

Running head: EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN
ASSESSING EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

**EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL
STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS**

(CASE STUDY)

ERIKA SOFIA MONTALVO ESPITIA

JORGE ELIECER HERNANDEZ FLOREZ



**UNIVERSIDAD DE CÓRDOBA
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING PROGRAM
MONTERÍA – CÓRDOBA
DECEMBER, 2019**

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL
STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

**EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL
STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS**

ERIKA SOFIA MONTALVO ESPITIA

erikamontalvoespitia@gmail.com

JORGE ELIECER HERNANDEZ FLOREZ

eliecer150698@gmail.com

**THESIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING PROGRAM**

ADVISOR

DELIA GONZALES

UNIVERSIDAD DE CÓRDOBA

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

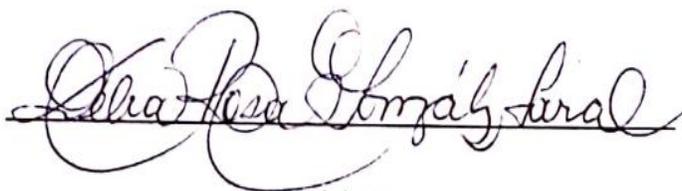
ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING PROGRAM

MONTERÍA – CÓRDOBA

2019

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL
STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

ACCEPTATION PAGE



Advisor



Juror



Juror

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL
STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	6
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	7
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	8
CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	10
2.1 Conceptual framework	10
2.1.1 Beliefs	10
2.1.2 Assessment	11
2.1.3 Speaking	13
2.2 Literature review	15
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY	18
3.1 Type of research	18
3.2 Context and participants	19
3.3 Data collection procedures	20
3.4 Data analysis	21
CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS	23
4.1 Teacher's beliefs about assessing EFL students' speaking skill	23
4.1.1 Teachers' beliefs about different assessment techniques and instruments	23
4.1.2 Teachers' beliefs about what should be taken into consideration for the assessment of students' speaking skills	25
4.1.3 Teachers' beliefs about sharing criteria and feedback on students' speaking performance	28
4.1.4 Teachers' beliefs about the purposes of speaking assessment activities	30
4.1.5 Teacher's beliefs about students' speaking performance	32
4.2 Beliefs and practice	34

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER’S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL
STUDENTS’ SPEAKING SKILLS

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION	40
CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS	43
CHAPTER 7: REFERENCES	44
CHAPTER 8: APPENDIXES	48
8.1 Appendix 1 – Likert scale	48
8.2 Appendix 2 – Semi-structured Interview	50

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

ABSTRACT

The analysis of teachers' beliefs about assessment procedures and practices during speaking activities in EFL public contexts is important because it helps us understand teacher's reasons behind the selection of materials and activities for classroom practices. This field has been studied in national and international private universities in order to explore the main beliefs of teachers regarding the assessment of speaking. However, few studies have been carried out exploring the connection between beliefs and practices of the assessment of speaking in public schools. Thus, this study aimed at exploring an EFL teacher's beliefs concerning the assessment of 9th graders' speaking skills in a public school and understanding how those beliefs were reflected on the teacher's practicum. To this end, semi-structured interviews, a Likert scale and two non-participant observations were used to gather the data. Results revealed that the teacher held beliefs 1) different assessment techniques and instruments, 2) what should be taken into account for the assessment of students' speaking skills, 3) sharing criteria and feedback, 4) the purposes of speaking assessment activities and 5) students speaking performance. It also showed that sometimes what the teacher said was not reflected in her performance.

Key words: Beliefs, speaking and assessment.

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

Acknowledgments

First of all, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to God for giving us wisdom, strength during this process, and for the opportunity to achieve this goal in our lives. We want to thank our parents for their unconditional support, guidance and motivation that helped us at all the times to finish this research.

Our sincere thanks also to our advisor Professor Delia Rosa Gonzalez who supported us every time. Besides our advisor, we would like to thank Professor Paula Andrea Garcia Montes for giving us constantly encouragement and support in the process of doing research and for sharing her knowledge and experiences with us.

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

1- Introduction

According to Pajares (1992) beliefs are “the points of view that people can have concerning a specific aspect of their context” (p.316). Similarly, Yero (2002) sustains that beliefs are “judgments and evaluations that we make about ourselves, about others, and about the world around us [and] . . . generalizations about things such as causality or the meaning of specific actions” (p. 21). Thus, beliefs might be considered as conceptions people hold about reality that allow them to make decisions regarding a particular topic.

In the educational field, beliefs may be considered as those psychological representations teachers may have to present content, evaluate, assess and interact with students. Therefore, beliefs might influence teachers' decision making concerning their assessment tools, procedures and types. This field has been studied in national and international contexts revealing that sometimes what teachers believe is not reflected in their practicum (Muñoz, Palacio & Escobar 2011). Likewise, a study on teachers' beliefs about the assessment of the foreign language speaking skills suggested that the use of several assessment techniques is the best way to assess students' oral production (Chang, 2006). However, those two studies were conducted in private contexts. Analyzing teachers' beliefs about assessment procedures and practices during speaking activities in EFL public contexts would be important to understand teacher's reasons behind the selection of materials and activities for classroom practices (Chang, 2006, p. 33). Additionally, it would help to explore how teachers are assessing students' oral production in public institutions. This study was intended to explore an EFL teacher's beliefs concerning the assessment of

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

9th graders' speaking skills and to understand how those beliefs are reflected on the activities and materials used to assess the oral skill of those learners. This study aimed at answering the following questions:

1. What are an in-service teacher's beliefs about assessing EFL students' speaking skills?
2. How are the teacher's beliefs reflected in her practice when assessing students' speaking skills in the EFL class?

This study was carried out with a high school English teacher at a public school in Monteria.

The following chapters contain information concerning the theoretical framework, literature review, the methodology, the data collection techniques and data analysis used in this study. The last chapters deal with findings, discussion and conclusions.

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

2- Theoretical framework

This chapter explains the key concepts that guide this research. They are beliefs, assessment, and speaking.

2.1 Conceptual framework

2.1.1 Beliefs. Beliefs are all those psychological representations people have about reality that allow them to make decisions regarding a particular topic. Those representations are believed to come from people's experiences. In addition, beliefs enable individuals to evaluate the reliability of the situations they live and experience daily.

Pajares (1992) defined beliefs as "the individual judgement of the truth or falsity of a proposition" (p.316). In this sense, individuals can take up positions based on what they have experienced throughout life. For example, when people are involved in a debate in which they express their ideas based on their philosophy about the topic being discussed. Likewise, Yero (2002, cited in Bingimlas, K., & Hanrahan, M. 2010, p.21) sustained that beliefs are "judgments and evaluations that we make about ourselves, about others, and about the world around us [and] . . . generalizations about things such as causality or the meaning of specific actions." That is, beliefs can influence the conception that people have regarding reality.

There are three types of beliefs "descriptive or existential, evaluative, and prescriptive beliefs" (Rokeach, 1972, para. 2). Descriptive beliefs are perceptions people hold to identify if something is real or not (e.g., I believe that Neil Armstrong didn't go to the moon). Evaluative beliefs contribute people to decide if something is dangerous or

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

convenient (e.g., I believe exercising is good for my health). Finally, prescriptive beliefs come from what people already know about a particular issue and that enable them to determine whether an act is enviable or not (e.g., I believe it is desirable that students study for their exams) (Rokeach, 1972).

However, when defining beliefs concerning assessment, some authors associate this term with conceptions. It occurs because beliefs are within the group of conceptions and thereby most of the researchers who have explored the beliefs regarding assessment have used these constructs interchangeably (Thompson, 1992, cited in Opre 2015).

2.1.2 Assessment. The term assessment is usually confused with evaluation and people often use them interchangeably. Nonetheless, evaluation is the final process of interpreting the data obtained so as to make decisions concerning students' learning and need, whereas assessment is the process of gathering information on students' performance in order to understand their learning and needs. Assessment refers to all the methods used by teachers in the classroom for obtaining information in relation to students' performance in order to enhance further results (Airasian 1991, cited in Mavrommatis, 1997). Thus, this research focuses on the concept of assessment as all the procedures, tools, and strategies a teacher uses to assess EFL students' speaking skill.

There are four types of assessment. The first type is proficiency assessment. Its purpose is to evaluate students' ability to use a language in different contexts. For instance, when learners take standardized tests that measure students' level of language (e.g. TOEFL or IELTS). The second type is the assessment of achievement. It is useful for identifying

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

what students have already learned. For example, when learners have worked on a unit of a book and the teacher gives them an achievement test based on what they have covered throughout the unit. The third type is summative assessment. It aims at checking the final status of students. For example, the final term exams at schools are considered summative assessment. The last type is formative assessment. It focuses on monitoring continuously students' progress toward the curriculum goals. For instance, when teachers ask students to design a mind map in class to show their understanding of a topic (Carter and Nunan, 2001, cited in Herrera & Sanchez, 2013).

In Colombia, the ministry of education presented a document named *the curriculum structure* for the suggested English curriculum. This document establishes that the suggested assessment types for Colombian education must be competence based assessment, assessment for learning and assessment of learning. Concerning competence based assessment, it shows what students know, know how to do and know how to be. In other words, competence based assessment “evidences the achievement of the competences undertaken in the classroom.” To identify that achievement, teachers must create situations which help students put into practice the language so as to obtain information regarding their progress and areas to improve. For example, teachers can make students prepare oral presentations in order to note students' growth.

Regarding assessment for learning, the MEN states that it is formative since it focuses on monitoring the “students' progress and level of comprehension of the subject.” This type of assessment helps to identify “needs or lack in learning”, which can serve to

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

adjust the teaching practice. Assessment for learning can be noticed when students are exposed to self-evaluation, co-evaluation and peer evaluation. Self-evaluation occurs when students reflect themselves on their progress. In co-evaluation, students usually provide feedback to their peers so as to learn with and from them. Finally, peer evaluation requires teachers to take part in it at some point and student's self-evaluation as well.

Finally, assessment of learning is characterized by being summative. This means that it is applied at the end of a unit, module, semester or full year. As a result, it aims at summarizing "the progress at the end of the course with a grade" (MEN, 2006).

2.1.3 Speaking. There are various definitions of speaking. Chaney (1998) for example states that "speaking is the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and nonverbal symbols, in a variety of contexts (p.13). For Harmer (2007, cited in Dueñas, Cardozo & Peña, 2015, p.38) speaking refers to "the ability to speak fluently and presupposes not only knowledge of language features, but also the ability to process information and language "on the spot." Hence, speaking consists of people's capacity for using the language for providing and receiving oral information. Additionally, speaking plays an important role in the process of interaction among people since through speech individuals are able to communicate their thoughts, feelings, and opinions to others.

There are two types of speaking: *monologue* and *dialogue*. Monologue refers to the speech given by one person, for example, an interrupted oral presentation. On the other hand, dialogue is a conversation between two people or more, for example, a role play between two individuals (Torky, 2006).

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

Speaking involves aspects which help to understand this skill. For example, it is face to face. This means that participants are usually present. It is also interactive. It means that there is a turn-taking between participants. Finally, it occurs in real time. That is, anything is planned (Torky, 2006).

There are five sub-skills involved in speaking: grammatical, discourse, pragmatic, strategic and fluency. The grammatical sub-skill refers to the correct use of grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. The discourse sub-skill deals with the speaker's ability to express his speech coherently and cohesively. The pragmatic sub-skill is related to suitability since it focuses on acting according to what the context requires. The strategic sub-skill is concerned with the use of alternative ways of talking such as gestures that are useful when the speaker does not know a word. Finally, fluency refers to speaking easily without pausing a lot (Torky, 2006).

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

2.2 Literature review

Although there have been some national and international studies on the field of beliefs regarding assessment, a few studies have been conducted on the analysis of beliefs concerning the assessment of speaking. Thus, this literature review aims at describing a national and an international study related to teachers' beliefs about the assessment of the speaking skill. Moreover, it describes three international studies on teachers' conceptions concerning assessment.

To start with, Research on beliefs has evaluated the impact of teachers' beliefs on speaking assessment. For instance, Muñoz, Palacio & Escobar (2011) evaluated the beliefs and procedures that sixty-two teachers used to assess oral language assessment in a private context in Colombia. Surveys, written reports, and interviews revealed that there were inconsistencies between what teachers believed toward the oral assessment and what they reflected in the EFL class. For example, while teachers admitted that assessment had to be used for formative purposes, they used it for summative purposes in their daily assessment practices.

This field of research has also been explored in international contexts. For example, Chang (2006) explored the main beliefs of teachers regarding the assessment of speaking in Taiwan's college and university classrooms. Findings from classroom observations, interviews, and documents indicated that teachers preferred using different assessment techniques to assess students' speaking skill. In addition, they thought it was not advisable to use one assessment technique since it would not demonstrate students' performance.

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

Besides, results from the study also showed that the assessment of speaking does not only involve students but also teachers because results allow them to judge whether students comprehend their directions or not. Furthermore, findings from the study also confirmed that teachers perceived the purpose of the assessment of speaking as the way to provide students information concerning what they have done, or what they have learned.

Dayal & Lingam (2015) explored Fijian teachers' conceptions of assessment at a Fijian's university. Written reflection guided by some prompts indicated that participants considered that assessment was directly related to testing, measuring or examinations. These results allowed researchers to conclude that participants had a very strong concept concerning what assessment is about. Likewise, the study demonstrated that some participants conceived assessment as a formative process. In other words, a continuous process that serves to inform students' progress toward a set of objectives.

Similarly, Hidayat (2017) described the teachers' beliefs and practices on assessment focusing on general assessment, cognitive assessment, affective assessment, and psychomotor assessment at Salatiga, Indonesia. Findings from classroom observation, semi-structured interview, documents, and open ended-questionnaire revealed a relationship between teachers' beliefs and what they reflected on their classroom practices regarding general assessment, cognitive assessment, and psychomotor assessment. However, there were inconsistencies concerning beliefs on affective assessment. In the study, participants affirmed that they took into consideration the attitudes of students within

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

the classroom when assessing them. Nevertheless, that belief was not certainly reflected when they were teaching.

Finally, Harris, Irvings & Peterson (2008) inquired the beliefs of eleven Secondary teachers from an Australian University concerning the purpose of assessment and feedback. Using focus groups, researchers found that teachers hold three types of assessment: formative, teacher-controlled summative assessment, and external summative assessment. As a result, teachers confirmed three purposes of assessment: First of all, teachers claimed that formative assessment helped students' improvement. On the other hand, external summative assessment served for accountability purposes. Additionally, results from the study also showed that most of the teachers considered these last two purposes as irrelevant and even erroneous. The study concluded that teachers agreed assessment was irrelevant when they did not work on the results obtained from the assessment.

Since most of the previous studies focused only on exploring assessment in terms of types, purposes, and practices, beliefs about teaching the four language skills, we consider that teachers' beliefs toward the oral language assessment in EFL class, particularly in public contexts, needs further research. Thus, our study intended to explore the beliefs teachers hold concerning the assessment of the speaking skills and how those beliefs were reflected in the teacher's practicum.

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

3- Methodology

3.1 Type of study

This study was a qualitative research in nature since it focused on behavior, attitudes, beliefs, actions, among others, undertaken in a natural setting, in this case at school. Nunan & Bailey (2009) stated that “naturalistic research is centrally concerned with documenting and analyzing what goes on in naturally occurring classrooms” (p.7). Accordingly, the intention of this study was to identify and describe the beliefs that an EFL English teacher may hold when assessing EFL students' speaking skill.

This research proposal followed a case study design to explore, understand, describe and analyze an EFL English teacher's beliefs, understanding, knowledge and actions about the assessment of students' speaking skills. Case study is defined by Gall et al, (2003) as “the in-depth study of instances of a phenomenon in its natural context and from the perspective of the participants involved in the phenomenon” (p.436). Hence, case study was used to explore in detail an in-service teacher's beliefs when assessing students' speaking skills as well as how those beliefs are reflected in her practice.

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

3.2 context and participants

This study was conducted at a public school in Monteria. The school was located in a busy area of the city surrounded by hardware stores, mechanic workshops, restaurants and shops. The school functioned in a large old building divided into two sections, one for primary and the other for secondary school. The school counted with two books for L2 lessons, one for primary named English and Me and the other for secondary school named Hit the Road. It also counted with some projectors teachers used to develop their lessons. The school serves to more than one thousand students from low income families. The number of L2 lessons varied according to the grade. For instance, primary students worked two hours per week while sixth and seventh grade students had six hours a week and from eighth to eleventh, they worked seven hours weekly.

The participants involved in this study were an English teacher and forty-four students from 9th grade. The average age of students was 17. Concerning their proficiency level, most of them showed an intermediate level. It means that they were able to express themselves within the English class.

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

3.3 Data collection procedures

The information needed to answer the questions of this research were collected through a semi-structured interview, a Likert scale and two non-participant observations.

For the first question of the study, we used the semi-structured interview. Semi-structured interviews are defined by Fylan (2005) as “simply conversations in which you know what you want to find out about – and so have a set of questions to ask and a good idea of what topics will be covered – but the conversation is free to vary” (p.65). In this sense, the semi-structured interview allowed us to obtain data from the teacher's opinions, beliefs and practices concerning their beliefs when assessing oral skill.

Likewise, we used a Likert scale, according to Galán, J.L., Merino, S., Martínez, J., et al. (2017) “a Likert scale is a psychometric response scale primarily used in questionnaires to obtain participant's preferences or degree of agreement with a statement or set of statements” (p.49). As a result, the Likert scale enabled us to analyze the teacher's opinions, conceptions and behaviors toward the oral language assessment in the EFL context.

For the second question of the study, two non-participant observations were carried out. In the words of Williams (2008), non-participant observation is “a relatively unobtrusive qualitative research strategy for gathering primary data about some aspects of the social without interacting directly with its participants” (p.561) Thus, this data collection technique allowed us to understand how the teacher's beliefs are reflected in the procedures and activities to assess her students' speaking skills.

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

3.4 Data analysis

The analysis of data obtained from the semi-structured interview, the Likert scale and the two non-participant observations provided a deep understanding about the root of teacher's actions and decisions when assessing students' speaking skill.

Both the semi-structured interview and the two non-participant observations were supported with transcripts and ethnographic narratives that allowed us to provide records of actions that occur during each interview and observation. Data obtained from those transcripts and narratives were carefully analyzed following thematic analysis. Thematic analysis "is a method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79). Thematic analysis helped us to find themes in the data that were relevant to address the research. In thematic analysis, themes can be found in two primary ways: in an inductive or deductive way. However, in this study we focused on inductive analysis. This means that we did not use existing categories. Instead, categories emerged based on the obtained data.

To conduct thematic analysis, we followed the six-phases suggested by Braun and Clarke 2006, p.87):

- Familiarizing yourself with the data.
- Generating initial codes.
- Searching for themes.
- Reviewing themes.
- Defining and naming themes.

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

- Producing the report.

For the first stage, the data was read several times so as to be familiar with it. In the second stage, we started creating initial codes. It helped us to reduce lots of data into chunks of meaning. The third stage involved analyzing the initial codes so as to check whether some of them can fit together into a theme. In the fourth phase, we reviewed the themes we had identified in the previous stage in order to check whether they make sense. For the fifth phase we defined and redefined the themes. This means that we established the meaning of each theme. The final step involved producing a report based on the identified themes (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017).

Concerning the analysis of the Likert scale, it was analyzed quantitatively. The number of chosen answers was calculated in order to identify tendencies in the teacher beliefs to later use descriptions to draw conclusions on the teacher's conceptions regarding the assessment of students' speaking skills.

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

4. Findings

The following chapter describes the findings in relation to the two research questions that guided this study. Each section will address a separate research question.

4.1 What are an in-service teacher's beliefs about assessing EFL students' speaking skills?

Five main categories emerged from the analysis of a Likert Scale and a semi-structured interview concerning the teacher's beliefs about the assessment of EFL students' speaking skills. The first category refers to different speaking assessment techniques and instruments. The second is concerned with what should be taken into account for the assessment of students' speaking skills. The third category deals with sharing criteria and feedback on students' performance. The fourth focuses on the purposes of speaking assessment activities. The last category is concerned with students' speaking performance.

4.1.1 Teachers' beliefs about different assessment techniques and instruments

The analysis of the Likert scale portrayed that the teacher believed that the best way to assess the speaking skill is through various techniques and instruments, as shown in the following image.

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
<p>1. I believe that the best way to assess the speaking skill is through different assessment techniques.</p> <p>2. I consider that the speaking skill must be assessed through different instruments such as rubrics, rating scales, etc.</p>					X

Image 1. *Teacher's beliefs about different speaking assessment techniques and instruments.*

These beliefs were confirmed later in the semi-structured interview. The following comment illustrates the belief in relation to the use of different assessment techniques.

*I think so because we have to take **into account the skills of each student**, so let's see we call the skills the (.3) each person has some learning styles, then you have to give **them options**, you have to give them opportunities, you have to combine or allow them to choose, you have this or you have this option, they choose the most appropriate to them.*

This comment showed that the teacher agrees with the use of different assessment techniques since it provides students with more opportunities to show what they are really

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

able to do. Additionally, the teacher believed that assessment should address students learning styles so they feel comfortable to present the final product or assessment.

Concerning the use of different instruments for checking students' speaking progress in class, the following comment indicated that she checks it using a rubric.

*Well, you know **we have to use a rubric because** we have to be a little sub-objective to not sound **so subjective**, there are rubrics for that, **which I always take them into consideration**, but because of the habit that we have, we maybe don't print the piece of paper and tell them this is the rubric.*

This evidence allowed us to conclude that the teacher somehow uses a rubric as an instrument to assess the students' speaking skills. However, it was noticed that she often does it in an informal way. This means that she usually does not provide students with a printed format but she shares the criteria before doing the activity. The comment above serves also to understand why the teacher prefers using a rubric. She stated that it helps the teacher to be more impartial when assessing this skill.

4.1.2 Teachers' beliefs about what should be taken into consideration for the assessment of students' speaking skills

In the Likert scale, it was identified that the teacher considered that for the assessment of students' speaking skills, it should be taken into consideration 1) the common European framework, 2) what students work in class, 3) students' non-academic performance and 4) all the components of the speaking skill, as the next image shows.

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL

STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
3. I believe that the assessment of speaking must be based on the common European framework.				X	X
4. I believe that the assessment of speaking should be linked with what students work in class.				X	
5. I think that students' non-academic performance such as effort, participation, etc., must be taken into account when assessing this skill.				X	
6. I think that teachers must assess all the aspects of this skill such as pronunciation, fluency, etc., rather than only one.					X

Image 2. Teachers' beliefs about what should be taken into consideration for the assessment of students' speaking skills.

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

As in the first category, these beliefs were also identified in the semi-structured interview. In the following evidence, the teacher expressed the importance of the common European framework in the assessment of students' speaking skills.

*Well as I told you, the common European framework **gives you some guidelines to achieve each level**. Here, it is given in the DBA. It is minimized a little bit because it says the minimum you must achieve but we know that **it is possible to achieve more**.*

The affirmation above helped to conclude that the teacher takes into consideration the common European framework to assess students' speaking skills. These guidelines serve her to have a clearer idea about what students are supposed to achieve by the end of the level. However, she clarified that students can go further than the level proposed by those guidelines.

Regarding the alignment of the assessment of speaking with what students work in class, the following comment helped to confirm this belief “*I usually use the **related theme***”. Additionally, in the remark below she added information regarding how she links the assessment of speaking with the themes students work in class.

*If for example **now that they were working culture**. They always ask me no but in this unit what is what we are learning. They want me to talk about the grammar part. So I try to **look for something with culture** that is not specifically from grammar but from a culture theme. In this case I asked them to work **they made a video about festivals in different parts of the world so there it is the culture**.*

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

This evidence served us to conclude that there was consistence between what students work in class and what they are assessed.

It was also discovered that the teacher takes into consideration students' non-academic performance for the assessment of students' speaking skills, as next account shows. “*Yes, it is **one of the criteria that are there***”. Thus, she always values aspects such as effort or participation when assessing this skill.

The teacher also believed that the assessment of the speaking skills must involve all its components, as the following comment portrays. “*Exactly, **sometimes I am not interested in the structure in which they speak with grammatically correct sentences; I am interested in them being able to communicate what I ask them***”. This remark illustrates that the teacher does not assess all the components of the speaking skill at the same time but she prefers designing an activity to check each component.

4.1.3 Teachers' beliefs about sharing criteria and feedback on students' speaking performance

Results from the Likert scale showed that the teacher thinks that it is necessary to share with students not only the criteria that is going to be taken into consideration for assessing a speaking activity, but also their feedback on their performance, as the following image portrays.

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
7. I think that the teacher must share with students the criteria she is going to take into account when assessing a speaking activity.					X
8. I think that students must always receive a feedback on their speaking performance.					X

Image 3. Teachers' beliefs about sharing criteria and feedback on students' speaking performance.

This discovery was also seen in the semi-structured interview. In fact, when the teacher was asked about her belief in relation to sharing the criteria with students before assessing a speaking activity, she provided the following answer.

*I tell them in this activity if it is a presentation I tell them I'm going to take into account the layout, a billboard or something visual or a slide but I don't want them to write everything only pictures or key points and from this, you are going to talk. So I'm going to see that **creativity**, I'm going to see **pronunciation**, I'm going to see they meet with all the requirements, the topic I'm asking, the **preparation**, **teamwork** if it is a group, the **responsibility**.*

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

This evidence served to notice that the teacher always share with students the criteria she is going to take into consideration when assessing their performance on this skill. Furthermore, it was identified that she gives students the opportunity to participate in the assessment process of this skill, as the following account portrays. *“I am going to observe this this and that. “If they tell me teacher but we don’t agree with this assessment item or why you don’t assess this item. I can do it”*. Thus, the teacher negotiates with students the criteria she may take into consideration before assessing any speaking activity.

Additionally, the following remark evidenced that the teacher implements the feedback every time she assesses a speaking activity. *“We always try to give students a feedback and if the student says teacher can I do it again depending on the conditions we have stablished”*. This evidence helped also to conclude that feedback from the teacher may help her to decide whether students need to repeat the activity or not. Taking into consideration this, feedback helps students to improve their performance in this skill.

4.1.4 Teachers’ beliefs about the purposes of speaking activities

The Likert scale portrayed that the teacher believed that the purpose of speaking activities is to enhance students’ performance in this skill. She also held the belief that those activities provide meaningfulness to them, as it is seen in the following image.

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER’S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL
STUDENTS’ SPEAKING SKILLS

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
9. I believe that the activities used to assess the speaking skill should help students to improve this skill.					X
10. I consider that the speaking assessment activities should be meaningful to students.					X

Image 4. Teachers’ beliefs about the purposes of speaking assessment activities.

The evidence below illustrates when speaking activities provide meaningfulness to students “*Ahh, when he is able to propose, support or explain a situation in a natural way*”. This statement indicates that the meaningful purpose is achieved when students go beyond memorization. This means that the student is able to express his ideas fluently.

4.1.5 Teacher’s beliefs about students’ speaking performance

The Likert scale also revealed that the teacher held the belief that if students do not succeed in a speaking test it is due to their level. Additionally, she had the belief of constant flexibility in regard to students’ outcomes; when they do not get a good result in their speaking performance, she gave them another opportunity. The following image illustrates these findings.

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL
STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
11. I consider that when a student fails a speaking test it's because he doesn't have the level.					X
12. I consider that when a student gets a bad grade on speaking activities, he must receive another opportunity.			X		

Image 5. *Teacher's beliefs about students' speaking performance.*

When the teacher was later asked about statement eleven, she provided the following answer.

*And the other is that you talked to me about if they don't have the capacity. **It is difficult when we haven't had the whole process. When they come here from primary is like if they start again. And in sixth and seventh there are many things to work on them that we don't work speaking well. So when they come to ninth we want to ask them more but no we know that they find it difficult to do this this and that. That's why we sometimes accept some things they say.***

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

This comment demonstrated that the teacher somehow put the blame on what students are exposed to do in previous grades. Thus, students' low performance in the speaking skill is due to their poor previous bases.

The teacher also stated that students must receive another opportunity when they get a bad grade on speaking activities. Although in the Likert scale she was undecided, the following comment showed that she agrees with it.

For example, I have given many students the opportunity. For example, this video I said look here you have made many mistakes. I can assess it look here you have this this and that. And they teacher I am going to do it again and I give them the opportunity.

The previous evidence allowed us to conclude that depending on the results obtained from students' speaking performance, the teacher may decide whether to give students the opportunity to repeat the activity or not.

4.2 How are the teacher's beliefs reflected in her practice when assessing students' speaking skills in the EFL class?

After the analysis of ethnographic narratives and transcripts obtained from non-participant observations, it was possible to notice that some of the teacher's beliefs corresponded to what she did in the classroom when assessing students' speaking skills. However, others were not noticed during the observations and in some of them there is no consistence between what the teacher said and what she did in the classroom.

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

To start with, in regard to the first category about different assessment techniques and instruments to assess students' speaking skills, it was identified that there was no consistence between teacher's first answers and her practice. At the beginning, she had agreed with the use of various techniques and instruments to assess this skill. However, the following transcript showed the opposite.

07:29 - 08:12 Teacher's assessment technique

1 T I think you could see how I grade speaking. **I ask them to make videos to save time** so that they have the opportunity if they made a mistake they can make it again. Then, I give them the criteria that I give them, each criterion is rated from 1 to 5, and then I add and divide. Some of them are going to make presentations because they owe me some scores, those who did not attend to the restaurant we did, they do it in person with me.

As it is shown in the turn, the teacher uses only one assessment technique. Thus, there is not a link between what she stated at the beginning and what she practiced. However, it is clear that this is probably the best technique she found to assess this skill since it helps her to save time.

Concerning the use of different assessment instruments, although there was not an evidence, it was observed consistence since in the practice the teacher used a rubric but in an informal way. That is to say, there was not a printed format.

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

Regarding the second category about what should be taken into account for the assessment of students speaking skills, it was not possible to observe whether teacher's assessment of speaking was based on the common European framework or not. However, it was observed that there was an alignment between what students worked in class and what the teacher assessed, as it is shown in the following comment:

*“If for example now that they were working culture. In this case I asked them to **make a video about festivals** in different parts of the world so there it is the culture. The other that I worked with them was the topic about Halloween that **I took them a video about Halloween**. That is culture”.*

This evidence helped to see that depending on the worked topic, the teacher plans the assessment activities for this skill.

Concerning students' non-academic performance, it was found that she contradicted this belief. In the Likert scale she agreed with taking these criteria into account when assessing students' performance while in the practice she did not take into consideration these aspects.

In regard to the belief about the assessment of all the components of the speaking skill, it was possible to identify only two, as indicated below:

02:15 – 03:28 Speaking components

1 T Too short and you are reading

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

participation?

Pronunciation and try not to read, try to memorize as much as possible.

From this transcript, it was observed the teacher allowed students to know the aspects she is going to take into account for the assessment of their performance.

Regarding sharing feedback, the transcript below illustrates how the teacher provides it.

25:11 – 25:34 Teacher's feedback

- 1 T **You are going to say: my name IS
I AM from
You are **not going to say my age. It is better to say I AM**
My hobbies are. What is the other part?**
- 2 S1 No teacher, before that, it is my country.
- 3 T Ahh ok, I am FROM

From this excerpt, it is seen that the teacher clearly provides students with their feedback. It is also noticeable that she provides it when students finish their performance. Thus, corrections take place at the end.

In relation to the fourth category about the purposes of speaking assessment activities, this was not possible to determine if the activities used to assess the skill helped students to improve it. On the other hand, it was found inconsistency between teacher's

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

belief about the meaningfulness of the speaking assessment activities and her practice, as shown below:

23:23 – 23:35 Speaking activities' meaningfulness

- 1 T Well guys, what am I going to take into account in the participation?
Pronunciation and try not to read, **try to memorize as much as possible.**

This turn helped to conclude that there is a contradiction since in the semi-structured interview she stated that a meaningful activity is achieved when the student goes beyond memorization and in this turn she asked to memorize.

With regard to the last category about students' speaking performance, this was not observed if the reason behind students' failure in speaking tests is due to their level. By the other side, it was noticed that the teacher gives students the opportunity to repeat an activity when their performance is low, as portrayed below:

03:30 – 04:30 providing students with another chance

- 1 T you only included the vocabulary 3.7, the last one that included images or any sample is missing, you did not do any of that
2 T I am going to put you here zero
3 S1 Zero does not count teacher

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL
STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

- 4 T Five and four, two points six. Nine
- 5 S1 Divided by four
- 6 T Divided by four it does not give you, I would have to divided it by
three to give you a three point three, not even that gives
- 7 T **Do I put three or do you repeat it?**
- 8 S1 Leave it like that

In turn seven, it was observed that the teacher showed consistence between what she expressed at the beginning and what she did in the classroom.

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

5. Discussion

This study aimed at 1) exploring an EFL teacher's beliefs concerning the assessment of 9th graders' speaking skills and 2) understanding how those beliefs were reflected on the activities and materials used to assess the oral skill of those learners. In response to the first research question, results showed that the teacher believed that the students' speaking skills were best assessed through different assessment techniques and instruments. This result confirms the conclusion of a study that revealed that teachers preferred using different assessment techniques to assess students' speaking skills (Chang, 2006).

Results also indicated that the teacher considered that the speaking skill should be assessed taking into account 1) the common European framework, 2) what students work in class, 3) students non-academic performance and 4) all the components of the speaking skill. Concerning the common European framework, this guideline helps teachers to know the level students' are expected to achieve by the end. Thus, it should play an important role in the assessment process of students' speaking skill. In relation to the alignment between students' classwork and speaking assessment practices, this finding ratifies that the assessment process must be linked with the topics that students are supposed to learn (Wilson & Wineburgs, 1993). Regarding students' non-academic performance, this is similar to what Lu (2003, cited in Chang, 2006) identified. He found that teachers included students' effort or participation when assessing their performance. In this line of ideas, these aspects might help students to feel that their work is valued. Likewise, it serves them

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

to be graded with a higher score. In regard to the assessment of all the components of the speaking skills such as fluency, pronunciation, etc., it may be significant for EFL teachers since it helps to understand how well students are performing in each component. Based on this understanding, the teacher may also identify the component that the student needs to work harder.

It was also found that the teacher believed that it is necessary to share the speaking assessment criteria and the feedback obtained from students' performance. It corroborates what Herrera and Cortez (2013) discovered. They concluded that teachers gave students feedback after their performance. Additionally, they agreed with the idea that this feedback helps students to improve further performances. Thus, feedback plays a great role in students' speaking improvement.

The teacher also thought that speaking assessment activities should help students to improve this skill and they should be meaningful to them. Taking into consideration that the teacher believes that a speaking assessment activity is meaningful when students are able to express their ideas fluently, it may be concluded that the meaningfulness of the activities is concerned with students' critical thinking development. In other words, and as it was stated by the teacher, it is reached when the pupil propose, support or explains a situation (Bruner & Haste 1980).

The last finding concerning the first research question was concerned with teacher's beliefs about students' speaking performance. She believed that the reason behind students'

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

failure in speaking tests is due to their level. This is something that might be added to one of the factors that affect students' speaking performance. This means that students do not count with good previous speaking bases to accomplish a great performance as the teacher expects (Baker & Westrup, 2003, cited in Abda, 2017).

Regarding the second question, referred to how the previous beliefs were reflected in the teacher's practice, results indicated that some of the beliefs corresponded to what the teacher did in the classroom. However, in some cases there was not consistence between teacher's beliefs and action and in some other cases it was not possible to observe some of them. These findings are similar to what Muñoz, Palacio & Escobar (2009) found. They noticed that there were inconsistencies between teacher's beliefs and what they reflected in the EFL class. Thus, not all the things that the teacher says to do are reflected in her practice.

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

6. Conclusions

In conclusion, the study demonstrated that the teacher from a public school hold the following beliefs about the assessment of EFL students' speaking skills 1) beliefs about different assessment techniques and instruments, 2) beliefs about what should be taken into account for the assessment of students' speaking skills, 3) beliefs about sharing criteria and feedback on students' speaking performance, 4) beliefs about the purposes of speaking assessment activities and 5) beliefs about students speaking performance.

The study also revealed that some of the identified beliefs corresponded to teacher's actions in the classroom. However, it was also found that some other beliefs were reflected in the teacher's practice. Likewise, there were others which were not possible to identify in the two non-participant observations.

However, this study only showed the beliefs of one EFL teacher. Thus, these findings cannot be generalized to all EFL teachers. Based on this, it is suggested for further research to conduct this study with more participants to obtain more generalized results. Additionally, it implies to provide EFL teachers with occasions to reflect upon their beliefs and practices to try to help them improve their practicum.

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL
STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

7. References

- Alhojailan, M. I. (2012). Thematic analysis: A critical review of its process and evaluation. *West East Journal of Social Sciences*, 1(1), 39-47.
- Baker, J. Westrup. H. (2003). *Essential Speaking Skills: A handbook for English Language Teachers*. London: Continuum international Publishing.
- Bingimlas, K., & Hanrahan, M. (2010). The relationship between teachers' beliefs and their practice: How the literature can inform science education reformers and researchers. In Taşar M., & Çakmakçı, G. (Eds.), *Contemporary science education research: International perspectives* (pp. 415-422). Ankara, Turkey: Pegem Akademi.
- Bowen, G. A. (2009). Document analysis as a qualitative research method. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 9(2), 27-40. doi:org/10.3316/QRJ0902027.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology*, 3(2), 77-101.
- Bruner, J., & Haste, H. (1990). *La elaboración del sentido: la construcción del mundo por el niño*.
- Chang, C. (2006, April). Teachers' beliefs towards oral language assessment in Taiwan collegiate EFL classrooms. Paper presented at the Fooyin University 2006 International Conference on English Instruction and Assessment, Kaohsiung,

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL
STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

Taiwan. Retrieved from

<http://flcccu.ccu.edu.tw/conference/2006conference/chinese/download/C03.pdf>.

Dayal, H. C., & Lingam, G. I. (2015). Fijian teachers' conceptions of assessment.

Australian Journal of Teacher Education, 40(8), 43-58.

doi:org/10.14221/ajte.2015v40n8.3.

Dueñas, F., Cardozo, D., & Peña, C. (2015). Developing speaking skills through speaking -

oriented workshops. *Enletawa Journal*, 8 (2), 35 – 45.

Galán-García, J.L., Merino, S., Martínez, J. et al. (2017). Genetic and algebraic

algorithms for classifying the items of a likert questionnaire.

Math. Comput. Sci. 11(1), 49 - 59. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11786-017-0289-1>.

Given, L.M. (Ed.). (2008). *The sage encyclopaedia of qualitative research method* (Vols. 1-

2). Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications.

Harris, L., Irving, S. E., & Peterson, E. (2008). Secondary teachers' conceptions of the

purpose of assessment and feedback. Paper presented at the Australian Association

for Research in Education Conference, Brisbane. Retrieved from

<https://s3.amazonaws.com/academia.edu.documents/30688573/har08349.pdf?AWS>

AccessKeyId=AKIAIWOWYYGZ2Y53UL3A&Expires=1551983864&Signature=

bXi4keVhuA10JuBrXAubYQD0tYo%3D&response-content-

disposition=inline%3B%20filename%3DSecondary_teachers_conceptions_of_the_

pu.pdf.

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL
STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

Herrera, M., & Cortés, A. (2013). *A description of the process followed by teachers in some public high schools to assess speaking* (Master's thesis, University of Nariño, Nariño, Colombia). Retrieved from <http://sired.udenar.edu.co/4951/1/89484.pdf>.

Hidayat, M. (2017). *Teachers' beliefs and practices on assessment at SMA N 2 Salatiga in academic year 2016/2017 (A case study at SMA N 2 Salatiga)* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Surakarta, Muhammadiyah, Indonesia). Retrieved from <http://eprints.ums.ac.id/48529/18/11.%20PUBLIKASI%20ILMIAH.pdf>.

Kayi, H. (2012). Teaching speaking: Activities to promote speaking in a second language. *Новейшие научные достижения*, 12 (11), 1-6.

Maguire, M., & Delahunt, B. (2017). Doing a thematic analysis: A practical, step-by-step guide for learning and teaching scholars. *AISHE-J: The All Ireland Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, 9(3), 3351-33514.

Mavrommatis, Y. (1997). Understanding assessment in the classroom: Phases of the assessment process — the assessment episode. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice*, 4(3), 381-400. doi:10.1080/0969594970040305.

Miles, J., & Gilbert, P. (Eds.). (2005). *A handbook of research methods for clinical and health psychology*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Ministry of National Education, MEN. (2016b). *Pedagogical principles and guidelines: Suggested English curriculum, 6th to 11th grades*. Bogotá, CO: Author. Retrieved

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL
STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

from <http://aprende.colombiaaprende.edu.co/sites/default/files/naspublic/Anexo%2015%20Pedagogical%20Principles%20and%20Guidelines.pdf>.

Muñoz, A., Palacio, M., & Escobar, L. (2012). Teachers' beliefs about assessment in an EFL context in Colombia. *Profile Issues in Teachers Professional Development, 14*(1), 143-158.

Opre, D. (2015). Teachers' conceptions of assessment. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences 209*, 229-233. doi:10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.11.222.

Pajares, F. (1992). Teachers' beliefs and educational research: Cleaning up a messy construct. *Review of Educational Research, 62*(3), 307-332.

Perumal, T. (2014). *Research Methodology*. Malaysia: Open University Malaysia.

Savasci-Acikalin, F. (2009). Teacher beliefs and practice in science education. *Asia-Pacific Forum on Science Learning and Teaching, 10*(1), 1-14.

Torky, S. (2006). *The effectiveness of a task-based instruction program in developing the English language speaking skills of secondary stage students*. Unpublished PhD dissertation. Ain Shams University. Cairo, Egypt.

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER’S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL
STUDENTS’ SPEAKING SKILLS

8. Appendixes

8.1 Appendix 1 – Likert scale

Objective: To identify a teacher’s beliefs concerning the assessment of 11th graders’ speaking skills.

Dear Teacher, we’d like you to complete this Likert Scale about your assessment beliefs and practices in the English class. The information will be used for research and academic purposes only.

Instructions: Please, rate the following statements based on this scale.

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I believe that the best way to assess the speaking skill is through different assessment techniques.					X
2. I think that the teacher must share with students the criteria she is going to take into account when assessing a speaking activity.					X
3. I believe that the assessment of speaking must be based on the common European framework.				X	X
4. I consider that when a student fails a speaking test it’s because he doesn’t have the level.				X	
5. I think that students					

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL

STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

must always receive a feedback on their speaking performance.					X
6. I consider that when a student gets a bad grade on speaking activities, he must receive another opportunity.			X		
7. I believe that the activities used to assess the speaking skill should help students to improve this skill.					X
8. I think students should participate in the assessment process of this skill.				X	
9. I consider that the speaking skill must be assessed through different instruments such as rubrics, rating scales, etc.					X
10. I think that students' non-academic performance such as effort, participation, etc., must be taken into account when assessing this skill.				X	
11. I believe that the assessment of speaking should be linked with what students work in class.				X	
12. I consider that the speaking assessment activities should be					X

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER’S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL
STUDENTS’ SPEAKING SKILLS

meaningful to students.					
13. I think that teachers must assess all the aspects of this skill such as pronunciation, fluency, etc., rather than only one.					X

8.2 Appendix 2 – Semi-structured interview

DATE: November 13, 2019

LENGTH: 24:29

PLACE: Monteria

PARTICIPANT:

STUDY QUESTION: What are an in-service teacher’s beliefs about assessing EFL students’ speaking skills?

Turn Participant

- 1 R **Teacher, we are going to record the following interview. You know to have evidence about the work that is being carried out. Is there any problem with that?**
- 2 T Not Mr.
- 3 R **Ok. This is a semi-structured interview and we are going to start talking a Little about your English class. What do you think if you start describing what your English class is like?**
- 4 T What is my English class like?
- 5 R **How would you describe it?**
- 6 T Related to what skill or in general?
- 7 R **In general**
- 8 T Well, then you know we have an area plan where the performance indicators are organized in which we must focus on developing. Well, we always take into consideration that when planning the class which are also aligned with the guide text we work on, I try to combine the theme that addresses the guide text that is aligned with the performance indicators, which are also aligned with the DBA

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL
STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

(Basic Learning Rights) that also emerge from the curricular guidelines, the common European Framework, all that is linked. I usually take the text as a reference but I do not stick to it. I always look for other activities that are suddenly a little more (.3) motivating for students that adjust to the context and that I see according to the need they have. So I usually take other things and the book as a complement to their independent work.

I usually take authentic material or situations that they need, I work a lot on the Project-based learning strategy where they are going to research on a topic and then they create something. Logically there is a space for the description of what it would be that they would create and what they would point to, what problem or what solution they would do with it or what proposal they would make. I usually, in each term take into consideration making a project.

9 R

And let's talk a little about skills as such, that are writing, speaking, listening and reading. Which one do you put into practice in your class?

10 T

We try to combine or to work on the fourth skills, but you know that here the number of students per classroom is numerous forty where we find that many students are a little apathetic or do not have the needed discipline to learn a language, sometimes it is complicated for us to work on them speaking as such. We look for a strategy where you try to encourage them in some way that and where we can work in team. Writing is done. Well I usually, work based on a text, first I give them a topic to have an input a reading, and from that reading I ask them to do as a guided summary, I ask them some questions that they have to answer or I put them let's say when they were working on the environmental theme, I told them what was the ecological footprint at school, what actions should the institution do to improve the ecological footprint, but I guided it giving them some prompts and gave them as a model about what goes in the introduction, and what goes in the conclusion. In listening some things from the book, or I bring a song or I bring them a different conversation or a video, I usually bring as some segments of videos of real movies and from that segment I do an activity that is based on grammar, I focus on grammar as I also take the opportunity to evaluate listening as such the part of listening perfection.

11 R

And which of those skills do you feel most comfortable with?

12 T

Ahh, I still have to talk to you, I talked to you about listening,

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL
STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

speaking and writing. I missed Reading, well, Reading, I combine it with all three. Well, really, there is a part that we have to strengthen here because we have to be thinking about the Icfes tests, which is grammar, so you also have to put the structure component, I work with interactive slides so that the student himself can deduce the grammar. When we are going to work on the definition of grammar so that they understand its use, they have understood xxx I have done here. And students like more that part because they are used to working. What is the topic? Grammar is this and what is the vocabulary is this. This is like the focus one is thinking about xxx so the strongest will be always the language use component in this case the vocabulary and the others, we try to develop them but with less intensity.

- 13 R **Tell us a little about the speaking skill, how have you felt working with that skill?**
- 14 T As I say it is complex but students like it. Everywhere, in all the contexts where I have taught the students when it is speaking they like because they don't have to write, they are lazy when writing. Apart from that because they work in groups, apart from that they see it as a game because sometimes they have to do if it is a role play they like it. That restaurant activity, I don't know if you noticed, they loved that and worked well. If there is presentation they like it too. But the fact is that they want to make the presentation by heart, learn it by heart, others believe that it is only reading and nothing more, so we have to make a great effort to break that mentality they have that a presentation is going to be by heart. And it is also complex for us to interact with each group, as I said the number of students that I sometimes ask them to make a video and send it to me to save time.
- 15 R **So , it is a little complex to work on that skill**
- 16 T Yes, yes if we want to work on the form of interaction is complex, then we have to do it more like a presentation or role play, or make a video of something, they can do a dramatization or they can research on a topic, they usually want to send a voice message and they say it's easier with the cellphone, but we can't notice if they are reading or speaking although most of them memorize it.
- 17 R **How do you think this skill should be evaluated, the speaking skill?**
- 18 T Well, you know we have to use a rubric because we have to be a little sub-objective to not sound so subjective, there are rubrics for that, which I always take them into consideration, but because of

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL
STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

- the mechanics that we have, we maybe don't print the piece of paper and tells them this is the rubric. Sometimes I do, sometimes I do but to save time what we do is or what I do is first, I tell them in this activity if it is a presentation I tell them I'm going to take into account the layout, a billboard or something visual or a slide but I don't want them to write everything only pictures or key points and from this, you are going to talk. So I'm going to see that creativity, I'm going to see pronunciation, I'm going to see they meet with all the requirements, the topic I'm asking, the preparation, teamwork if it is a group, the responsibility. I know this is in the rubric and I sometimes don't give them that, but I say them I mention and socialize with them what I'm going to evaluate, so they know when I'm going to put the grade I say them in this point from 1 to 5 I sometimes negotiate it with them. How much do you think you have from here to here? And there I put it.
- 19 R **Teacher, What do you think about the following statement? "The best way to evaluate the speaking skill is by using different evaluation techniques".**
- 20 T Of speaking? assessment techniques
- 21 R **Yes, using different types of evaluation techniques. What do you about that statement?**
- 22 T I think so because we have to take into account the skills of each student, so let's see we call the skills the (.3) each person has
- 23 R **Learning styles**
- 24 T Some learning styles, then you have to give them options, you have to give them opportunities, you have to combine or allow them to choose, you have this or you have this option, they choose the most appropriate to them.
- 25 R **And what you say, do you do it in your class? Let's say What techniques do you use?**
- 26 T For example, I give them the option, I say them is the video because many of them are shy, you can do it here in person, or you can do it as a presentation or you can do it as a role play or if you want make the video, so for those that can find it more difficult to present in front of the group or raise their voice because they tend to lower their voice when they speak in English, so we can't listen well. So I give them the option to make a video, they have to show that they are not reading.
- 27 R **What do you think should be evaluated within speaking skill taking into account that speaking includes everything that has to do with accuracy, pronunciation, intonation, fluency?**
- 28 T Well, in speaking are the components, if what I want to see is

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL
STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

- fluency within fluency are like the conversational strategies that within are how to keep, how to start a conversation, how to keep it, how to do, how to answer. I usually use I give them some expressions that are named (**formulike expressions**) so they're not thinking what's coming now, while they get the idea of what they are going to talk about. He calls attention with a (**formulike expressions**) and they know how to start the conversation because they have some pre-formulated expressions and help them to finish the conversation too.
- 29 R **In other words, if you want to look fluency, do you design an activity to see that component?**
- 30 T Exactly, sometimes I am not interested in the structure in which they speak with grammatically correct sentences; I am interested in them being able to communicate what I ask them.
- 31 R **Teacher and when you were a student, how was this skill assessed?**
- 32 T At school or University
- 33 R At school
- 34 T Imagine I at school had English six and seven and I remember I took annoyance to English because the teacher told me repeat so I had to repeat everything he said an I felt silly and I said I am not going to repeat I am not going to repeat that was like read and that we repeat what he said or make a sentence and that we repeat that's what I remember. In French I remember that I had to learn songs. At university speaking at university I learned a lot with roleplay because I was using the textbook that was street line that was only situations and we had to do roleplays. At university it was different because you help yourself searching movies watching this listening to songs.
- 35 R **And now that you are a teacher, have you used any of those assessment techniques strategies of this ability?**
- 36 T When I finish university let me tell you the truth it was a shock. I wanted to do what I did at university and schools but it is totally different what I learned was because I read every day and find. I am enrolled in various, educational websites where articles come out. I research and try every new thing that comes out if for example I worked with task-based I researched a lot about task-based then I found about project-based so worked a lot with project-based and I am usually reading and trying but when I finish university I felt ignorant when I went putting into practice.
- 37 R **Well and let's say final speaking tests, do you develop them in your class?**

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL
STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

- 38 T Final speaking tests no because here we apply final tests that are tough and that are watched by other teachers. So we don't to them. What we do are activities of the process development.
- 39 R **How do you think students feel with the assessment techniques you use?**
- 40 T Well they like it. When it is speaking they like it because they don't have to do many things and they see it like a game. So they always like it. But it is difficult to see the progress.
- 41 R **And how do you feel with the way you use to assess them? Do you consider it effective?**
- 42 T Yes using the rubrics it is a great help because when you are going to grade we say How much does he deserve? How much does he deserve? From here to here. But when you have the rubric you say any aspect from one to five and you have already told them from one to five you have to manage this manage this from here to here.
- 43 R **And what do you think when a student gets a bad grade in speaking? What do you think that is due to?**
- 44 T Well there is a fundamental part that is the attitude and the commitment. If I give them some instructions. I usually use a process that is task based there is always an input. There are always some activities that lead to finding the final objective that is the product. If that is done well, it is going to be easy for them. And I realize when the student does that with commitment. But some of them when working in groups that these activities I usually make them work in groups because they are too many, so they don't take it seriously maybe to that process and at the end they just want to do something by heart or step out or make the other group look bad. That's why I give them a grade that says group work because one partner has to support to another or motivate to do it.
- 45 R **Well you said something about the attitude, but might it be because students don't have the level to do that speaking activity?**
- 46 T Exactly, what happens is that we first have to see what students have the need they have and what I can modify to what they want. So some students depending on their capacities their learning styles as I have told you we can modify it. For example I told him you have to do this this and that. But if there is a student who finds it difficult I told him at least do it until here that I want to see your responsibility at least do it until here. And the other is that you talked to me about if they don't have the capacity. It is difficult when we haven't had the whole process. When they come here from primary is like if they start again. And in sixth and seventh

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL
STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

- there are many things to work on them that we don't work speaking well. So when they come to ninth we want to ask them more but no we know that they find it difficult to do this this and that. That's why we sometimes accept some things they say.
- 47 R **Teacher and do you agree with let's say if a student fails a speaking activity, do you agree with providing that student with another opportunity?**
- 48 T Well we always try to give students a feedback and if the student says teacher can I do it again depending on the conditions we have established. For example, I have given many students the opportunity. For example this video I said look here you have made many mistakes. I can assessed it look here you have this this and that. And they teacher I am going to do it again and I give them the opportunity.
- 49 R **Well you talked also about the group work and there are other aspects such as the participation, effort, etc. Do you have all these aspects when assessing?**
- 50 T Yes. It is one of the criteria that are there.
- 51 R **Ok and when assessing the speaking skill you told us that you share with students the assessment criteria, but Are the activities that you try to develop in your class link with what they work?**
- 52 T I usually use the related theme. If for example now that they were working culture. They always ask me no but in this unit what is what we are learning. They want me to talk about the grammar part. So I try to look for something with culture that is not specifically from grammar but from a culture theme. In this case I asked them to work they made a video about festivals in different parts of the world so there it is the culture. The other that I worked with them was the topic about Halloween that I took them about Halloween. That is culture.
- 53 R **And do you give them the opportunity to participate in some assessment processes? Maybe the criteria you are going to take into account.**
- 54 T We organize a restaurant that is part of culture because it was a restaurant in English. I mean, what are the modals people use when ordering food. So I gave them a format. Previously that I did the whole process task-based I prepared everything I had to do with video, audio, with everything. I told them well look, the day of that activity that was a real restaurant, the day of that activity remember I am going to observe this this and that. If they tell me teacher but we don't agree with assessment item or why you don't assess this

EXPLORING AN IN-SERVICE TEACHER'S BELIEFS WHEN ASSESSING EFL
STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

- item. I can do it. And when I allow them to grade themselves because they do a self-evaluation then they write me a grade and I sometimes question them. Do you think you deserve this grade? No yes because of this this and that. They tell me because of this this and that. Anyway I give them another grade and I am looking at here if it is true that he behaved well, if he really participated. So both grades are computed. It is difficult maybe when we have attitudinal assessments. For example the effort. How do I give them an effort grade if I don't know How difficult was it from him at home? How long did he practice? That's why I allow them to self-evaluate.
- 55 R **At the beginning you talked about the common European framework. That it was present in what you try to develop in class. And concerning the speaking skill, What do you think about the common European framework?**
- 56 T Well as I told you, the common European framework gives you some guidelines to achieve each level. Here, it is given in the DBA. It is minimize a little bit because it says the minimum you must achieve but we know that it is possible to achieve more. But here we are in the minimum because you know the conditions. So we are always trying to achieve the minimum because students are not so good at speaking.
- 57 R **Finally, Awhen you assess the speaking skill, When is a significant assessment process achieved in the student?**
- 58 T Ahh, when he is able to propose, support or explain a situation in a natural way. For example, I gave you the grade ninth C that is more difficult in terms of behavior, attitude and performance. But if I had given you the grade ninth A where they are always responsible, they have a good attitude since they were in sixth grade until ninth A it would have been different. There they for example I ask, they interact the other asks ah but why this or in the roleplay the always add something.
- 59 R **So it depends on the group level**
- 60 T Yes
- 65 R **Well teacher we think it is all for today, thanks for your attention. We hope we didn't make you feel uncomfortable.**
- 66 T Well we always try to collaborate because I was in your situation too.