



***USING CUED-DIALOGUE AND GAP FILLING
EXERCISES TO DEVELOP IRAQI EFL
LEARNERS' ABILITY OF SPEAKING***

A THESIS

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FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF EDUCATION
(METHODS OF TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN
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1.1 Problem of the Study and its Significance

Language is basically oral. Therefore, speaking occupies an important place in any matter of teaching and learning foreign languages. For most people, the ability to speak a language is synonymous with knowing that language since speech is the most basic means of human communication (Lazaraton, 2001:103). Nunan (2001: 225) says that the ability to function in another language is generally characterized in terms of being able to speak that language. When someone asks, "Do you know another language?", they generally mean "Can you speak the language?"

Most language learners, as Hadley (2003: 228), consider speaking ability as one of their primary goals of study. He (ibid) attributes this mainly to either because students would derive some personal satisfaction from being able to speak a second language or because they feel that the ability to speak a second language would be useful in pursuing other interests or career goals. Despite this special status that speaking occupies among other skills, it has not always figured so centrally in second and foreign language teaching. AS a matter of fact, oral skills in EFL have been neglected for the most part of EFL history. Salih (1998:3) says that "It is a common experience of the teachers of English in Iraq that students at the secondary stage are very poor and hesitant when it comes to participation in dialogues, which can be considered a valid measure for learners of oral proficiency". He adds that "even those who are able to recognize and producte conversational sentences fail to respond properly when engaged in a dialogue". Many studies in the fields of discourse

analysis and sociolinguistics reveal the participation in dialogue is not a matter of knowledge of linguistic competence; rather, it requires the mastery of the use of what is called the communicative competence and the knowledge of dialogue components. According to Lazaraton (2001: 103), oral skills played second fiddle to other skills for decades. For example, the grammar-translation method ignored speaking completely. While in a production-based approach such as the silent way, student's speech was carefully controlled for structure and content, whereas audiolingualism stressed oral skills, speech production was tightly controlled in order to reinforce correct habit formation of linguistic rules. Speaking ability only began to receive its due attention recently with the arrival of communicative language teaching, and the way of teaching spoken English has started to evolve into a more authentic way (Malmberg, 1993:166-167). Today, it is important that communication helps people participate in the social world around them.

It is also central to learn how to develop the established contact with other speakers (Savignon, 1997: 10). Cued-dialogue is a technique for targeting intensive aspects of language which requires pupils to read a dialogue in which one speaker's line have been omitted (Brown, 2005 :169). For the methodological viewpoint, a dialogue is an effective communicative device and its effectiveness lies in its utilization in creative practice and use in a great variety of situations dealing with the learner's everyday life; therefore cued dialogue will help us to bring the outside life into the classroom and help the students to express

themselves. The second source of the problem is related to the fact that speaking in a second or a foreign language as such is, as most authors state, the most demanding of four skills. Richards and Renandya (2002 : 270) and Brown (2001 : 201) mention that certain characteristics of speaking make it the most difficult skill to be acquired by second or foreign language learners. Such difficulty needs to be addressed appropriately by using the suitable techniques that would maximize opportunities for the development of the learner's oral skills. With the shift towards communicative language teaching that took place in the Iraqi EFL scene, the researcher feels that it is time to adopt the communicative techniques to achieve such goals.

Neu and Reese (1997: 127) say that in an information gap activity, one person has certain information that must be shared with others in order to solve a problem, gather information or make decisions. Information gap is a useful activity in which one person has information that the other lacks. Another advantage of information gap activities, is that students are forced to negotiate meaning because they must make what they are saying comprehensible to others in order to accomplish the task. As Cook (1996: 90) mentions, such activities "forced the students to use communication strategies whether they want to or not". It is essential for the pupils at the secondary stage to attain a fair mastery of English in order to be able to communicate ideas and experiences fluently, and for their teachers to get acquainted with the most recent developments in teaching English as a foreign language.

1.2 Aim

This study aims at identifying the effect of cued-dialogue and information-gap exercises on the development of preparatory school students' speaking ability.

1.3 Hypotheses

The aim of this study will be achieved through verifying the following hypotheses:

1-There is no statistically significant difference between the mean score of the students who are taught speaking according to cued-dialogue and gap-filling exercises and that of the students who are taught speaking according to traditional techniques.

2-There is statistically significant difference between the mean score of the students who are taught speaking according to cued-dialogue and gap-filling exercises and that of the students who are taught speaking according to traditional techniques.

1.4 Value

The value of the study stems from the significance of learning to speak as an essential aspect of the process of teaching EFL. Speaking is very important to be mastered by learners of a foreign language. This study may also be valuable for teachers of English, teachers trainers, educators, supervisors and EFL learners.

1.5 Limits

This study is limited to Iraqi EFL fifth – year preparatory school students during the academic year 2011-2012. The teaching material is limited to ten units from (3-12) taken from the New English Course for Iraq (NECI), Book7.

1.6 The Procedures

To achieve the aim of the present study, the following procedures will be adopted:

- 1-selecting a sample of EFL pupils from fifth-years preparatory schools,
- 2-dividing the selected sample of pupils randomly into two groups (an experimental group and a control group),
- 3-designing a test of speaking and verifying the validity and reliability of the test,
- 4-pre- testing of the whole selected sample of the study in order to measure the initial level of performace in speaking,
- 5-teaching the experimental group students according to cued- dialogue and information –gap activities ; whereas teaching the control group students according to traditional techniques,

6-post- testing both groups in speaking at the end of the experiment, and finally.

7-using suitable statistical methods to analyze the collected data.

1.7 Definitions of the Basic Terms

For the purpose of clarifying the major terms which are used in this study they are defined as follows:

1.7.1 Gap-Filling Activities

Harmer (2007: 275) says that "information- gap activities" are those where students have different pieces of information about the same subject and have to share this information (usually without looking at what their partner has got) in order for both of them to get all the information they need to perform a task".

Nunan (2001: 309) defines, "information gap pair or group work" tasks in which participants have access to different information. In order to complete the task, the information must be exchanged".

According to Ur (1996: 281) an interesting type of task is that based on the need to understand or transmit information, finding out what is in a partner's picture, for example. Variation on this is the opinion gap where participants exchange views on the given issue.

1.7.2 Speaking

According to Oxford Advance Learner's Dictionary (1995: 1141). *Speaking* "is making use of words in an ordinary voice; uttering words; knowing and being able to use a language; expressing oneself in words; making a speech".

-Speaking "is the expression of ideas and thoughts by means of articulate sounds produced by the vocal organs" (Webster Dictionary, 1970: 1431). Chaney (1998: 13) states that *speaking* "is the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non – verbal symbols in a variety of context".

3.7.3 Cued- Dialogue is a technique for targeting intensive aspects of language which requires students to read a dialogue in which one speaker's lines have been omitted (Brown, 2005: 149).

Cued- dialogues are techniques in which pupils read a dialogue together but can only make their own part, which usually includes opportunities for the pupils to make their own responses (Shehatha, 2003:6-7).

3.7.4 Excercises

Richards and Rodgers (2001:19) define excercises as "an implementation that which actually takes place in a classroom. It is a particular trick, stratagem or contrivance used to accomplish an immediate objective".

2.0 An introductory Notes

The theoretical background of the current study is comprised of two basic parts. Speaking as one of the most important and essential skills that must be practised, definitions of speaking skills, factors affecting students' speaking ability, communicative teaching and developing speaking activities, characteristics of successful speaking activities and the evaluation of grading scale of speaking skills. The second part deals with Cued-dialogue; its important, characteristics of the dialogue, and linguistics competences of the dialogue, information gap activities, their important, teacher's role during the activities and the previous studies.

2.1 Speaking Skills

This section will be devoted to the skill that the present study tries to improve, that is the speaking skill. Hence, a number of closely related issues will be covered.

2.1.1 The Notion of Speaking Skills

Speaking "is the expression of ideas and thoughts by means of articulate sounds produced by the vocal organs" (Webster Dictionary, 1970: 1431). According to Chaney (1998:13), speaking "is the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non – verbal symbols, in a variety of contexts". Speaking is to express or communicate opinions, feelings, ideas, etc, by or as talking and it involves the activities

on the part of speakers as psychological, physiological (articulator) and physical (acoustic) stage" (Oxford Advance Dictionary, 1995: 13).

Byrne (1998: 8) defines speaking "as a two way process between speaker and listener and involves the productive skill of speaking and the receptive skill of understanding". In the same respect, Nunan (2003, 48) agrees with Byrne that speaking is the productive oral skill and it consists of producing systematic verbal utterances to convey meaning. According to Chastain (1998: 330-358), speaking is a productive skill and it involves many components. According to (Oxford Advance Learners' Dictionary 1995:1141) speaking "is making use of words in an ordinary voice; uttering words, knowing and being able to use a language; expressing oneself in words; making a speech".

2.1.2 Different Factors Affecting Students' Speaking Skills

In learning speaking, there are a lot of factors that highly influence the process of speech and that can affect negatively acquiring speaking ability and obstructing students to speak fluently. According to Richards and Renandya (2005: 205), they mentioned four factors that affect students' oral communication ability such as :

1- Age or Maturational Concentraits

Several scholars like Scarsella and Krashen (1990: 284) argue that those who begin learning a foreign language in early childhood through natural exposure activities higher proficiency that lose beginning as

adults. This fact shows that the aging process itself may affect or limit the adult learners' ability to pronounce the target language fluently.

2- Aural Medium

Listening plays an extremely important role in the development of speaking abilities. Speaking feeds listening which precedes it. So, speaking is closely related to listening which is the basic mechanism through which the rules of language internalized.

3- Social – Cultural Factors

Language is a form of social interaction because linguistic communication occurs in the context of structured interpersonal exchange and meaning is thus socially regulated. Thus to speak a language, one must know how language is used in a social context.

4- Affective Factors

The affective side of a learner is probably one of the most important influences on language learning success or failure. The effective factors relating to foreign language learning are: emotion, self-esteem, empathy, anxiety, attitudes and motivation. These six factors play an important role in determining the success and the failure of students in learning speaking. Learning to speak a foreign language requires more than knowing its grammatical and semantic rules. Therefore, factors affecting EFL adult learners oral communication skills need to be taken into

consideration by EFL teachers in order to provide guidance in developing competent speakers of English. If teachers are aware of these things, they will teach in a more appropriate way and it will help them to develop students speaking skills.

2.1.3 What Makes Speaking Difficult?

Speaking comes naturally to humans, but is not as simple as it seems. It can be a difficult process for language learners as well as native speakers for the following reasons:

1-Many people do not like speaking in front of large groups of people. This is especially true in a foreign language, because speakers may worry about producing utterances with many errors or oddities in them.

2-Recognizable pronunciation is necessary for speech to be intelligible. It is sometimes hard to understand people with a strong regional accent in our own language, and it is hard to interpret a non- native speaker's 'Ease eat treejet ? as 'Is it three yet ?

3-Like listening, speaking takes place in real time, and speakers do not have time to construct their utterance carefully. In conversation , the commonest kind of speaking, we have to do many things all together understand what the other person is saying , say what we want to when we get the chance to speak, be prepared for unexpected changes of topic, and think of something to say when there is a long pause. (Davies & Pearce, 2000: 82).

4-Fluent speech is phrasal, not word by word. Learners have to organize their output both cognitively and physically (Brown, 2001:270).

5-Speaking is used for many different purposes, and each purpose involves different skills. In a casual conversation, for example, the speaker's purpose may be to make social contact with people, to establish rapport, or to engage in a harmless chitchat. On the other hand, when the same speaker is engaged in a discussion with someone the purpose may be to seek or express opinions, to persuade someone about something, or to clarify information. Other purposes of speech include giving instructions, describing things, complaining about people's behavior, making polite requests, entertaining people, etc. Each of these different purposes for speaking implies knowledge of the rules that account for how spoken language reflects the context or situation in which speech occurs, the participants involved and their specific roles and relationships, and the kind of activity the speakers are involved in (Richards and Renandya 2002 : 201).

6-Fluent speech contain reduced forms, such as contraction, vowel reduction, and elision so that learners who are not exposed to or who do not get sufficient practice with reduced speech will retain their rather formal-sounding full forms (Brown,1994) as quoted by (Lazaraton 2001:103).

2.1.4 Characteristics of Successful Speaking Skills

Sometimes spoken language is easy to perform, but in some cases it is difficult (Brown, 2001: 270). This statement is supported by Munjayanah (2004: 16). It states that when people want to speak fluently,

sometimes they get difficulties to do it. In order to carry out the successful speaking, they have to fulfill some characteristics of successful speaking activity. Ur (1996:120) lists some characteristics of successful speaking skill which can be used to assess the teaching \ learning processes as follows:

1- Learners Talk a lot

As much as possible of the period of time allocated to the activity is in fact occupied by learner's talk. This may be obvious, but often most time is taken up with teacher's talk or pauses.

2- Participant is Even

Classroom discussion is not dominated by a minority of talkative participants. All get a chance to speak and contributions are fairly evenly distributed.

3- Motivation is High

Learners are eager to speak because they are interested in the topic and have something new to say about it, or they want to contribute to achieve a task objective.

4- Language is of an Acceptable Level

Learners express themselves in utterances that are relevant, easily comprehensible to each other and of acceptable level of language accuracy.

2.1.5 Developing Speaking Skills

Several methodologist and teaching specialist suggest and describe the organization of activities focused on the development of speaking skill with different names and numbers of stages.

2.1.5.1 Pre-speaking Skills

Include all those things, language teachers can prepare students to be able to complete successfully the scheduled communication activity. The first step is to introduce the topic. Thinking first about the topic rather than the vocabulary or grammar will tend to focus attention on ideas and meaning rather than on linguistic elements. Language teachers may introduce the topic in several ways. One way is simply to present the theme and encourage students to cogitate a bit about it (Chastain,1988: 287). According to Harmer (2001: 59-120 -122) pre-speaking activities includes two main areas engagement and grouping learners. Engagement means "making it clear that something 'new' is going to happen". Grouping learners, it means dividing them into pairs or groups .Harmer also suggests for basic ways in grouping learners: friendship, streaming, chance and changing group.

2.1.5.2 During – Speaking Skills

To be able to integrate productive speaking skills into their classroom sequence, teachers must help students develop the prerequisite attitudes, expectation, ideas and skills. They must teach students to accept the responsibility of practising communication without supervision and to expect that students will be asked to use the material they are studying to communicate their ideas to someone else (Chastain,1988: 188). Byrne (1991: 13) divides the role of the teacher according to the kind of interaction activity distinguish between fluency and accuracy activities. During fluency activities the teacher most frequently adopts the roles of simulator, manager and consultant. On the other hand, the role that the teacher carries out during accuracy activities will primarily include the role of conductor, organizer and monitor.

2.1.5.3 Post- Speaking Skills

Teachers may place post-speaking skills immediately after the speaking activity or they may choose to wait until subsequent classes (Chastain,1988:289). Ur (1996: 22) mentions that, before the actual process of bringing the activity to the end, however some pairs or groups may finish earlier than others. Such extra work may include, for example, a further elaboration of the task, getting students to read their books, or asking students to get on their homework. It is necessary to provide a positive feedback that is likely to motivate students and bring about some kinds of improvement, along with pointing out what went wrong during the activity (Harmer, 2001: 123).

2.1.6 Characteristics of Real Communication

Chastain (1988:277) as cited in Taylor (1983) mentions the following Characteristics of real communication.

- 1- Participants must be able to comprehend meaning that is conveyed at a level beyond that of the sentence.
- 2- They have a purpose, which is to bridge some information gap.
- 3- They always have the choice of what to say and how to say it.
- 4-They have an objective in mind while they are talking.
- 5-They have to attend to many factors at the same time.

2.1.7 The Evaluation of Speaking Skill

Though oral tests are difficult to design and judge, they are important in teaching practices. Based on appropriate criteria, test results describe levels of performance and provide useful information to teachers, students, parents , and others interested in understanding both the quality of performance and how, in the future, that performance might be improved (New York State Education Department, 2000).

Brown (1997: 4) lists five components of testing speaking skills as follows:

1- Comprehension: Oral communication certainly requires a subject to respond to speech as well as to initiate it.

2- Grammar: It is needed by students to arrange a correct sentence in conversation, or the student's ability to manipulate structure and to distinguish appropriate grammatical from inappropriate ones. The utility of grammar is also to learn the correct way to gain expertise in language in oral and written forms.

3- Pronunciation: Pronunciation is the way by which students produce the learners' language when they speak.

4- Vocabulary: One can not communicate effectively or express his ideas both oral and written forms if he does not have sufficient vocabulary. So vocabulary means the appropriate diction which is used in communication.

5- Fluency: Fluency can be defined as the ability to speak fluently and accurately. Fluency in speaking is the main goal of many language learners.

2.1.8 Developments in the Teaching of the Spoken Language

For many years, speaking, as the researcher referred to in the first chapter, does not receive the attention that it really deserves in the FLT scene. Bygate (2002: 34) states that the teaching of speaking began to

emerge as a concern in its own right only in the 1940s. He adds that prior to that, language teaching approaches either ignored speaking, as it is the case with the grammar-translation method, or were based on the use of texts. Bygate (2001: 14) also says that foreign language teaching methods in general have rarely focused on the production of spoken discourse. He attributes that to the following:

1-Tradition: Grammar-translation methods to language teaching still have a huge influence on language teaching, marginalizing the teaching of communication skills.

2-Technology: Only since the mid-1970s has tape-recording been sufficiently cheap and practical to enable the widespread study of talk whether native speaker talk or learner talk.

3- Exploitation: Most approaches to language teaching (the direct method, the audio lingual approach) as well as more marginal approaches (such as the silent way, community language learning, and suggestopedia exploited oral communication centrally as part of their methodology: not as a discourse skill in its own right, but rather as a special medium for providing language input, memorization practice and habit information. Howatt (2004: 173) mentions that the European reform movement stressed the primacy of speech and the importance of adopting oral methodology in foreign language teaching classes. However, Bygate (2002: 34) argues that within this context, speech was used first as an effective way of presenting and demonstrating grammatical structures without using the first language, as in the direct method, and in Palmer's

use of question-answer sequences in his 'oral method'. Second, it was used as a way of facilitating memorization. Therefore, spoken discourse was mainly represented through question-answer interactions or the use of written dialogues.

During the Second World War, consequences of neglecting speaking for many years became pronounced as the American military found itself short of people who were conversationally fluent in foreign languages. Thus, it needed a way of training soldiers in oral- and aural skills quickly. American structural linguists stepped into the gap and developed a program which borrowed from the direct method, especially its emphasis on listening and speaking (Schmitt 2002: 5). The result was the emergence of audiolingualism. The latter put much emphasis on the spoken language and this emphasis led to a radical change in the type of material selected as a basis for teaching (Rivers, 1981: 41). In the 1970s, however, critics began to suggest that audiolingual drills were limited in that they failed to teach the typical forms and functions of oral language, and that a functional approach might be more effective.

This led to the introduction of drills and exercises that taught learners to express a range of speech functions (such as invitations, requests, apologies, offers, refusals) and to vary the degrees of formality (particularly in terms of politeness), though some began to include role play activities (e.g., Morrow and Johnson) (Bygate, 2002: 35). With the advent of the theory of communicative competence (Hymes, 1972) and the practice of communicative language teaching, the teaching of oral

communication skills as a contextualized activity has become the focal point in many EFL classes (Lazaraton, 2001: 103).

2.2 Audiolingualism and Communicative Language Teaching

In this section, light will be shed on the audiolingual method and communicative language teaching. The audiolingual method will be discussed due to the fact that it was the first modern method to lay emphasis on speaking as a skill and also because of the fact that it is a pioneer in introducing dialogue as a teaching technique. Whereas communicative language teaching will be discussed because of the fact that the techniques that the researcher intends to implement belong to this approach, and also because this method is the most adopted method around the world nowadays.

2.2.1. The Audiolingual Method

2.2.1. Definition

The audiolingual method, or audiolingualism, is a language teaching method based on the notion that learning another language is a matter of acquiring new linguistic habits. The method has learners memorize and manipulate the target grammar through various manipulation and substitution drills (Nunan, 2001: 301).

2.2.2 History

Audiolingualism is the joint product of structural linguistics and behaviorists psychology (Al-Hamash and Younis, 1985: 74). While the principal methods of the first half of the twentieth century, the grammar-translation and the direct methods, had largely developed in the European school systems, audiolingualism is in origin mainly American (Stern, 1983: 426). In the fifties it was most frequently referred to as 'the oral approach or 'the aural-oral method'. The term audiolingualism was proposed by Brooks as a more pronounceable alternative (Van Els et al, 1984: 153).

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, the method became widely adopted in North America and then it found its way into the European educational system. Although the method began to fall from favor in the late 1960s, audiolingualism and materials based on audiolingual principles continue to be used today (Richards and Rodgers, 2001: 54).

2.2.3. Theoretical Background and Classroom Application

The audiolingual method aims at teaching the language skills in the order of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Thus, the aural/oral skills receive most of the attention (Rivers, 1981: 44) and (Larsen-Freeman, 2000: 46). Material is presented in spoken form, and the emphasis in the early years is on the language as it is spoken in everyday situations; reading and writing at this stage play supportive roles. At advanced levels, when the last two skills receive increasing emphasis, students are introduced to more literary forms of expression. At all stages,

however, the listening and speaking skills are kept at a high level by continuous practice (Stern,1983 :427). Classroom activities emphasize mimicry and memorization, and students learn dialogues and sentence patterns by heart (Lightbown and Spada, 2006: 34).

According to behaviorism, language learning is essentially the formation of good language 'habits' through repeated reinforcement. In Audiolingualism, there are three stages of learning. These stages are: **presentation, practice, and production (PPP)**. The three-step PPP process was aimed at developing automatic habits largely through classroom processes of modeling, repetition, and controlled practice. PPP was applied originally to the teaching of grammar, but, by extension, it has been used to structure the teaching of language skills as well, including speaking. A typical teaching sequence might involve listening to, and imitating, a taped dialogue, followed by repetition of features of the dialogue, and then performance of the dialogue in class (Thornbury, 2005: 38).

2.2.4 The Role of the Teacher

Richards and Rodgers (2001: 62) say that audiolingualism is a teacher-dominated method. Larsen-Freeman (2000: 45) likens the teacher in audiolingualism to an orchestra leader who directs and controls the language behavior of the students. The teacher is responsible for providing the students with a good example for imitation.

2.2.5 The Role of the Students

Students are imitators of the teacher's model or the tapes supplied to models speakers. They follow the teacher's directions and respond as accurately and as rapidly as possible (Larsen-Freeman, 2000: 45).

2.2.6 Correcting Errors

In the audiolingual method, correct production by learners should always be praised (reinforced) and incorrect production instantly and firmly corrected (Pearse and Davies, 2000: 190)

2.2.7 Evaluation

Evaluating learners is done by having them take tests of the discrete-point type. A discrete-point test is a one in which each question would focus on only one point of the language at a time. For example, students may be asked to distinguish between words in a minimal pair, or to supply an appropriate verb form in a sentence (Larsen-Freeman, 2000: 47).

2.2.8 The Fall of Audiolingualism

The audiolingual method enjoyed many years of popularity, especially in the period between 1958 and 1964 (Brown 2001: 23). But this popularity was not to last forever. The effectiveness of audiolingualism was challenged almost as soon as the claims for were advanced. The studies of Scherer and Wertheimer (1964), Chastain and Woredehorf (1968), the Pennsylvania Project (Smith 1970) sought to find concrete evidence of the merits of audiolingualism (Stern 1983: 463).

Suddenly the whole audiolingual paradigm was called into question: pattern practice, drilling, memorization. This might lead to language-like behaviors, but they were not resulting in competence (Richards and Rodgers, 2001: 66). Audiolingualism popularity started to wane and it gradually lost its place to the communicative approaches Brown (2001: 23).

Wilkins (1975:168) mentions that the audiolingual approach is habit theory which was widely used in teaching foreign language was attacked by Chomsky's theory at transformational grammar that language is not habit structure. In the 1970s language teaching became increasingly influenced by cognitive and sociolinguistic theories of language and learning. Specialists realized that audio lingual approaches omitted to take account of two aspects of language in communication. First, the audio lingual approach neglected the relationship between languages and meaning .Second, it fails to provide a social context within which the formal features of language could be associated with functional aspects such as politeness (Carter&Nunan, 2001:15).Chomsky (1966:155) mentions that audiolingual approach emphasizes on repetition and memorization .While sentences are not learned by these items. Though memorization and drilling are useful for the early stages, but they become boring and unsatisfying later.

2.3 Communicative Language Teaching Approaches

2.3.1 Definition

Communicative language teaching, or (CLT), is an approach and philosophical orientation that connects classroom-based language learning with the language that learners need in order to communicate outside the classroom (Nunan, 2003) as cited by (Linse, 2005: 56).

2.3 .2 Origins and Theoretical Background

The goal of most methods that existed until the 1970 was to enable students to communicate in the target language. However, in the 1970s, educators began to question if they were going about meeting in the right way. Some observed that students could produce sentences accurately in a lesson, but could not use them appropriately when genuinely communicating outside of the classroom (Larsen-Freeman, 2000: 121). Many educators noted, as Widdowson (1978: 3) points out, that being able to communicate required more than mastering linguistic structures. Students may know the rules of linguistic usage, but be unable to use the language. Such observations contributed to a shift in the field in the late 1970s and early 1980s from a linguistic-centered approach to a communicative approach (Larsen-Freeman, 2000: 121). Hadley (2003: 104) states that CLT has developed from the writings of British applied linguists such as Wilkins, Widdowson, Brumfit, Candlin, and others, as well as American educators such as Savignon (1983), all of whom emphasize notional-functional concepts and communicative competence, rather than grammatical structures, as central to language teaching (Harmer 2007:50). says that CLT was a reaction to what had gone before – namely the grammatical patterning of structural-situationalism and the

rigidity of the drill-type methodology that audiolingualism made varying use of.

According to Cook (2003: 36), the essence of CLT is a shift of attention from the language system as an end in itself to the successful use of that system in context; that is to say from an emphasis on form to an emphasis on communication. Language-learning success is to be assessed neither in terms of accurate grammar and pronunciation for their own sake, nor in terms of explicit knowledge of the rules, but the ability to do things with the language, appropriately, fluently and effectively. Consequently, communicative pedagogy shifted its attention from the teaching and practice of grammar and pronunciation rules, and the learning of vocabulary lists, to communicative activities.

According to Harmer (2007: 50), CLT has two basic principles: the first is that language is not just patterns of grammar with vocabulary items slotted in, but also involves language functions such as inviting, agreeing and disagreeing, suggesting, etc., which students should learn how to perform. The second principle of CLT is that if students get enough exposure to language and opportunities for language use and if they are motivated – then language learning will take care of itself.

2.3.3 Major characteristics of Communicative Approaches

1- Classroom goals are focused on all the components (grammatical, discourse, functional, sociolinguistic, and strategic) of communicative

competence. Goals, therefore, must intertwine organizational aspects of language with the pragmatics.

2- Language techniques are designed to engage learners in the pragmatic, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes. Organizational language forms are not the central focus, but rather aspects of language that enable the learner to accomplish those purposes.

3- Fluency and accuracy are seen as complementary principles underlying communicative techniques. At times fluency may have to take on more importance than accuracy in order to keep learners meaningfully engaged in language use(Brown,2001:43).

4- Judicious use of the native language is acceptable where feasible, and translation may be used when students find it beneficial or necessary.

5- Attempts by learners to communicate with the language are encouraged from the beginning of instruction.The new language system will be learned best by struggling to communicate one's meaning and by negotiating of meaning through interaction with others (Hadley, 2003: 104).

2.3.4 Learner Roles

The emphasis in communicative language teaching is on the processes of communication, rather than mastery of language forms, Breen and Candlin (1980: 110) as cited by Richards and Rodgers (2001: 166) say that the learner's role within CLT is that of a negotiator – between the self, the learning process, and the object of learning. This

role emerges from and interacts with the role of joint negotiator within the group and within the classroom procedures and activities which the group undertakes. The implication for the learner is that he should contribute as much as he gains, and thereby learn in an independent way.

2.3.5 Teacher Roles

The teacher facilitates communication in the classroom. In this role, one of his major responsibilities is to establish situations likely to promote communication. During the activities he acts as an adviser, answering students' questions and monitoring their performance. He might make note of their errors to be worked on at a later time during more accuracy-based activities (Larsen-Freeman, 2000: 128).

Richards and Rodgers (2001: 167) identify five roles for the teacher in CLT. These roles are:

- 1-facilitator of the communication process between all participants in the classroom,
- 2- Independent participant within the learning-teaching group,
- 3- Needs analyst. The CLT teacher assumes a responsibility for determining and responding to learner language needs.
- 4- Counselor. to exemplify an effective communicator seeking to maximize the meshing of speaker intention and hearer interpretation through the use of paraphrase, confirmation, and feedback,

5- Group process manager. for organizing the classroom as a setting for communication and communicative activities.

2.3.6 Tolerance of Students' Errors

Errors of form are tolerated during fluency-based activities and are seen as natural outcome of the development of communication skills. Students can have limited linguistic knowledge and still be successful communicators. The teacher may note the errors during fluency activities and return to them later with an accuracy-based activity (Larsen-Freeman, 2000: 132).

2.3.7. Evaluation

A teacher evaluates not only the students' accuracy, but also their fluency. The student who has the most control of the structures and vocabulary is not always the best communicator (Richards and Rodgers 2001: 167). A teacher can informally evaluate his students' performance in his role as an adviser or co-communicator. For more formal evaluation, a teacher is likely to use an integrative test which has a real communicative function. In order to assess students' writing skill, for instance, a teacher might ask them to write a letter to a friend (Larsen-Freeman, 2000: 132). Johnson and Johnson(1998: 74-75) say that in a communicative test the items relates directly to language use, tasks in the test are as authentic as possible, knowledge of language function and

appropriateness of expression to social situation are tested as well as knowledge of structure and word meaning.

2.4- The Definitions of the Dialogue

A dialogue in language teaching, is a model conversation used to practice speaking. Dialogues are often specially written to practice language items. They usually also contain simplified grammar and vocabulary, and so may be rather different from real- life conversation Richards et al (1992:107). Dialogue is a crucial part of teaching and learning a second language. Despite its importance in teaching speaking, it has been undervalued, English language teachers have continued to teach speaking throughout repetition or memorization of dialogues. Today the specialists ensure that the goal of teaching speaking should improve students' communication skills (Chaney, 1998: 13).

Since language is essentially dialogic in its use, practising dialogues has been used for a long time in language teaching. Grammatical structures or lexical items can be worked into a dialogue with a little ingenuity. Dialogue practice also provides a useful change of focus from teacher- led classroom interaction (Thornbury, 2005: 73). According to Chafe (1986: 16), "dialogue is truly communicative event which is a dynamic exchange in which linguistic competence must adapt itself to the total information input, both linguistic and paralinguistic". Richards (1983: 118) says that the speaker and the hearer have to take the initiative, ask questions or express disagreement in the dialogue, all of which

require a command of particular language features. Al-Hamash (1982: 7) mentions that dialogue is a short interchange or conversation centering around topics mainly taken from reading passages. At the first level of instruction, learning is based on dialogues containing commonly used everyday expressions and basic structures of high frequency. The vocabulary content is kept to a useful minimum so that the students can concentrate on establishing a firm control of structure. The dialogues are learned by a process of mimicry-memorization: students learn the dialogue sentences by heart. First, they listen carefully to the teacher, or to a native model on a tape, until they can distinguish the sounds and intonation of the phrase to be learned. Then, they repeat the phrase after the model until they are repeating it accurately and fluently (Rivers, 1981: 44). Now, students take the role of one person in the dialogue, and the teacher takes the other. After students have learned the one person's lines, they switch roles and memorize the other person's part. Another way of practicing the two roles is for half of the class to take one role and the other half to take the other. After the dialogue has been memorized, pairs of individual students might perform the dialogue for the rest of the class (ibid, 47).

2.4.1. Cued – Dialogue

Cued dialogue is a technique used for targeting intensive aspects of language which requires learners to read a dialogue in which one speaker's lines have been omitted from methodological viewpoint. A

dialogue is an effective communicative device and effectiveness lies in its utilization in creative practice and use in a great variety of situations dealing with learners everyday life ;therefore, dialogues will help us to bring the outside life into the classroom and help the students to express themselves (Brown, 2005:169). Cued- dialogue is an activity in which pupils read a dialogue together but can only make their own part, which usually includes opportunities for the pupils to make their own responses (Shehatha,2003: 6).

While Chastain (1988:275) states that in real- language dialogue in a normal fashion, participants must learn to attend, and produce a different type of utterance and to focus on many features of communication.

2.4.2 The Reasons for Using Dialogue

The text book writers produce dialogues for a variety of reasons; such reasons may usually include the following:

- 1- Showing how native speakers engage in discourse to find out information, to get something done, or just to make contact with another person.
- 2- The dialogue may be included to show learners how spoken English (or any other target language) sounds.
- 3-To provide samples of a new vocabulary to be learned.
- 4- To give grammar practice.

(Cameron, 2001: 69).

5- To provide chances for practicing real – life speaking in the safety of the classroom.

6- When engaged in a dialogue, learners will try to use any or all of the language they know. This will provide feedback for the teacher and learners themselves.

(Harmer, 2007:

123).

2.4.3. The Importance of Dialogue

Dialogue is a part of teaching language. Dialogue motivates us to practice with foreigners. However, dialogue has two important purposes; first it provides the students with a bit of language that helps them perform in a particular setting. The second is to introduce certain high-frequency patterns of the language that will be practiced further in the dialogue expression activities (Ministry of Education New York,2009).

A dialogue is most important language teaching device that appeared in textbooks around the world, and though many language teaching techniques have come and gone since 200 A. D. The dialogue has survived his right down to the nowadays (Firth, 1964:3). While Brown (2001:169) mentions the advantage of dialogue is that the learners are not only able to understand the words of the foreign language, but also understand the correct language rules, it can be said that learning dialogue can represent the learners' interactions by using suitable words in sentences. Learning dialogue is not only helping the student to understand what he is saying, but also giving him a tool of analyzing vocabulary and

grammatical discussion. Lane (1978: 58) describes other important aspects of dialogue. The first is the creation and maintenance of social relationships as friendship, and the second one is the exchange of information, the negotiation of statuses and social roles, as well as deciding on and carrying out joint actions. Van Els, et al (1977: 266) mention that dialogues have acquired a prominent place as a means of presentation. Dialogue allows the teacher to present new language material functionally in a communicative situation, which makes it easier for learners to grasp the new material.

2.4.4 Characteristics of Dialogue

Hedge (2000:263) as cited in Cook (1989: 51) offers the following characteristics of dialogue:

- 1- The greeting with which dialogue usually opens occurs at the beginning of dialogue and can not occur anywhere else in dialogue.
- 2- Any participant can speak at any time.
- 3- Every participant can have something to say and can have a turn.
- 4-It is no primarily necessitated by a practical task.
- 5-The number of participants is small.
- 6- Talk is primarily for the participant and not for an outside audience

2.4.5 Dialogue Communicative Competence

The notion of dialogue communicative competence focuses on the speaker's conversational oral ability to produce and understand sentences which are appropriate to the context in which they occur, what the conversationalists need to know in order to communicate effectively in socially distinct settings (Crystal, 1985:59). While Chastain (1988:70) mentions that communicative competence is "the ability to choose the language that is appropriate to the situation and to the listener". Littlewood (1981: 14) says that dialogue communicative competence is a dynamic rather than a static concept. It depends on the conversational exchange of meaning between two or more persons. Widdowson (2007:54) mentions that communication is always a matter of negotiating some kind of common agreement between the parties in an interaction. The first- person party, the sender (**P1**), formulates a message by drawing on systematic and schematic knowledge and the second person party, the receiver (**P2**), brings similar knowledge to bear in interaction. Communication is effective to the extent that there is some convergence between the two.

How much convergence is achieved in the communication will naturally depend on there being a measure of correspondence between person one (**p1**) and person two (**p2**) knowledge. Thus problems might arise if (p1) uses items of language outside (**p2's**) competence, or refers to an ideational framework that (**p2**) does not know about, or follows interpersonal conventions that (**p2**) is unfamiliar with (ibid).

2.4.6 Linguistic Competence of Dialogue

According to Brumfit and Johnson (1987: 186) linguistic competence is necessary for achieving communication competence. The learner who has sufficient command of language competence can deal with all situations and expression his different needs and thoughts.

Linguistic competence includes the following items:

a- Grammar

b- Vocabulary

c- Fluency

d- Pronunciation

1- Grammar

Gebhard (2006 : 169 – 170) says conversation in a second language means knowing how to maintain interaction and focus on meaning; use conversational grammar, introduce, develop and change topics .To truly communicate, you must also be able to use conversational grammar, which is different from standard grammar because it is based on how people actually talk. While Harmer (20007:12) says that the grammar of language is the description of the way in which words can change their forms and can be combined into sentences in that language. Grammar: it is needed for students to arrange a correct sentence in conversation, or the student's ability to manipulate structure and to distinguish appropriate grammatical from in appropriate ones. The utility of grammar is also to learn the correct way to gain expertise in language in its oral and written forms(Brown, 1997:4).

2-Vocabulary

One can not communicate effectively or express their ideas both oral and written form if they do not have sufficient vocabulary. So vocabulary means the appropriate diction which is used in communication Brown (1997: 4). Carter (1992: 86) states that vocabulary plays an important role in conversational exchanges through which students express their ideas, thoughts and opinions to make themselves understood. Hedge (2000: 115) points out that a simple way of defining vocabulary is to say that "in a given context, one linguistic item can be exchanged for another without changing the meaning of the sentence or utterance". While Thornbury (2005: 22) mentions that vocabulary has interpersonal function by identifying what the conversationalists like or don't like when they begin to express their thoughts, ideas and opinions.

3- Fluency

Thornbury (2005:6) defines fluency as "the ability to speak fast". Crystal and Davy (1975:88) state that fluency means "how utterances are connected, how words are changed, how elements of structure are omitted". While Lesson (1975:22) defines fluency as "that organizational feature of the intellectual content of the utterance and the speed with which it is communicated to the hearer". Fluency can be defined as the ability to speak fluently and accurately. Fluency in speaking is the main goal of many language learners (Brown, 1997:4).

4- Pronunciation

Cilce Murcia (2002:117) says that "pronunciation is not merely an aspect of the oral production of words and sentences". It is a dynamic element of conversational fluency within the domain of fluency rather than accuracy". Thornbury(2005: 24) mentions that, "the lowest level of knowledge a speaker draws on is that of pronunciation". Pronunciation is the way for students to produce learner language when they speak (Brown, 1997:4).

2.4.7 Components of a Dialogue

Like other speaking activities, dialogues have a beginning and an end with a series of interactive communications in between (Chastain, 1988:276). Since a dialogue is a connected speech, it contains the following components:

1-Opening

2-Topic

3-Adjacency Pairs

4-Taking Turns

5- Closing

1- Opening

According to Clark and Clark (1977:226) a dialogue is opened when one speaker gets another speaker's attention and signals to start a dialogue. Hedge (2000:267) says that there are conversational ways of opening a dialogue in English: some of these are contextually facilitated, as in the British 'It is a nice day, isn't it? Where the tag ending invites a response. In fact, many openings are ritualized as statement followed by response or question followed by answer, for example 'These buses get later, don't they? Or 'Busy here today, isn't it?' These openings are all attention- getting and can lead to further conversation. Gebhard (2006:170) says that opening a dialogue with a formulaic expression such as what's up? While Halliday (1975: 91) points out that the phatic communion is the language of social contact that establishes and maintains good and friendly relations among the dialogue participants. The actual sense of the words used in phatic communion matters little; it is facial expression and intonation that are probably the important things. Knowledge of the spoken form of any language must include knowledge of its conventions of phatic communion, dialogue is impossible unless one is equipped with meaningless phrases of use when there is nothing to say (Widdowson, 1978:107).

2- Topic

Brown and Yule (1983:75) and Tyler (1978 :452) define a topic as "what is being talked about" or something about which speakers contributed with relevant utterances bounded by transactional markers :

lexical markers such as : **by the way** and phonological ones such as change in pitch and on which the attention of participants is connected. Richardson (1981:423) mentions that "dialogue participants need to have to a variety of topics". This requires a wider repertoire of vocabulary items and grammatical structures for learners to be able to deal with such variety of topics. Gebhard (2006:170) says that carrying on a dialogue also requires speakers to introduce, develop, and change topics. This aspect of dialogue management can be complex, the selection and development of a topic done through a process of negotiation.

3- Adjacency pairs

According to Hedge (2000:267) the term ‘adjacency pairs’ has been given to exchanges where a turn by one speakers requires an immediate response, as in greetings, invitations, compliments, enquiries about health, and complaints. More than one response might be possible, for example, a justification rather than an apology might be given after receiving a complaint. Such responses usually require more careful formation and students need to learn and practice the necessary language. Schegloff and Sacks (1983: 289) mention that adjacency pairs as sequences of two utterances forming a pair. The first utterance forms a first pair –part and the second utterance forms a second pair-part.

These utterance are characterized by being adjacent and ordered, in the first utterance must belong to the class of the first pair- parts, the second to the class of second pair –parts; so that a particular first part

requires a second part, for instance: greetings generally follow greetings, accepting and refusing follows offers and so on. While Widdowson (2007: 37) mentions that question and answer turns can be considered another example of adjacency pair. The asking of a question will generally signal a shift of turn and require that the turn should take the form of a reply. What kind of reply is appropriate will, of course, depend on the kind of question. When A asks B a question, it will be, more often than not, in order to elicit something that B knows about but A does not. If A is a teacher, however, and B a pupil the question is likely to be about something A already knows about, its purpose being to get the pupil to display their knowledge in an approved way. As every pupil knows, there are penalties for not conforming to this particular routine. Similarly, questions asked in a cross-examination in court are of a particular kind and are designed to elicit particular kinds of answer.

Thus, when a speaker produces an utterance which serves as a first pair-part an appropriate second pair-part is expected from the conversational partner; for example.

A- Greeting – Greeting

A: Hello.

B: Hi

B- Question – Answer

A: Is this yours?

B- Yes.

C- Introduction - Good morning. My name is Linda. How can I help you?

Typically in these cases, the greeting, introduction, and question occur in this fixed sequence and without a pause to allow for a shift of turn.

4- Taking Turns

According to Gebhard (2006:171) Taking turns “means to take part in a dialogue also means to take turns”. Students often report that one of their greatest difficulties is entering a dialogue. This is not surprising given that this requires a rapid sequence: watching for indications that the current speaker is coming to a close (for example, falling intonation); giving signals of a desire to come in (for example, raising eyebrows, leaning, forward, looking at the speaker intently, coughing); formulating a turn which fits the flow of the dialogue and which picks up on what has already been said, and finding the language to express it (Hedge, 2000: 268).

Gebhard (2006: 171) says that there are both long and short turns. A short turn includes just one or two utterances, such as in what’s up? A long turn takes place when it is necessary for a speaker to explain or justify something, to provide an anecdote, or to tell a story. Many EFL Students have difficulty taking long turns in a dialogue because to do so requires them to take on possibility for generating a sequence of utterances that gives the listener a good understanding of what they are saying.

5- Closing

Thornbury (2005:73) says that closing stage is when adjacent students performed the dialogue, all participants working at the same time. The teacher's role at this stage is to move around the class, checking to see that students are on task and offering any guidance or correction, as appropriate. When participants finish their dialogue, they can be asked to switch the roles and do it again, or to change key elements in the dialogue such as the relationship between the speakers, or attempt to do the dialogue from memory. Closings need to be carefully negotiated as there is usually a pre- closing signal, for example, 'Well, I must think about going....' or 'I do not want to keep you.....' before the actual closing (Hedge 2000:267). Coulthard (1977:85) says that the ending of dialogue is something that has to be achieved. Participants do not stop speaking suddenly, they usually end their dialogue with a closing pair which can only occur when conversational topic has been exhausted and participants have agreed to end their dialogue.

2.4.8 Dialogue and Discourse

Dialogue is one form of discourse having most of the characteristics of spoken discourse. Coulthard (1977:63) states that in a stretch of dialogue, participants do not communicate by means of individual words or clauses or even by individual sentences. Utterance are not isolated, each utterance is tied to a previous one. Participants in a dialogue have to understand what has gone before in order to produce a coherent utterance. Thus typing is a cohesive device and an indication of speaker's

understanding of what has gone before. Discourse competence includes the followings elements:

1-Cohesion

2-Coherence

1- Cohesion

According to Widdowson (1979:145) Cohesion relates to rules of use which help to realize propositional development of a spoken text. When we speak or write we do not express our thoughts through the use of single sentences. Rather what we produce is a number of sentences related to each other in some way. These sentences together comprise what is called **text**(written or spoken) the question that arises here is how these sentences are connected together? A text must have a certain structure that depends on factors quite different from those required in the structure of a single sentence. Some of these factors are described in terms of cohesion, or the ties or connections that exist within texts (Yule, 2010: 143).The root meaning of cohesion is sticking together. Cohesion shows how sentences which are structurally independent of one another may be linked together through particular features of their interpretation (Halliday, 1964: 27). Halliday and Hasan (1976 : 4) , in their definition of cohesion , state that : " the concept of cohesion is a semantic one ; it refers to the relations of meaning that exist within the text , and that define it as a text" . Cohesion occurs where the interpretation of some elements in the discourse is dependent on that of another. A very famous

example that has been quoted in the works of many authors is that provided by (Halliday and Hasan 1976:4).

Wash and core six cooking apples . Put them into a fireproof dish.

It is clear that **them** in the second sentence refers back to (is anaphoric to) the **six cooking apples** in the first sentence. This anaphoric of **them** gives cohesion to the two sentences.

2- Coherence

When we talked about cohesion we said that there were certain linguistic links that would help to connect the text together. Such links exist within the text itself. However, such linguistic devices do not solely lead to a full understanding of the text under question. As a matter of fact, it is quite easy to create a highly cohesive text that has a lot of connection between that sentences , but is very difficult to interpret . There must be another factor that leads us to distinguish connected texts that make sense from those that do not. This factor is usually described as COHERENCE (Yule, 2010: 143- 144). Callow and Callow (1992: 8) state that the human mind can only grasp what relates logically both to our existing knowledge and to the rest of the text. Richards et al (1992: 61) define coherence as the relationship which links the meanings of utterances or of the sentences in a text. Cook (1989: 156) points out that coherence is the quality of meaning, unity, and purpose perceived in discourse.

Salkie (1995: 5) says that in grammar we say that a sentence that does not work is ungrammatical. In text and discourse analysis we say

that a text that does not work is incoherent. According to Widdowson (2007: 51), no matter how cohesive a text may be in terms of internal contextual links that can be identified, that extent to which it is interpreted as coherent discourse will always depend on how far it can be related externally to contextual realities, to the ideational and interpersonal schemata that readers are familiar within the particular socio-cultural world they live in. A very good example is that presented by the American sociologist, Harvey Sacks, cited by Radford et al.

Mrs. Smith: I have a fourteen – year – old son.

Mr. Jones: well, that’s all right.

Mrs. Smith: I also have a dog.

Mr. Jones: Oh I ‘m sorry.

This discourse seems hopelessly incoherent, until we learn that Mrs. Smith is trying to rent an apartment and Mr. Jones is the landlord. It seems that the essential feature of coherence is what speakers \ writers and hearers \ readers believe and what they can sensibly infer. In the previous dialogue, both participants understood perfectly well that Mrs. Smith was looking to rent an apartment from Mr. Jones, and so Mr. Jones’s final response would be taken to mean something along the lines of "I can not rent the apartment to you. But this comes about as a result of our knowledge of the restrictions on property rentals" (ibid).

2.5. Information Gap Activity

As discussed in part one of the principle tenets of the communicative approach to language teaching is that the learners are involved in actual interaction in the classroom. This interaction must be meaningful and involved an authentic use of language (Basturkmen, 1994: 50). To help students develop their communicative efficiency in speaking, there are some activities used in the classroom to promote the development of speaking skills of our learners.

2.5.1 The meaning of Gap

Harmer (1991:48) defines information gap as "gap" between the two persons in the information they possess, and the conversation helps to close that gap so that now both speakers have the same information. Hedge (2000:58) defines information-gap activity as one which involves a transfer of given information from one person to another or from one form to another, or from one place to another generally calling from the decoding or encoding of information from or into language.

2.5.2 Types of Gap

Generally, the activities which depend on bridging a gap could be in the form of the following:

1- The reasoning gap activity

Involves deriving some new information from given information through the process of inference or deduction and the perception of

relationships or patterns. One example is working out a teacher's timetable on the basis of a given class timetable. Another is deciding what course of action is best for example cheapest or quickest for a given purpose and within given constraints. The activity necessarily involves comprehending and conveying information, as information-gap activity, but the information to be conveyed is not identical with that initially comprehended. There is a piece of reasoning which connects the two (Hedge, 2000: 59).

2- The opinion gap

This involves identifying and articulating a personal preference, feeling, or attitude in response to a given situation. One example is story completion; another is taking part in the discussion of a social issue. The activity may involve using factual information and formulating argument to justify one's opinion Hedge (2000, 59- 60). Everyone has different opinions, feelings and thoughts about the world. Finding out someone's feelings and opinions helps objective close the gap between people. The number of personalized activities in many textbooks shows the value of this gap(Liao, 2006: 5).

3- The experience gap

All students in class have had different experiences in their lives, so this type is a good task for communication. Questionnaires can be exploited the experience gap, particularly those that aim to practice past

form, e.g.a questionnaire to find out what games people played when they were children (Littlewood,1991 : 91).

4- The Knowledge gap

Students know different things about the world .This gap can be exploited in brainstorming and general knowledge – style quizzes (ibid).

5- The information gap

This is the classic gap exploited by communicative approach. According to Johnson and Johnson (1998:166) "one of the principles underlying communicative methodology is message-focus. This has given rise to activities which simulate real communication by involving the exchange of information or opinion between participants".

2.5.3 Types of Information

The information involved in the gap can be of two types supplied-to-the learner and supplied –by-the learner.

1- Supplied –to- the learner

This kind usually discussed in the literature on information gap, is when the gap is created by giving one or more group members information which others do not have. An example could involve giving one person one version of a picture, giving another version of the same picture to their partner, and asking them to identify the differences

between the two pictures. This activity is called spot the difference (Susanti, 2007:12).

2- Supplied –by-the- learner

Information gaps are those which exist because of unique information which learners already possess. Asking students to interview each other about their families would be an example of unique information which learners supply from knowledge they already possess (Jacobs, 1998:4).

2.5.4 Types of Information Gap Activities

There are two types of information gap activities: one-way and two-way. According to McKay and Tom (1999) as quoted in (The National Center for Family Literacy and Center for Applied Linguistics, 2004 : 4) , one- way occurs when one person holds information which other group member(s) do not have. An example of a one –way information exchange is one in which one person has a picture and describes it to his\ her partner who tries to draw it. In a two –way information gap activities, both learners have information to share to complete the activity e.g., both have some information about directions to a location, but they have to share the information that they have to complete the directions (Ellis, 1999:95). Accordingly, Harmer (2007: 229) mentions that one popular information Activity is called **Describe and draw**. In this activity, one student has a picture which they must not show their partner (teachers sometimes like to use surrealist painting – empty doorways on beaches,

trains coming out of fireplace, etc) All the partner has to do is to draw the picture without looking at the original, so the one with picture will give instructions and descriptions, and the ‘artist’ will ask questions. The second form of information-gap which is a variation on **Describe and draw** is an activity called **Find the differences**-popular in puzzle books and newspaper entertainment sections all over the world. In pairs, students each look at a picture which is very similar (Though they do not know this) to the one their partner has. They have to find, say ten differences between their pictures without showing their pictures to each other. This means they will have to do a lot of describing – and questioning and answering – to find the differences.

2.5.5 Definition of Information Gap Activities

Nunan (2001: 309) defines information gap as "pair or group work tasks in which participants have access to different information. In order to complete the task, the information must be exchanged". One of the principles underlying communicative methodology is message-focus. This has given rise to activities which simulate real communication by involving the exchange of information or opinion between participants (Johnson and Johnson, 1998: 166). In a gap-filling activity, each learner in a pair or group of learners holds information which is partial, or different from that of their partner(s). The task involves conveying information -opinions not already know to the other participant(s)(Littlewood,1989: 33). According to Ur (1996: 281)

an interesting type of task is that based on the need to understand or transmit information, finding out what is in a partner's picture, for example. Variation on this is the opinion gap where participants exchange views on the given issue. While, Harmer (1991:48) defines information gap as "gap" between the two persons in the information they possess, and the conversation helps to close that gap so that now both speakers have the same information. Each speaker in the conversation has information that the other speaker needs to know (Richards and et al, 1992: 179).

2.5.6 The Pedagogical Significance of Information Gap Activities

Information gap activities have increasingly achieved popularity in recent years and have been recommended as a way forward in English language teaching. Accordingly Harmer (1991: 49) , Hedge (2000:263) and Hess(2001:3-6) state the benefits of information gap activities as the following points :

1- Information gap activities serve as a stimulus to elicit speech. Foreign language learning is always a process of collaboration as well as endeavor. The learners interact freely with one another to gather information from their peers, thus creating a casual atmosphere in which everybody feels comfortable and not threatened to offer their contributions. If there is an information gap between the learners, lifelike conversation can be ensured always with more unpredictable, divers, meaningful, interesting and vivid output.

2- Information gap activities can be an adapted form for multilevel learners from the elementary to the advanced .Generally speaking, the instructor-monitored but learners- participation activities are designed for the beginners and the intermediate , and the instructor- guided but learners-monitored activities are for the advanced and some intermediate .

3- Information gap activities can not only prove to be useful at the productive stage in the classroom, but also for the receptive stage as well. Or "it possesses a nature of communication both for input and output stages".

4- Information gap activities can serve as a means to share jointly and help to establish a kind of atmosphere that encourages learners to help one another or ask for help from their peers. Information gap activities collect intelligence by allowing each learner to brainstorm information, and then display and contribute to communication as a unified group. This makes learning always a most effective experience.

5- Information gap activities can foster a learner- autonomous learning style. Learners allowed to have a sense of self owing to the following four factors: "Collaboration" (having students work together toward common goals); "Personalization" (arranging for the kinds of activities that will allow students to express their own opinions and ideas. "Individualization" (arranging activities that will allow students to work at their own pace); and "enlarging the circle" (including as many students as possible in an activity).

6- Information- gap activities oblige negotiation of meaning.

2.5.7 The Teacher's Roles in Information Gap Activities

It has already been cited that the teacher is the most important figure in the teaching process, and he\she is the first responsible for actual standard of teaching English in schools and the level of student's achievement. (Thornbury, 2005: 58) mentions that, the teacher can play an important role here in guiding the learner to notice certain groups. However, the teacher is not always the best judge of the learner's current state of readiness'. There is some evidence to suggest that learners will only notice certain features of the second language when they have reached the developmental stage in which they are ready to notice them. So, probably the most effective gap noticing is that which is initiated by the learners themselves.

The following points clarify the teacher's role in activating and developing student's ability as shown by different methodologists:

1- Designer and Organizer

In information gap activities, the instructor is like a director in a movie, to design the structure of the class, to make out the content of interaction, and "to keep the learning process flowing smoothly and efficiently"(Brown, 2001: 167). In addition, Byrne (1991:13) compares the teacher to an actor claiming that teacher will have to play different roles at different times. While Nunan and Lamb (1996: 134) point out that the roles that the teachers adopt are dynamic, not static, and are subject to change according to the psychological factors brought by the participants.

While Harmer (1991: 235) says that, different learners require different activities to get their satisfaction, which leads to the instructors behaving differently according to the demands of their learners. However, "the most effective activities can be made almost useless if the teacher does not organize them properly".

2- Investigator and Assessor

On one hand, as investigators, the researchers themselves will want to develop their own skills and will hope for a gradually deepening insight into the best *way* to foster language learning. The feedback regularly enriches the teacher's understanding, pedagogical devising techniques, and activity designing diversities. On the other hand ,as assessors ,the teachers will see the feedback of how well the learners are performing or performed in the activities ,evaluate the appropriateness of the activities they set , and adjust their teaching target in relating to the real situations (Harmer,1991 : 242). Therefore, the successful implementation of the activities relies on the precise organization of the classroom and that the lesson is well prepared.

3-Participant and Prompter

Harmer (2001,275-276) states that, while taking the role of a prompter, the teacher offers discrete suggestions or lets students struggle out of a difficult situation (when students get lost, can not think of what to say next , lose fluency),which can stop the sense of frustration when

coming to a ‘dead end’ of language ideas. Thus, the teacher needs to talk to learners in a personal way from time to time, to find out their opinions about the ongoing topic, to encourage some quiet and shy pairs or groups to talk without worrying about mistakes, to offer linguistic support, or to prompt some clues. While Liao (2008: 17) says that, “there is no reason why the teacher should not participate as an equal in the activity”. He can offer his information, and at the same time stimulate and present new language, without taking the main initiative for communication away from the students themselves.

2.5.8 Components of a Lesson Plan for Information Gap Activity

Teachers must be careful during preparing for a lesson plan, so they have to choose the most perfect ways to implement their lessons in a successful way. Hopkins (2002: 52) mentions four stages for preparing a lesson plan in the classroom; each of the phases can be explained briefly as follows:

1-Planning

In this phase, the teacher makes the lesson plan and then chooses the teaching aids to imply the information gap activity in the form of dialogue, short paragraph, describe and draw material.

2- Acting

The teacher puts the class into five groups, calling them A, B, C, D, E. To each group he gives one of the pictures. The students in the groups have to memorize everything they can about the pictures-which is in

them, what is happening etc. They can talk about the details in their groups. The teacher now takes the pictures and asks for one student from each group (A, B, C, D and E) to form a new five person group. He tells them that they have seen different pictures, but that the pictures taken together. The task is for the students to work out what the story is. The only way they can do this is by describing their pictures to each other and speculating on how they are connected.

3- Observing

In this phase, the teacher observes the student's response, participation and everything which is found during the teaching and learning process. In speaking learning process, most of the students will be interested in information gap method, and all of them will have the opportunity to speak.

4- Reflecting

After collecting the data, the teacher will evaluate the teaching-learning process. Then the teacher will evaluate her\himself by seeing the results of the observation, whether the teaching - learning process of speaking using information gap method is good to imply in a teaching - learning process. If the first plan is unsuccessful, the teacher should make the next plan (re-planning) to get good results (Harmer,2007:129).

2.5.9. Strategies of Implementing Information Gap Activities

The following are some techniques used to implement information gap activities:

2.5.9.1 Personalization and Individualization

Personalization activities provide the learners opportunities to express their opinions, suggestions, or taste, to share their real life experiences or ideas, and to apply their issues or concerns to some controversial topics. And individualizations activities allow the learners to act at their own pace, in their own manner and style, and on the topics or content of their own choice. Then they will “find their own way, taking charge of their language”, and "make their own opportunities for practice in using the language inside and outside the classroom" (Brown,2001:209). While Hedge (2000:274) says that, personalized practice makes language more memorable. Personalization can make use of language resources in interpersonal situations. The implication is that practice must allow students some degree of choice in what they say.

2.5.9.2 Open Ending

Open-ended cues in information gap activities supply possibility at various levels and dimensions. Thus activate an increase in number of learners' responses from elementary to advance, from simple to sophisticate, and from textbook to personal experiences. Open-ended strategy allows learners opportunities for choosing appropriate languages,

topics and paces, which promotes a significant rise in the proportion of learners' participation (Ur, 1996:309).

2.5.9.3 Pair work or Group work

In large classes, pair work and group work play an important part since they maximize student participations Harmer (2007:126). Through pair and group work students can get more opportunities to speak and feel more confident about speaking after cooperating to practice. Furthermore, students get enjoyment from learning language, which motivates them to reach a higher level Ellis (2003: 168). When a teacher starts teaching a new group, teacher needs to spend some time on helping the students to get use to his way of doing things. It is best, first of both students and teachers to use simple activities and then move to more complex ones. Frequent activities in pair and groups are good for building confidence, especially for shy students, pairs and groups' activities offer less threatening than the whole class work (Davies and Pearse, 2000:13). The teacher should know the abilities and interests of each student in class so that he can organize homogeneous groups, the teacher must create an atmosphere in which students feel free to arise questions without constraints and students should feel that class participation is an important part of the day lesson (Al Mutawa and Kailani, 1989:147).

2.5.9.4 Variety and Interest

A variety of information gap activities are always essential in all teaching and learning. They will accommodate varieties of learning style and individuals. Constant alteration of activities, techniques and approaches can provoke greater motivation and interest as well as future increased longing to fill the gap. Variety means great several contributions from the learners. While **interest** is particularly important for the implementation of information gap activities. To stimulate learner's involvement, interest requires that the activities be designed with some essential characteristics, such as those in games, role-playing, curiosity-arousing activities and imagination- involving activities and real life activities. Making the information gap activities interesting will ensure a high involvement of learners and keep their motivation ongoing (New York State Education Department, 2000).

2.6.Previous Studies

The following are a number of previous studies that are related to the current study.

2.6.1 Karimi (2010)

This study aimed to find out whether there is any relationship between the use of information-gap tasks in the classroom and Iranian EFL Learners' lexical development. For the purpose of this study five different kinds of information gap tasks were chosen and practiced with

the experimental group. Then, with the help of a t- test between the post test results of the experimental and control groups, the results were analyzed. The hypothesis that there would be a relationship between the use of information gap tasks and lexical development was sustained. Before the treatment, the PET test of (80) items was administered to (100) students, through which (60) students whose scores were between one standard deviation below and above the mean of all scores were selected (homogenous scores). After specifying two groups exactly by randomly selecting (30) students for the experimental group and (30) students for the control group according to the machine procedure, a teacher-made test of (35) vocabulary items was developed. To standardize the test, the researcher administered it to (30) students with similar characteristics to the experimental and control groups. The sixteen-session course of instruction lasted for two months during which for the CG (Control Group), the conversational techniques of teaching vocabulary, and for the EG (experimental group), the task-based techniques of teaching vocabulary were used (20-25 words each session). The results of the study revealed that the EFL Learners' degree of learning increases when they learn new words by the use of information-gap tasks in the classroom. Also the learners in experimental group taught through the use of information gap tasks were gradually seen to become less dependent upon teacher's assistance. So, the findings of this research recommended to give students opportunities to develop strategies for

interpreting and comprehending language as it is actually used by native speakers.

2.6.2 Al- Twairish (2009)

This study, attempted to measure the effect of the implementation of the communicative approach (CA) on the listening and speaking skills of Saudi third year secondary students. In order to address this issue, a quantitative study was conducted on two randomly selected classes at Dammam Tenth Secondary School. The two classes were assigned as the sample of the study: an experimental group consisted of (37) students and a control group consisted of (41) students. Various communicative activities were used with the experimental group while the control group was exposed to the traditional activities. A pre-test was administered to both group at the beginning of the experiment to ensure that they had the same language background. At the end of the experiment, a post-test was assigned to both groups to determine where the CA had positively affected the students' listening and speaking abilities. The finding of the study revealed that: (1) the CA had a positive effect on the students' listening and speaking skills; (2) the experimental group obtained somewhat higher score in the post-test than in the pre-test, making difference between the pre-test and post-test scores statistically significant; (3) the difference between the pre-test and the post-test for the control group was not statistically significant; and (4) the experimental students were more differentiated than the control students.

In light of these results, the researcher recommended that a shift should be made from non-communicative to communicative ELT and students should be encouraged to speak the target language with their colleagues.

2.6. 3 Ekawati (2009)

This study, described the effectiveness of teaching speaking using information gap with jigsaw activities viewed from the students' achievement and described the students' response related to the teaching speaking using multidirectional information gap with jigsaw activities. The researcher applied classroom action research as the type of research to the 8th year students. The data of this research were field note, interview script, and the scores of pre-test, and post-test . The researcher used observation, interview and document for collecting the data. The techniques of analyzing data were reducing, displaying or presenting the data and verifying the data. The action was conducted in three cycles and the results of the study showed that: (1) the implementation of multidirectional information gap with jigsaw activities consist of activities covering grouping students into expert group and jigsaw groups discussing the topic. After that the expert group and jigsaw group exchange the group. The expert group joins the other jigsaw groups to re-explain the topic and after that they go back to their own group. (2) Teaching speaking using multidirectional information gap and jigsaw activities to improve the students speaking ability. It is indicated by the improvement of the students speaking components in each cycle, and the

improvement of students' average scores after the researcher gave the treatment. (3) The students' responses after being taught by using multidirectional informational gap with jigsaw activities are good. It is indicated by the students' answers in questionnaire. The students were confident to speak freely in the classroom .

2.6.4 Klanri (2007)

This study, investigated the effectiveness of the two communicative activities, information gap and role- play in developing students' speaking proficiency in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. It also provided an understanding of the dynamics of the learning process in the language classroom which resulted in students' progress in speaking. This study was conducted in a normal language classroom of thirty –eight students in Thailand, and nine participants were targeted : (3) high, (3) medium and (3) low, based on language proficiency levels. Data were gathered from four sources: Speaking Tests as pre- test and post- test, student diaries, teachers' journal and ethnographic interviews. The speaking Test is used as both pre-test and post-test was analyzed by using mean, standard deviation and t- test dependent measures to test the difference in students' English speaking proficiency between, before and after the two communicative activities program. Results of this study revealed that using the two communicative activities as an innovate program had a significant impact on improving EFL students' speaking proficiency.

Quantitative and qualitative data

mutually supported the positive conclusions of the study. Based on the findings, recommendations have been provided for teachers in arranging the EFL speaking classroom. The information gap and the role-play are highly recommended as effective method in the improvement of students' speaking proficiency.

2.6.5 Mahmood (1999)

Mahmmod's study aimed at finding out empirically the effect of using games in teaching oral skills on the achievement of secondary school students.

The study hypothesized that:

- 1- There was no significant difference between the mean score of the achievement of the students who were taught by using games and those of the students who were taught without using games in the written test that would be administered at the end of the experiment.
- 2- There was no significant difference between the mean scores of the achievement of the students who were taught by using games and those of the students who are taught without using games in the oral test that will be administered at the end of the experiment.

The researcher employed the design that consists of a post-test only control group. The sample of the study is chosen randomly. The researcher sets up two groups: control group and experimental group. Each one of these groups contains thirty students who are chosen randomly. The researcher tries to ensure that the two groups are identical

in terms of age, level of achievement in English, and level of parents' education. The experiment lasted eight weeks. The researcher taught both groups himself in order to control the teacher variable. Both groups were presented with the same material, which included oral practice exercises in the first four units of Book 7 of the New English Course for Iraq.

In order to test the hypotheses, the researcher constructed written and oral tests. The researcher reported that the subjects of the experimental group had better scores on the written and oral tests than the subjects of the control group. Thus, the researcher concluded that the teaching with the use of games is a more effective way in improving oral skills than teaching through traditional techniques.

2.6.6 Salih (1998)

Salih's study aimed at investigating the effects of making EFL students aware of conversation organization competence on their oral performance in the four main areas of conversational communicative competence, namely, the area of linguistic competence, the area of sociolinguistic competence, the area of discourse competence, and the area of strategic competence. The study is limited to second year students in the English Language Department of the College of Arts in the University of Basrah for the academic year 1996-1997. In order to fulfill the aims of his study, Salih organized an experimental group and a control group with thirty students in each group. Students of the experimental group are taught thirty lectures of the awareness program, designed by the

researcher, while students of the control group are made to attend the same number of lectures according to the usual method of teaching conversation.

Salih concluded that conversation is organized activity consisting of the organizing elements like adjacency pairs, turn-taking, conversational topic, cooperative maxims, opening and (pre) closing. It is also concluded that conversational organization is subject to a set of governing rules and strategies which conversationalists use to achieve purposeful conversational communication. Salih also concluded that the students 'awareness of the elements of conversation organization competence is a prerequisite for their improvement and success in the other elements of conversational communicative competence.

2.6.7 Kadhum (1987)

There are two specific aims in this study .The first is to define the difficulties that might impede students' participation in interaction process. The second is to determine the most effective conditions for teaching conversation . The sample consists of college students of both Arts and Education at the University of Basrah, during the academic year 1986 - 1987.

To achieve the aims, the researcher starts visiting the classes of students of both colleges . This procedure is based on the assumption that it is necessary to submit a survey of how conversation is actually being taught. Moreover, the researcher conducts a test to examine a

randomly selected group of students from the English departments at both colleges. The test takes into consideration the actual level of students' interactive skills. It is accompanied with a questionnaire to elicit the students' view concerning certain points which are related to the study. The result of the test shows that the students' level of performance is relatively low and that they can be considered incompetent when it comes to their interactive skills.

2.6.8 Discussion of the Previous Studies

The aforementioned studies have provided valuable information indicating that students' speaking skills can be fostered and demonstrate through new approaches and techniques. Surely, the focus was on developing speaking skills in English as a foreign language.

The survey of the previous studies shows the following:

1- The aim of the present study is to find out the effect of using cued-dialogue and information-gap activities on the development of preparatory school students' ability in speaking. Nevertheless, some of the studies' aims, such as Karim (2010), Ekawati (2009) and Klanri (2007) emphasizes the use of information-gap activities which is related to the aim of the present study concerning to find out the effect of using information-gap activities on students' ability in speaking.

2- The studies differ in their duration. The longest study lasted four years while the shortest study lasted two years. However, the present study has lasted two and a half months.

3-Some of the previous studies are adopted a null hypothesis whereas others adopted the alternative one. Concerning the present study, hypothesis of this study is postulated.

4-Some of the previous studies are conducted an experiment to achieve their aim or aims such as Karim (2010), Mahmood (1999) and Salih (1998). Others are involved an interviews as the suitable instrument such Kadhum (1987). The present study is adopted an experiment to achieve the aim of the study.

6-Different statistical tools are used in previous studies such as Cooper formula, t-test for two independent samples, Kuder-Richardson formula and Pearson Correlation Coefficient. Concerning the present study, Chi-Square, t-test for two independent samples.

6- All the studies stated in this suction emphasis the effect of information-gap and conversation in modifying individuals' behaviour and improving their performance. None of these studies adopts exactly the same procedures of developing students' ability in speaking. Therefore, this study has been carried out to show how English language teachers, at preparatory schools, should learn how to enhance their ability in teaching

English and to be creative to apply various techniques in teaching speaking in order that the students are interested in learning speaking.

3-0 Introductory Note

The purpose of this chapter is to survey the procedures that have been carried out in order to fulfill the aim of the study in terms of the following:

1. Selecting the experimental design,
2. Selecting the population and sample,
3. Equalizing the sample,
4. Preparing instructional material,
5. Applying the experiment,
6. Administering the test, and
7. Analyzing the data statistically.

3-1 The design of the Experiment

This study follows the experimental design of pretest-posttest equivalent groups in which subjects are randomly assigned to experimental and control groups, and a pretest is administered before the application of the experimental and control treatments and a posttest at the end of the treatment period. This experimental design is adopted due to the nature of the research which aims at finding the effectiveness of using

cued-dialogue and information gap activities on developing speaking skills.

3.2 The Sample of the Study

A sample of (72) students from Al-GhadilMushriq Preparatory School for boys has, on purpose, been chosen from the whole population of preparatory schools in Baquba City (See table (3.1). The selection of the sample is limited to secondary schools for boys after dropping the preparatory schools for girls and preparatory schools for boys and girls in the Directorate General of Education in Diyala Governorate.

Table (3.1). Names of Preparatory Schools for Boys in Baquba City .

No	Names of Schools	No. of Pupils
1.	Al-Markaziyah Secondary school for Boys	117
2.	Al-Shareef-Al-Rathee Secondary school for Boys	79
3.	Diyala Secondary school for Boys	44
4.	Jamal Abdulnasir Secondary school for Boys	104
5.	Al-Mohsin Secondary school for Boys	68
6.	Al-Jawahri Secondary school for Boys	61
7.	Al-Talli –Al-Natheed Secondary school for Boys	144
8.	Al-Maarif Secondary school for Boys	50
9.	Al-Sham Secondary school for Boys	82
10	Al- Salam Secondary school for Boys	126
11	Hay-Al-Mualimeen Secondary school for Boys	82

12	Al-GhadilMushriq Secondary school for Boys	72
13	Al-Muthul Secondary school for Boys	65
14	Ebin –Sina Secondary school for Boys	76
15	Al-Zamakshry Secondary school for Boys	90

Al – GhadilMushriq Secondary school was chosen on purpose due the security issues related to Diyala province.

After visiting the school, it has been found that there are two sections for the fifth grade in the school, they are sections (A) and (B). One of these sections has on purpose been selected to be the EG and the other one to be the CG. Section (A) included (36) pupils and section (B) included (36) pupils. The total number is 72 students. Section A is selected as the experimental group (EG) and section B as the control group (CG). Two students from B and one from A are excluded from the experiment because they are repeaters in this grade. The repeaters are kept in their classes during the period of the experiment. Thus the final number of the sample subjects is (69) students. See **Tables (3.2)**.

Tables 3.2 The Number of Subjects before and after Excluding the Repeaters

Group	Section	No.	Repeaters	Final No.
EG	A	36	1	35
CG	B	36	2	34
Total		72	3	69

3.3 Equivalence of the Sample

The researcher has done his best to control the variables that may affect the outcome of the experiment. The students of the two groups have been equalized according to the following variables:

1. The subjects' age,
2. The level of fathers' education,
3. The level of mothers' education,
4. The students' scores in English in the previous year, and
5. The students' scores on the pretest.

The information mentioned above is taken from the school records and the students themselves.

The differences are tested at 0.05 level of significance using Chi-square test and t-test formula for two independent samples.

3.3.1 The Age of Pupils (measured in months)

The age of the pupils of the control group is compared with that of the experimental group. The researcher used the t-test formula for two independent samples. The average age of subjects in both groups was different. The mean of the experimental group was (198.43) months, and that of the control group was (199.21) months. t-test score was (0.254) which indicated no significant difference at (0.05) level between the two groups in age. (See Table 3.2 and Appendix B).

Table 3.2 The Mean, Standard Deviation and T-value of the Subjects' Age

Group	No.	M	SD	Df	T-value	
					Calculate d	Tabulate d
EG	35	195.57	11.43	67	0.258	1.99
CG	34	199.47	13.55			

3.3.2 The level of Fathers' Education

chi-square formula was used for two independent samples to determine whether there are any significant differences among the two groups in the level of fathers' education. Educational qualifications are classified as follows:

Table 3.3 Frequency and Chi-square Value for the Fathers' Education

Group	No.	Illiterate	Primary	Intermediate	Secondary	Diploma	University	Df	Chi-value	
									Computed	Tabulated
EG	35	2	10	7	5	3	8	3	1.451	7.815
CG	34	1	7	10	6	4	6			
Total	69	3	17	17	11	7	14			

3.3.3 The Level of Mothers' Education

As for the mothers' level of education, table (3.4) shows that there was no significant difference as well, and that the two groups were

equivalent in this variable. They were treated in the same way as in dealing with the level of fathers' education.

Table 3.4 Frequency and Chi-square Value for the Mothers' Education

Group	No.	Illiterate	Primary	Intermediate	Secondary	Diploma	University	df	Chi-value	
									Computed	Table-value
EG	35	6	10	5	6	4	4	4	0.791	9.49
CG	34	5	9	6	8	4	2			
Total	79	11	19	11	14	8	6			

¹ The cell which is less than 5 is merged to the next cell.

3.3.4 The Subjects' Level of Achievement in English in the Fourth Secondary Grade

The mean scores of the EG and the CG in the fourth secondary grade, and first term, year (2010) were treated. The mean scores of the experimental group and the control group in the fourth grade were (60.34) and (59.65). The t-test reveals that there is no statistically significant difference between the two groups at 67 degrees of freedom and 0.05 level of significance. The calculated t-value is 0.46, whereas the tabulated value is 1.99 which indicates no statistically significant difference.(See [Table 3.5](#) and [Appendix C](#)).

Table 3.5 The Mean, Standard Deviation and T-value of the Subjects'

Achievement in the 4th Secondary Grade

Group	No.	M	SD	Df	T-value	
					Calculate d	Tabulate d
EG	35	60.34	6.24	67	0.47	1.99
CG	34	59.65	5.99			

3.4. The students' scores on the pre- test

To ensure that the sample subjects are equivalent in their previous English language proficiency, the researcher applied the oral speaking test before starting the experiment. The results of the subjects were recorded and statically analyzed by using t-test. Table (3.6) shows the mean and the standard deviation of each group in English previous learning. The results analyzed indicates that there are no statistically significant differences between the experimental and the control groups at (0.05) level.(See Appendix D).

Table 3.6 The Mean, Standard Deviation and T-value of the Subjects' Achievement on the Pretest

Group	No.	M	SD	Df	T-value	
					Calculate d	Tabulate d
EG	35	15.7	4.15	67	0.65	1.99
CG	34	15.06	4.14			

3.4.1 The students' scores on the Pre-test (Rrcognition-part).

To ensure that the sample subjects are equivalent in their previous English language recognition, the researcher applied the oral speaking test before starting the experiment. The results of the subjects were recorded and statically analyzed by using t-test. Table (3.7) shows the mean and the standard deviation of each group in English previous learning. The results analyzed indicates that there are no statistically significant differences between the experimental and the control groups at (0.05) level.(See Appendix S).

Table 3.7 The Mean, Standard Deviation and T-value of the Subjects' Achievement on the Recognition (Pretest).

Group	No.	M	SD	Df	T-value	
					Calculate d	Tabulate d
EG	35	14.2	3.974	67	0.284	1.99
CG	34	14.235	4.195			

3.4.2 The students' scores on the Pre-test (Production-part).

To ensure that the sample subjects are equivalent in their previous English language production, the researcher applied the oral speaking test before starting the experiment. The results of the subjects were recorded and statically analyzed by using t-test. Table (3.8) shows the mean and the standard deviation of each group in English previous learning. The results analyzed indicates that there are no statistically significant differences between the experimental and the control groups at (0.05) level.(See Appendix K).

Table 3.8 The Mean, Standard Deviation and T-value of the Subjects' Achievement on the Recognition (Pretest).

Group	No.	M	SD	Df	T-value	
					Calculate d	Tabulate d
EG	35	14.542	4.049	67	0.67	1.99
CG	34	13.852	4.557			

3-5 The Oral Speaking Test

An oral speaking test is designed to identify student's speaking skills and to record students' marks in oral speaking test (pre& post test). Ur (1996:135) gives a useful scale of oral testing criteria. In the test, the candidates are tested on fluency and accuracy, and may get a maximum of five points on each of these two aspects, ten points in all. The oral speaking rubric adopted in this study is based on Weirs' testing scale model with some modifications to rate students' oral performance. According to Weirs' model, this study also assessed students' oral performance on five major criteria: comprehension, pronunciation, fluency, grammar and vocabulary. Each criterion's characteristics are then defined into four short behavioral statements as stated in the frame (see, Appendix F). This helps to make the test reliable, since it avoids subjectivity because it provides clear, precise and mutually exclusive behavioral statements for each point of the scale. The amount of score can be described as follows:

- **Pronunciation : 6**

- **Grammar** : 6
- **Vocabulary** : 6
- **Fluency** : 6
- **Comprehension** : 6

The criteria and the scale in this research will be used to identify the students' mark on the oral speaking skill test and to find out the effectiveness of using cued-dialogue and information gap activities on developing speaking skills for the 5th grades.

3.6 Description of the Oral Speaking Skills Test

The oral speaking skills tests administered as pre-test and post-test were designed to test students' oral proficiency regarding five aspects: comprehension, pronunciation, fluency, grammar and vocabulary . The instructional material selected for this study are two dialogues, and information gap activities from person to person book by (Richard and et al, 2005:84), and some pictures clipped from ([http:// www.eslprintables.com](http://www.eslprintables.com)).The researcher selected a certain technique in teaching cued-dialogue "picture strip story". The dialogue was presented also information gap activities in two pictures; each one represents a certain action and situation that enables the pupils to form certain questions and answers. The model lesson with its procedures and pictures used in teaching cued-dialogue and information gap activities have been exposed to the jury members. Taking into consideration the recommendations and

modifications of the jury members. The post test is the same version of the pre test with some suggestions are taken in consideration.

3.7 Validity of the Test

One of the most important aspects which must be considered when selecting or constructing a test is its validity, which can be defined as "measuring the instrument appropriateness to meet the identified educational needs of the teacher" (Lado, 1964:50). While Harris (1969: 60) defines validity as "the extent to which it does what is intended to do". According to McNamara (2000: 133) validity is "the extent to which a test meets the expectations of those involved in its use, e.g. administrators, teachers, candidates and test score users."

Heaton (1988:160) says that, most designers of communicative tests regard face validity, as the most important of all types of test validity. In order to ensure face and content validity of the test, the items of the test were exposed to a jury of specialists who are known for their long experience in the field of teaching EFL, linguistics, and language testing. They have all agreed that the test is within the level of the students' knowledge of English at the fifth preparatory grade and the test items are appropriate for measuring students' achievement in speaking.

3.7.1 Face Validity

Gronlund (1981:68) maintains that face validity is the outside or superficial appearance of the test, i.e., whether the test appears to

teachers, educators and the like as an appropriate measuring device or not. Therefore, after preparing the initial form of the test, the researcher has submitted it to a jury of ten university lecturers who are specialized in TEFL. The jury members have been requested in a covering letter to decide on the appropriateness of the test items (See appendix (J). The jury consisted of the following members whose names are arranged in alphabetical order: Some of the jury members have presented some invaluable suggestions which have been taken into full consideration by the researcher and his supervisor. Then the test was exposed to those members who made the proposed suggestions. After that all the jury members agreed that the test has become suitable for testing the language areas it is supposed to measure.

3-8 The pilot Administration of the Test

Before the test is formally administered, it should be tried out on a sample similar to those for whom the test is being designed. Such a step is usually referred to as **pilot study** (Harris, 1969: 103). After securing the validity of the test, a pilot study has been administrated empirically on a sample of (50) students which have not been involved in the experimental and control group.

The aims of this application are to:

- 1- Check the time that students need to answer the test,
- 2- Identify the discrimination power of the test items,
- 3- Determine the appropriate time required;

- 4- Discover how test takers respond to the test task;
- 5- Secure the clarity of the tests items, and
- 6- Find out the reliability of the test.

3.9The Experiment Application

The experiment started on 24 October, 2011 and ended on 4 January, 2012. The experiment lasted for 10 weeks. The lessons were arranged for both groups on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday¹.The lessons chosen for the experiment were taught by the researcher to the experimental group as follows:

- 1- The techniques of teaching the experimental group were based on cued-dialogue and information gap activities concept and communicative approach which were hypothesized to develop speaking skills while control group was taught by the ordinary method.
 - 2- The researcher himself applied the experiment and prepared all the needed aids and material (lesson plan, pictures, lap top and others).
 - 3-The researcher listened to students' opinion and suggestions all around the session to evaluate the process of teaching by using cued-dialogue and information gap-activities.
 - 4-The pre-test of speaking skills was prepared by the researcher himself and students' marks were recorded by using oral speaking test. It was applied to the experimental and control group.
-

5- The post test of speaking skills was applied to the experimental and control groups.

6- The results were collected and statistically analyzed.

3.10 Reliability of the Test

Reliability is a quality of the test scores which refers to the consistency of measures across different items, test forms, and raters and other characteristics of measurement context (Lado, 1972:330). Oller (1979:4) believes that "reliability provides consistency which secures validity and indicates how much confidence we can place in our results". According to Harmer (2001:322), a good test should give consistent results. In practice, reliability is enhanced by making test instructions absolutely clear, restricting the scope for variety in the answers, and making sure that test conditions remain constant. Various methods can be used for estimating test reliability such as: split-half, Cronbach Alpha, Kuder-Richardson, equivalent forms, and the test-retest. Different methods can be applied to estimate reliability. Test re-test method, which is adopted in this study, is considered by Harris (1969:15) as the simplest method in which the same test is applied to the same pupils at appropriate time interval between the two administrations.

The first application of the test was on the eighth of October, 2011. The researcher and another scorer^{*1} listen carefully and score the pupils' responses which were recorded on an audio tape. The second application of the test was after one week. Correlation has been determined between

the scores of the two applications by applying Pearson's correlation coefficient formula^{*2}. As a result, an acceptable degree of reliability, which is (0.85), has been obtained (See Bloom et al., 1981:89).

3.11 Item Analysis

"Item analysis is the study of validity, reliability, and difficulty of test items taken individually as if they were separate tests (Lado, 1965: 342).

"Item analysis refers to a number of procedures used to investigate the properties of test items (especially *difficulty* and *discrimination*) prior to the development of their final format and content. McNamara (2000: 134)states that "item analysis is the systematic evaluation of the effectiveness of the individual item on a test. This is usually done for purposes of selecting the "best" items which will remain on a revised and improved version of the test" (Brown, 2005: 41).

3.11.1 Level of Difficulty

Level of difficulty of the test items is represented by the percentage of pupils who answer the item correctly to the total numbers of pupils. By applying the formula^{*1} for computing item difficulty, the results indicate that most of the items have an acceptable level of difficulty which ranges between (30% - 80%). Motivation is an important reason for varying the range of the difficulty of the items. Just as putting some difficult items in the test would motivate good students, the inclusion of a number of easy items would serve the purpose of motivating "poor" students. Also,

regardless of the students' ability, if the test is new or unfamiliar or if there are some tension surrounding the test, presenting a number of easy items at the beginning of the test would be very helpful providing a lead-in for the students. (Heaton, 1990: 179). Even though items with high item facility (items that are very easy) fail to discriminate between candidates, it may be helpful to include some at the beginning of a test in order to ease candidates into the test and to allow them a chance to get over their nerves (McNamara, 2000: 61). See appendix (N).

3.11.2 Discrimination Power

A fundamental issue in all testing and measurement is to *discriminate* between larger and smaller quantities of something, better and worse performances, success and failure, more or less of whatever one wants to test or measure. Even when the objective is to demonstrate mastery, as in a classroom setting where it may be expected that everyone will succeed, the test cannot be a measure of mastery at all unless it provides at least an opportunity for failure or for the demonstration of something less than mastery (Oller, 1979: 247). Therefore, each item in a test should help to separate the proficient subjects from those who lack the tested skills or learnings (Harris, 1968: 105). This will be ensured by the process of item discrimination.

3.11.3 Statistical Tools

The following statistical tools are used in this study.

1. The t-test for two independent samples to find out the significance of differences between the two groups in non-experimental variables and in the experimental variable.

$$t = \frac{\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2}{\sqrt{\frac{(n_1 - 1)S_1^2 + (n_2 - 1)S_2^2}{(n_1 + n_2) - 2} \times \left(\frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2} \right)}}$$

Where:

\bar{X}_1 = the mean of the EG

\bar{X}_2 = the mean of the CG

n_1 = the number of subjects in the EG

n_2 = the number of subjects in the CG

S_1^2 = the variance of the EG

S_2^2 = the variance of the CG

(Weir,2005: 2001).

2. Chi-square to find out the significance of differences between the two groups as far as the levels of parents educational background are concerned:

$$X^2 = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$$

Where:

O = the observed frequencies

E= the expected or theoretical frequencies

(weir,2005:202

).

3. Pearson Correlation Coefficient to estimate the reliability of raters.

$$r = \frac{n \sum xy - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{[n \sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2][n \sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2]}}$$

Where:

x = the first sets of scores

y = the second sets of scores

N = the number of the sample

(Weir, 2005:201).

4- Item Difficulty: $FV = R \backslash N$

Where :

FV= Item difficulty

R= represents the number of correct responses

N= the number of test-takers

(Heaton,1990:179).

5-Discrimination Power :

$IDis = \frac{\text{Correct answers in the upper group} - \text{Correct answers in the Lower group}}{1/2 \text{ (one half of the total No.of subjects.)}}$

(Gronlund,1977:

112).

4.0 An introductory Note

In this chapter, results are analysed in order to determine whether there is any difference between the achievement of the (EG) and that of the (CG). Comparisons are made between the means of the scores of those two groups in the oral test, recognition test, and production test. Finally, results are discussed.

4.1 The Results of the Oral Test

The results of the pupils' performance on the oral test reveal that the average score of the (EG) is (21.43) with a standard deviation (SD) of (3.77) which is higher than that of the (CG) which is (18.79) with an SD of (5.22). The difference between the two averages is statistically significant because the tabulated t-value is (1.99) at the $P > 0.05$ and a df of (67) while the calculated value is (2.43). This indicates that there is a clear difference between the oral performance of the (EG) and that of the (CG). Table (4) below shows the detailed descriptions of the results of both groups on the oral test. (See Table 4 and Appendix E).

Table (4).The Results on the Oral Test

	Group	No. of Pupils	Mean	SD	df	Calculated t-value	Tabulated t-value
Total	EG	35	21.51	3.77	67	2.43	1.99
	CG	34	18.79	5.22			

4.1.1 Analysing the Results of the Post-test (Recognition-part).

The results of the pupils' performance on the recognition test reveal that the average score of the (EG) is (19.971) with a standard deviation (SD) of (4.526) which is higher than that of the (CG) which is (14.205) with an SD of (4.820). The difference between the two averages is statistically significant because the tabulated t-value is (1.99) at the $P > 0.05$ and a df of (67) while the calculated value is (5.125). This indicates that there is a clear difference between the recognition performance of the (EG) and that of the (CG). Table (5) below shows the detailed description of the results of both groups on the recognition test. (See Appendix L).

Table (5). The Pupils' Results of the Post-test (Recognition-part).

Test	Group	No. of Pupils	Mean	SD	df	Calculated t-value	Tabulated t-value
Recognition	EG	35	19.971	4.526	67	5.125	1.99
	CG	34	14.205	4.820			

4.1.2 Analysing the Results of the Post-test (Production--part).

The results of the pupils' performance on the production test reveal that the average score of the (EG) is (20.142) with a standard deviation (SD) of (4.619) which is higher than that of the (CG) which is (14.059) with an SD of (4.928). The difference between the two averages is statistically significant because the tabulated t-value is (1.99) at the $P > 0.05$ and a df of (67) while the calculated value is (5.289). This indicates that there is a clear difference between the production

achievement of the (EG) and that of the (CG).Table (6) below shows the detailed descriptions of the results of both groups on the recognition test.(See Appendix R).

Table (6). The Pupils' Results of the Post-test (Recognition-part).

Test	Group	No. of Pupils	Mean	SD	df	Calculated t-value	Tabulated t-value
Production	EG	35	20.142	4.619	67	5.289	1.99
	CG	34	14.059	4.928			

4.2 Discussing the Results

The results of the pupils' performance on the oral test reveal that the average score of the (EG) is (21.43) with a standard deviation (SD) of (3.77) which is higher than that of the (CG) which is (18.79) with an SD of (5.22). The difference between the two averages is statistically significant because the tabulated t-value is (1.99) at the $P > 0.05$ and a df of (67) while the calculated value is (2.43). This indicates that there is a clear difference between the oral achievement of the (EG) and that of the (CG).Table (4) below shows the detailed descriptions of the results of both groups on the oral test.

The results of the pupils' performance on the recognition test reveal that the average score of the (EG) is (19.971) with a standard deviation (SD) of (4.526) which is higher than that of the (CG) which is (14.205) with an SD of (4.820). The difference between the two averages is statistically significant because the tabulated t-value is (1.99) at the $P > 0.05$ and a df of (67) while the calculated value is (5.125). This

indicates that there is a clear difference between the recognition achievement of the (EG) and that of the (CG). Table (5) below shows the detailed descriptions of the results of both groups on the recognition test.

The results of the pupils' performance on the production test reveal that the average score of the (EG) is (20.142) with a standard deviation (SD) of (4.619) which is higher than that of the (CG) which is (14.059) with an SD of (4.928). The difference between the two averages is statistically significant because the tabulated t-value is (1.99) at the $P > 0.05$ and a df of (67) while the calculated value is (5.289). This indicates that there is a clear difference between the production achievement of the (EG) and that of the (CG). Table (6) below shows the detailed descriptions of the results of both groups on the recognition test. (See Appendix R).

The results prove the existence of a statistically significant difference between the achievement of the two groups in favour of the (EG). This indicates that the null hypothesis is rejected and that the alternative hypothesis should read: there is a statistically significant difference between the achievement of the (EG) and that of the (CG) in language performance. This indication, in fact, supports the researcher's impression made during the period of the experiment when the pupils of the (EG) exhibited an eagerness towards more progress in learning, increased their tendency to monitor their own work, compete among themselves to gain success, and sometimes made extra successful effort to modify their responses and to match the most acceptable behaviour.

It may be reasonable, here, to assume that the previous result is attributed to the effectiveness of cued-dialogue and information-gap activities in improving the pupils' ability in speaking.

4.3 Conclusions

The following points have been made on the basis of the findings indicated in :

1-Cued-dialogue and informaton gap activities can better improve the students' interaction with the teacher and other students. When they were parcticing in pairwork and groupwork,all of them participated. It meant students' participation in the class also improved. On the other hand, they decreased the amount of teacher taking time.

2- Cued-dialogue and information gap activities can maximize students' opportunities to speak during the English lesson and provide the potential benefits of student-student interaction. In order to elicit information and opinions from the teacher and friends, the students needed to interact among them. They should spend most of the time working in pairs and groups. The students have reasons to interact and tasks to fulfill.

3-Cued-dialogue and information gap activities encourage students' practice opportunities of the target language receptivity in the lessons as a result of presenting various task. In the light of students' reflections for the tasks used during the study,which were very positive, it showed that students were receptive to the idea of information gap and cued-dialogue activities while learning English .

4- Perhaps, language teachers can benefit from these techniques in order to educate more active students who are at the same time better communicators.

5-Cued-dialogue and information gap activities teach students how to concentrate on how to communicate the intended meaning not on the language forms.

4.4 Recommendations

In the light of the finding and the due literature, The researcher recommends the following:

4.4.1 Recommendations to Curriculum Designers and Decision Makers

1- To increase speaking proficiency, the syllabus of English curriculum should emphasis the productive skills of speaking. In dealing with a large number of students in Iraq classrooms. Pairwork and group work should be recommended in classroom instruction for all subject areas.

2-Information technology may be used in the classroom in variuos forms of activity, task or project. It can benefit language teaching such as films, radios, videws, which are available in many EFL settings, along with newspapers and magazines. These affordable sources enable the EFL students to increase their opportunities in learning to speak proficiency, including the provision of the internet interacting with native speakers on a variety of topics.

3-For teachers training, it is important to develop Iraqi teachers competencies to have opportunities to improve their English speaking proficiency as well as the other language skills.

4-The curriculum designers must consider continuity, sequence, and integration in building up their curricula and materials.

5-Students may be provided with models of good techniques and activities to participate.

6-Speaking teachers need to be trained on how to develop and present dialogues for their students. The environment is also very important.

4.4.2 Recommendations to Teachers

1-Teachers may establish learning environment to compensate for the authentic atmosphere in language learning using pairwork and group work which help in carrying out the learning process successfully.

2-Teachers may know how to enhance their ability in teaching English and to be creative to apply various techniques in teaching speaking in order that the students can be interested in learning speaking.

3- The teachers may expose students to the natural use of English with native speakers, so that they can observe and acquire the verbal and non-verbal speaking skills.

4- Teachers may encourage shy students to participate orally by using different activities of information gap that depend on project team work.

5-The teachers may provide motives for the students who keep speaking at class and for the students who present a summary of English programs they watched at home such as the news related to weather.

6-The teachers may give every student equal opportunities to express themselves and especially pay attention to those introverted students.

4.5 Suggestions for Further Studies

For additional studies in the area of language learning and teaching, the following suggestions are made:

1-Conducting other studies similar to the present study but in other skills of language such as (listening, reading and writing).

2-A study on the effectiveness of the using a new technique in teaching speaking such as information gap and cued-dialogue.

3- Conduct an analytical study to the Iraqi English curriculum to identify the main speaking skills that should be focused on during speaking lessons.

4-A study of the effectiveness of the communicative language teaching techniques in other stages of learning i.e; primary stage and intermediate stage.

I certify that the thesis entitled “*Using Cued-dialogue and Gap Filling Exercises to Develop Iraqi EFL Learners' Ability in Speaking*” by *Omar NasirAllah Khalaf* has been prepared under my supervision at the Department of English, College of Basic Education, Al-Mustansiriyah University as a partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Education (Methods of Teaching English as a Foreign Language).

Signature:

Name: INSTR. RIDHA GHANIM, (Ph.D).

Date: / /2012

In view of the available recommendations, I forward this thesis for debate by the examining committee.

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Head of the Department of Higher Studies

(Methods of Teaching)

Date: / /2012

I certify that I have read the thesis entitled *“Using Cued-dialogue and Gap Filling Exercises to Develop Iraqi EFL Learners' Ability in Speaking”* by Omar NasirAllah Khalaf submitted to the Council of the College of Basic Education/Al-Mustansiriyah University in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Education (Methods of Teaching English as a Foreign Language), and it is found linguistically adequate.

Signature:

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Date:

I certify that I have read the thesis entitled *"Using Cued-dialogue Gap Filling Exercises to Develop Iraqi EFL Learners' Ability in Speaking"* by Omar NasirAllah Khalaf submitted to the Council of the College of Basic Education, Al-Mustansiriyah University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Education (Methods of Teaching English as a Foreign Language), and it is found scientifically adequate.

Signature:

Name: Sheima Al-Bakri

Date:

We certify that we have read the thesis entitled "*Using Cued-dialogue and Gap Filling Exercises to Develop Iraqi EFL Learners' Ability in Speaking*" by *Omar NasirAllah Khalaf* and as an examining committee examined the student in its content, and in our opinion it is adequate as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in Education in Methods of Teaching English as a Foreign Language.

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