of their syllables.				

Appendix 02

PARTS OF BAC PAPER	TYPOLOGY OF TASKS	TYPICAL INSTRUCTIONS	OBSERVATIONS	TEXT LENGTH & NUMBER OF TASKS		
4.Discourse	Filling gaps with a number of words.	Fill in the gaps with words from the list.	**The activities suggested in Discourse should be conducive to the written expression.**			
	Matching statements from column A with statements from column B.	Match statements from column A with statements from column B.				
	Re-ordering scrambled sentences into a passage.	Re-order the following sentences to make a coherent passage.				
	Dialogue completion.	Imagine what **A/B** says and complete the following dialogue.				

Appendix 02

PARTS OF BAC PAPER	TYPOLOGY OF TASKS	TYPICAL INSTRUCTIONS	OBSERVATIONS	TEXT LENGTH & NUMBER OF TASKS		
PART TWO **Written** **Expression** **L.E-06points** **L.P-05points** **Sc-Exp-M-TM-GE** **05 points**	Choose ONE of the following topics:	Topic one Topic two	**One: Should be thematically related to the topic of the initial text.** **TWO: thematically related to other themes of the syllabus**			

الجمهورية الجزائرية الديمقراطية الشعبية

الديوان الوطني للامتحانات والمسابقات

دورة: جوان 2013

وزارة التربية الوطنية

امتحان بكالوريا التعليم الثانوي

الشعبة: آداب وفلسفة

المــدة: 02 سا و30 د

اختبار في مادة: اللغة الإنجليزية

على المترشح أن يختار أحد الموضوعين التاليين:

الموضوع الأول

PART ONE: Reading (15 points)

A. Comprehension (07 points)

Read the text carefully then do the following activities.

Today, there are some 43 million pupils and students in public schools at the elementary and secondary levels, and another 6 million in private schools throughout America. In other words, 88 percent of American children attend public schools and 12 percent go to private schools. United Nations figures show that in the amount spent on education per capita, the U.S. is ninth place in the world (behind Qatar, Sweden, Norway, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Denmark, Switzerland and Canada).

Most historians agree that a great deal of the economic, political, scientific and cultural progress America has made in its relatively short history, is due to its commitment to the ideal of equal opportunity. This is the ideal of educating as many Americans as possible to produce an educated people.

American education has encouraged more Americans than ever before to study for advanced degrees and to become involved in specialized researches. The belief that the future of society depends on the quantity and quality of its educated citizens is widely held. It explains why a great many Americans are still willing to give more money to education, even during times of economic difficulty.

(From D.K. Stevenson, **American Life and Institutions**)

1. Circle the letter that corresponds to the right answer.
   The text is:

   a. narrative.   **b.** expository.   **c.** prescriptive.

2. Are these statements true or false? Write T or F next to the letter corresponding to the statement.
   a. Most American children attend public schools.
   b. Qatar spends more on education than America.
   c. The ideal equal opportunity aims at educating the rich.
   d. Americans refrain financing education when hard times.

3. **In which paragraph is it mentioned that** Americans focus on higher education?

4. **Answer the following questions according to the text.**
   a. How many pupils attend elementary and secondary schools?
   b. What has the ideal of equal opportunity brought to America?
   c. Why are Americans willing to give more money to education?

5. **Copy the title you think is the most appropriate.**
   a. Education in Qatar
   b. Education in America
   c. The American Lifestyle

B. Text Exploration (08 points)

1. **Find in the text words that are opposite in meaning to the following:**
   a. disagree (§2)   **b.** illiterate (§2)   **c.** to take (§3)

2. **Complete the chart as shown in the example.**

	Verb	noun	adjective
example	to educate	education	educational
	to depend	....	....
	....	commitment	....
	....	....	involved

3. **Rewrite sentence (b) so that it means the same as sentence (a).**
   1. **a.** Americans spend less on education than Denmark.
      b. I wish Americans ....
   2. **a.** America has encouraged students to take further studies.
      b. Students...
   3. **a.** "Children must go to school when they are six," he says.
      b. He says that...

4. **Classify the following words according to the pronunciation of their final "s".**
   encourages – times – students – produces – beliefs – schools

/s/	/z/	/iz/

5. **Fill in the gaps with only FOUR words from the list.**
   prepare – managing – skills – helpless – everyday – history

   Education is more important today than ever before. It helps people acquire the ......**1**...... they need for such ......**2**...... activities as reading a newspaper or ......**3**...... their money. It also gives them the specialized training to ......**4**...... for a job or career.

PART TWO: Written Expression (05 points)
        Choose ONE of the following topics.

Topic One: Use the following notes to write a composition of 100 to 120 words on:
        The differences between state schools and private schools.

        State schools: - restricted to primary, middle and secondary sectors
                            - free of charge
                            - crowded classes/hard to control
        Private schools: - expensive/pay fees
                            -less accessible/low income families
                            -small classes/easy to control

Topic Two: Write a composition of 100 to 120 words on the following topic:
        Most Algerian companies look for profit but don't care about ethics in business.
        If you were appointed manager of one of these companies, how would you fight unethical practices?

PART ONE : Reading (15 points)
A. Comprehension (07 points)
    Read the text carefully then do the following activities.

Plagiarism

    Due largely to the amount of information available on the Internet it is becoming easier for everyone to plagiarize. Whether intentional or not, schools and universities consider plagiarism a form of academic dishonesty and unethical practice.

    Obvious plagiarism includes buying a paper or copying another person's work and presenting it as yours. This can be information or items copied from Web pages, books and newspapers, TV shows or any other artwork. Essentially, it is a form of piracy; a theft of the author's intellectual property. The educational systems are so tolerant that the rate of plagiarism scandals has doubled in recent years.

    One of the scholars pointed out, "Before trying to avoid plagiarism, we must tackle the causes **which** include: the lack of academic integrity, the students' ignorance, **their** difficulty with citing, in addition to the weaknesses in language skills". The University of California, at Devis explains that the effects of plagiarism are ranging from damaging the student's academic career and causing serious legal problems to tarnishing the institution's reputation.

    The policies detailing the guidelines on the problems of plagiarism that have been established, should be explained by teachers periodically. Whenever ideas or works are borrowed from another source, students must cite or quote that source .This is the best way to minimize plagiarism.

                  By Shelia Odak,www.ehow.com/facts

1. **Circle the letter that corresponds to the right answer.**
       The text is:
          a. a book extract.   **b.** a Website article.   **c.** a newspaper article.

2. **Write the letter that corresponds to the right answer.**
    A. Today, it is easier to plagiarize from the Internet because of ....
       a. the lack of information.
       b. the inaccessibility to information.
       c. the availability of information.
    B. Plagiarism is a form of piracy like ....
       a. stealing another person's property.
       b. borrowing another person's property.
       c. selling another person's property.
    C. Students have to cite the source of borrowed works so as to ....
       a. help their teachers.
       b. be fair.
       c. improve their language skills.

3. **In which paragraph is it mentioned that** plagiarism is an unfair school behaviour?

4. **Answer the following questions according to the text.**
      a. How is plagiarism defined?
      b. Mention two causes of plagiarism?
      c. What are the consequences of plagiarism stated by the author?

5. **Who or what do the underlined words refer to in the text?**
    a. which (§3)   **b. their** (§3)

B. Text Exploration (08 points)

1. Find in the text words whose definitions follow.

    a. done on purpose (§1)

    b. things that shock or offend people (§2)

    c. lack of knowledge or education (§3)

2. Give the opposites of the following words keeping the same root.

    tolerance – careful – understand

3. Ask the questions which the underlined words answer.

    a. Plagiarism has increased **because school systems are tolerant.**

    b. Some students are good at **languages.**

    c. He has made **too much** effort to succeed.

4. Classify the following words according to the pronunciation of their final "ed".

    borrowed – practised – avoided – explained – pointed – worked

/t/	/d/	/id/

5. Reorder the following sentences to make a coherent paragraph.

    a. that the students who were accused of fraud,

    b. Last week, our college knew three cases of cheating.

    c. would fail the assignment or be expelled.

    d. After holding a consultation, the headmaster declared

PART TWO: **Written Expression** (05 points)

    Choose ONE of the following topics:

Topic One: In a composition of 100 to120 words write **an expository article for the school magazine analysing the causes and consequences of fraud at exams.**

Topic Two: Using the following notes, write a composition of 100 to120 words on:

    The ways that can help preserve your cultural heritage.

        - cultural heritage / history of ancient civilizations

        - passed on from generation to generation

        - preserve / share cultural heritage

        - be proud of roots / ancestors

        - donate to / participate in associations/restore museums...