Investigating the Most Effective Way in Teaching Conversation for Iraqi EFL Students

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1. Abstract

Conversation is a unique human activity through which people engage in social interaction and though it is constructed on a turn–by–turn basis, it actually proceeds without a predetermined cognitive map. Memorizing dialogues referring to different situations will not be of much benefit for those who wish to engage in such conversations as they are context bound, negotiative, interpersonal and constantly changing.

This needs more effort on the part of both teachers and students as finding out efficient ways for teaching conversation. Foreign language learning has always been a great concern not only for teachers but also for students who are looking forward to speak the foreign language in a good way.

In fact, every teacher has some kind of theoretical principles which function as a frame for his ideas of methods and techniques for teaching and learning English in the classroom. The three principal views in this respect are:

1. The structural view which treats language as a system of structurally related elements to code meaning (e.g. grammar).

2. The functional view which sees language as a vehicle to express or accomplish a certain function, such as requesting something, and

3. The interactive view which sees language as a vehicle for the creation and maintenance of social relations, focusing on patterns of moves, acts, negotiation and interaction found in conversational exchanges (Richards and Rodgers, 2001: 3).

The history of language teaching covers a variety of methods to teaching a foreign language. These methods and techniques of language instruction have evolved and shaped language teaching as it is known it. Some of these methods have fallen into relative obscurity and others are widely used. In this research two methods are going to be dealt with; the audio–lingual method and the communicative one since they are the mainly methods used in Iraqi foreign language classes but first it is necessary to clarify in detail what conversation is:

2. What is Conversation?

Conversation is a multifaceted construct. While monologues such as lectures, speeches and TV news reports are obviously to be ruled out, talk involving more than one speaker does not necessarily constitute conversation. In a class environment, for example, a

great deal of oral interaction between teacher and students may occur, but few people would accept that the teacher is having a genuine conversation with the students. Thornbury and Slade (2006: 5) point out that this complexity derives from conversation being so ubiquitous in our daily language usage. Besides, various fields of study such as linguistics, psychology, anthropology, and sociology have informed conversation that it becomes harder to compile a concise and comprehensive definition of it; yet Goffman (1976: 264) offered the following definition:

> Conversation is "restrictively defined, might be identified as the talk occurring when a small number of participants come together and settle into what they perceive to be a few moments cut off from (or carried on to the side of) instrumental tasks; a period of idling felt to be an end in itself, during which everyone is accorded the right to talk as well as to listen and without reference to a fixed schedule … and no final agreement or synthesis is demanded, differences of opinion to be treated as unprejudicial to the continuing relationship of the participants".

It is; therefore, the pre-dominant form of interactional discourse in which participants freely alternate in taking turns at speaking and, as Williamson (2009:1) mentions, it is much more than an *I say something – you say something* recursive sequence because though conversations do proceed turn by turn, they are in fact highly coordinated, collaborative activities in which the speaker strives to ensure that he is being attended to, heard and understood by the other conversational participant(s) who, in turn, endeavor to indicate to the speaker whether or not he has succeeded.

In fact, to give more insight to what conversation is, it is better to define it, as Kroeker (2009:8) says, by its characteristics, its functions and its conditions:

2. 1 Characteristics

Richards (1980:414) states that conversation is *cooperatively constructed* which is based on contributions, assumptions, expectations, and interpretations of the participants' utterances and since it is cooperative, it becomes a negotiated, self-regulated process that is segmentally created through short, frequent turns consisting of phrases and clauses which enables various situations such as coming into a conversation, holding listener interest, subject changing, and getting out of a conversation smoothly.

These routines are signaled through specialized words and phrases to make conversation cohesive .This means that conversation is *made up of linguistic features* such as ellipsis

(deliberately omit chunks of language), head and tail slots (prospectively and retrospectively topical comments), deixis (referential language of a shared environment), lexical repetition, vague language, and fillers (words and phrases that fill in pauses or buy time). (Richards and Sukwiwat, 1983: 114).

As sentences, conversational utterances are often "mixed" or "stringy" in syntactic form and omission of words is fairly common. Hesitations, self-interruptions, repetitions and false starts leave their mark on what may aptly be called a series of segments, for instance:

Well, I mean – I mean bits of it are – bits of it are quite funny aren't they. I mean bits of it. You know, don't you? (Power, 2009:4)

Though different linguistic features might be used in a conversation, there is no possibility of predicting the actual utterances. Further, the size of these utterances, their order of occurrence or their relative distribution among the participants cannot be predicted as each conversation is a unique creative event that unfolds in real time. The speaker may have an idea of what he would like to talk about, what messages he would wish to convey, and so on, but there can be no guarantee that he will fulfill such aims (Williamson, 2009:2).

Conversation is also a *social* action which establishes rapport and mutual agreement, engages in phatic communication, maintains and modifies social identity and involves interpersonal skills (Richards, 1980: 420). This social element is expressed through wishes, feelings, attitudes, opinions and judgments, which can clash with the formal nature of the classroom when teaching conversation.

In addition to the above characteristics, Cane (1998: 32) mentions that   conversation is *multi-sensory* .This entails paralinguistic features such as eye-contact, facial expressions, body language, tempo, pauses, voice quality changes, and pitch variation which affect conversational flow.

2. 2 Functions

Conversation is a way to verbally communicate for mostly interpersonal and somewhat transactional purposes (Nunan, 1999: 228). Interpersonal language engages people for social reasons and maintain in social bonds, as illustrated previously, whereas transactional language is for service encounters, to complete a task and/or exchange information like buying tickets or ordering food.

Within these situations, conversations can either be *casual*, occur among close friends or family where little or no information is given and is not known to the participants, or *consultative* which occur among strangers where all necessary background information is

supplied and more elaborate politeness procedures are added to the well-known formulae for requests, questions, orders, and suggestions (Power, 2009:2).

Bygate (1988:6) contrasts, from his own part, motor-perceptive skills and interaction skills. The first ones involve perceiving, recalling, and articulating in the correct order sounds and structures of the language, whereas the latter ones involve making decisions about communication, such as: what to say, how to say it, and whether to develop it, in accordance with one's intentions, while maintaining the desired relations with others.

Conversation is also a way to initiate actions through linguistic means such as speech acts or functions (apologizing, promising, and inviting). Functional language is used directly or indirectly in various ways and contexts and therefore it is neither exhaustive nor complete (Richards, 1980: 417).

Furthermore, Conversation can be used to *mark relationships,* which suspend social distance, status, and power through linguistic neutrality, equality, sympathy, and antipathy (Cook, 1989: 87).

2.2.3 Conditions

Since conversation is a social action, it gives the idea that it needs to take place when people face each other. However, Thornbury and Slade (2006: 23) point out that 'computer-mediated communication' shares many conversational characteristics where face-to-face may not be the only way to have a conversation.

In fact, conversation is a specific spoken discourse that is primarily social and engaged in for social purposes and in social contexts (Kroeker, 2009:10). It happens when:

- there is a small group of people with a minimum of two,
- within shared contexts such as in situational, institutional, social and cultural environments (Ibid: 15), and
- it happens in real time and demands spontaneous decision-making and improvisation leading to a dynamic discourse (Nunan, 1999: 226).

Moreover, conversation entails the knowledge of the language system and the factors that create socially cohesive discourse (Cook, 1989: 116) that makes communication, in language teaching, effective only when the student is sensitive to the social and cultural aspects of language use and how these differ between his first and second language.

Conversation classes must then be guided by the elements of conversation and the means to generate genuine conversation (Kroeker, 2009:19). This task will be demonstrated through the teaching approaches in the next section.

3. Approaches for the Teaching of Conversation

Dornyei and Thurrell (1994:40) indicate that there are two approaches for the teaching of conversation; indirect and direct one.

The indirect approach is based on a notion laid out by Krashen and second language acquisition theorists which states that language can be unconsciously acquired through conversation and exposure of comprehensive input. It states that the indirect focus on the form is not important since children, though they receive no such input, are able to learn their first language and become competent users of it (Ibid.).

The conversation competence, which refers to the product of engaging learners in conversational interaction, will emerge from participating in interactive activities such as discussions, role-plays, information gaps, and problem-solving tasks (Ibid.:41). Methods such as the Oral Approach, the Audio lingual Method, Community Language Learning, and Communicative Language Teaching are evolved from this approach.

Though the interactive activities encouraged by the indirect approach can be of benefit for learners who need practice, Taylor and Wolfson (1978: 31) see the indirect approach is unstructured and linguistically deprived of how to engage in authentic interaction, besides, accuracy and sociolinguistic elements are also important for a speaking skills course.

The direct approach encourages conscious learning. The learner should be aware of the nature and patterns involved in conversations. This requires a systematic program of language input and processes that lead to fluent conversation (Dornyei and Thurrell, 1994: 40).

This approach includes recording conversations to recognize student deficiencies in observing real conversational transcripts, good conversationalists, and the differences between non-native and native conversation (Kroeker, 2009:12).

As criticism to this approach, Cook (1989:117) says that not all aspects of conversation can be taught as some mechanisms are only unconsciously accessible like pausing, overlapping, and pitch rise to signal turn-taking.

It seems clear from the above that the curriculum of the Iraqi EFL students is based on the indirect approach since the Audio lingual Method and the Communicative Language Teaching one, which are evolved by this approach, are mainly used in this curriculum. This involves more light to be shed on these two methods and how conversation can be taught according to them:

3.1 The Audio-Lingual Method

It is familiar in our foreign language classes to hear the teacher says something and the students repeat. This listen-repeat sequence is built on by teaching new skills in

grammar, writing, reading, and speaking in a systematic way. These procedures are based on what is called the Audio-Lingual Method.

This method was based on the techniques Leonard Bloomfield and other linguists devised as a response to the need of army personnel after the USA entry into the Second World War for people who could carry on conversations fluently and could work as interpreters, code-room assistants, and translators. Students had to interact intensively with native speakers and a linguist in guided conversations designed to decode its basic grammar and learn the vocabulary (Richards and Rodgers, 2001: 43).

The theory of language underlying Audiolingualism was derived from a view proposed by American linguists in the 1930s and 1940s. The view then came to be known as structural linguistics with Bloomfield and Fries as its representatives. Structural linguistics, as it mentioned earlier, views language as a system of structurally related elements for the expression of meaning. These elements are phonemes, morphemes, words, structures, and sentence types.

According to a structural view, language has the following characteristics:

1. Elements in a language are produced in a rule-governed (structural) way. Language samples could be exhaustively described at any structural level of description.

2. Language is structural like a pyramid, that is, linguistic level is system within system. Language is speech, not writing.

3. Languages are different (Renshaw, 2009: 2).

The learning theory of Audiolingualism is behavioral psychology which is an empirically based approach to the study of human behaviour. Behaviourism tries to explain how an external event (a stimulus) caused a change in the behaviour of an individual (a response) without using concepts like "mind" or "ideas" or any kind of mental behaviour. Behaviourist psychology states that people are conditioned to learn many forms of behaviour, including language, through the process of training or conditioning (Ibid.: 3).

The occurrence of behaviour then is dependent upon three crucial elements in learning: a stimulus, which serves to elicit behaviour; a response triggered by a stimulus; and reinforcement, which serves to mark the response as being appropriate (or inappropriate) and encourage the repetition (or suppression) of the response in the future. Learning is thus described as the formation of association between stimuli and responses (Ibid.).

To apply this theory to language learning means the identification of the organism as the foreign language learner, the behaviour as verbal behaviour, the stimulus as what is taught (language input), the response as the learner's reaction to the stimulus, and the

reinforcement as the approval or praise (or discouragement) of the teacher or fellow students.

According to this, learning a language is a mechanical process of habit formation where students listen to or view recordings of language models acting in situations. Students practise with a variety of drills through which the instructor emphasizes the use of the target language at all times and ,by reinforcing 'correct' behaviors, students will turn them into habits (Richards and Rodgers, 2001: 43).

By drawing on the structural linguistics and behaviourist psychology, the Audio-Lingual Method formed its own distinctive characteristics.

3.1.1 The Main Concepts of Audiolingualism

Based on the assumption that foreign language is basically a mechanical process and it is more effective if spoken form precedes written form, the stress was on oral proficiency and carefully-structured drill sequences (mimicry/memorization) and the idea that quality and permanence of learning are in direct proportion to amount of practice carried out.

The main concepts of Audiolingualism are the following as stated by Ellis (1990: 21-25):

1. Foreign language is the same as any other kind of learning and can be   explained by the same laws and principles.

2. Learning is the result of experience and is evident in changes in behaviour.

3. Foreign language learning is different from first language learning.

4. Foreign language learning is a process of habit formation.

5. Language learning proceeds by means of analogy (habit-formation   involving discrimination and generalization) rather than analysis.

6. Discouraging the use of the mother tongue in the classroom.

7. Errors are the result of the first language interference and are to be   avoided.

8. Separation of language skills into listening, speaking, reading and   writing, with emphasis on the teaching of listening and speaking before   reading and writing.

Qing-xue and Jin-fang (2007:70) state that the separation of language skills is based on the assumption that learning a language entails mastering the elements or building blocks of the language and learning the rules by which these elements are combined, from phoneme to morpheme to word to phrase   to sentence. It; therefore stresses syntactical progression and uses pattern drill to help the students develop his oral ability.

Based on the above concepts, the following procedures are said to be used in teaching conversation:

3.1.2 Procedures for Teaching Conversation

Richards and Rodgers (2001: 64-5) mention the following procedures for teaching conversation:

1. Recognition: Students first hear a model dialogue (either read by the teacher or on the tape) and try to understand the meaning of the dialogue with the help of the teacher's gestures, mime, and context or situation established in advance.
2. Imitation and repetition: The students repeat each line of the dialogue, individually and in chorus. The students must imitate the right pronunciation, intonation and fluency.
3. Pattern drills: Different pattern drills are used to give students more practice.
4. Follow-up activities: The students then are allowed to look at their textbooks. They are usually asked to do some follow-up reading, writing or vocabulary activities. This will guide their use of the language.

Though the Audio-Lingual Method is probably the first language teaching theory that claims to be derived from linguistics and psychology, the idea that thinking processes themselves led to the discovery of independent language rule formation (rather than "habit formation"), and a belief that affective factors influenced their application, paved the way toward the new methods that were to follow the Audio-Lingual method, the most obvious is the Communicative Method:

3.2 The Communicative Language Teaching Method

The Communicative Method began in Britain in the 1960s as a response to Chomsky's criticisms of structural theories of language and partly based on the theories of British functional linguists, such as Firth and Halliday, as well as American sociolinguists, such as Hymes and Labov and the writings of Austin and Searle on speech acts. It emphasizes the learner's ability to use the language appropriately in specific situations and tries to make the learners communicatively competent. Learners should know when, where and with whom they should use language (Sierra, 2006:11).

The functional view of language is the primary one behind the communicative method. This view sees language as a linguistic system and as a means for doing things. Most of our day-to-day language use involves functional activities such as offering, suggesting, advising, apologizing, etc. To perform functions, learners need to know how to combine the grammatical rules and the vocabulary to express notions that perform the functions.
The goal then is to develop students' *communicative competence*, a term coined in opposition to the Chomskian concept of *competence* that refers to the abstract grammatical knowledge speakers have for producing correct sentences in a language.

Communicative competence, on the other hand, extends Chomsky's concept to the ability to understand and produce messages appropriate to a socio/psycho/cultural situation, so that language users can relate their linguistic knowledge to everyday conventions, participate in discourse, and have knowledge of the pragmatic conventions governing that participation (Hymes 1972:24−6).

According to Richards and Rodgers (2001:71), the Communicative Method can be considered rich and eclectic at the level of *language theory* as it advocates the following main features:

1. Language is a system for the expression of meaning.

2. The primary function of language is for interaction and communication.

3. The structure of language reflects its functional and communicative

   uses.

4. The primary units of language are not merely its grammatical and structural features, but categories of functional and communicative meaning as exemplified in discourse.

The learning theory underlying this Method is not very much developed though some main elements emerge from its practice. Learning improves when these forceful ideas are applied to classroom activities (See Johnson 1982):

1. Relationship of activities to real communication.

2. Activities use language for meaningful tasks.

3. Language used is meaningful to the learner.

4. Language is used communicatively, rather than practicing language skills.

3.2.1 The Main Concepts of the Communicative Method

The Communicative Method is based on the following principles as listed by Erton (2006:6):

1. Activities should involve real communication to promote learning.

2. Activities should not be imaginary but should be based on realistic motives.

3. The meaningful use and production of language promotes the language learning process.

4. Students use language as a means of expressing values and their concerns.

5. Students are demonstrated with the functions of language that best meet their own communicative needs.

6. The communicative language teaching makes use of any activity which would help the learners to get engaged in authentic (real) communication.

7. It aims to develop certain language skills and function by using the target language and communicative activities.

8. Favourite activities are: social interaction activities, conversation and discussion sessions, dialogues, pair and group discussions and role plays.

3.2.2 Procedures for Teaching Conversation

Richards and Rodgers (2001: 170) state that typical classroom procedures used in lesson based on communicative language teaching principles are not feasible since such principles can be applied to the teaching of any skill and the wide variety of classroom the activities and exercises types that can be applied in such a lesson are varied; yet, Langs (2009:5-6) offers the following steps:

1. Teacher gives a presentation of a situation or context: The dialogues are related to the learners' experiences and interest. This includes a discussion of the function and situation: People, roles, setting, topic and the level of formality or informality the function and situation demand.

2. Brainstorming and discussion establish the vocabulary and expressions: The purpose is to accomplish the communication by including a framework or means of structuring a conversation or exchange to achieve the purpose of the speakers.

3. Questions and answers are based on the dialogue topic and situation: wh- questions, yes/no, either/or and open-ended questions can be used.

4. Study of the basic communicative expressions in the dialogue or one of the structures that exemplifies the function, using pictures, real objects, or dramatization to clarify the meaning.

5.Classroom should provide opportunities for rehearsal of real-life situations: Emphasis on creative role-plays/ simulations/ surveys/ projects all produce spontaneity and improvisation not just repetition and drills.

6. Primacy of oral work: Emphasis on oral and listening skills in the classroom. This involves having personal contact with language, practicing sounds, and getting chance to make mistakes and learn from doing so.

7. Oral recognition and interpretative activities including oral production proceeding from guided to freer communication activities.

8. Homework and extension activities are relevant to the learners' creation of new dialogues around the same situation.

It is often assumed that it is the duty of a teacher to translate those learning methods into practical teaching procedures. To find out which of the above methods and its procedures in teaching conversation is more effective in fulfilling its aims, a sample of Iraqi

EFL College students have been taught, after which a test has been applied according to each one of them:

4. The Test

4.1 Test Design

The test consists of two parts: the **structural** part and the **communicative** one. The first one measures the students' performance in conversation according to the Audio Lingual Method. The material of this part of the test is taken from *Breakthrough 2: A Course in English Communicative Practice* by J.C. Richards and M. N. Long. This book is the text book of conversation studied by the third year at the Department of English at the College of Education, University of Babylon.

The subjects have been tested in the exercises of chapter 13 "What Should I Do?" which is talking about how to give recommendations and advice.

The exercises used in the test are 2.1, 2.2, 2.3 (b, c), 4.1, 4.2 (See Appendix 1).

The second part of the test measures the students' performance in conversation according to the Communicative Method. The material used in this part of the test is taken from *Interchange: Workbook 3* by Jack C. Richards, Jonathan Hull, and Susan Proctor. After being taught the theoretical part, the subjects have been tested in the exercises of Chapter 9 "At your Service" which is also talking about how to give recommendations and advice. The exercises used in the test are: 1, 2 (a, b), 3, 4, and 5 (b) (See Appendix 2).

4.2 The Subjects

The sample to which the test has been administered consists of eighty subjects of the third academic year (2011–2012) of the Department of English at the College of Education, University of Babylon.

4.3 The Results of the Test

4.3.1 The Structural Part of the Test

4.3.1.1 The Results of Exercise 2.1

This exercise is about giving advice by using the construction (**You should…**) or (**You had better…**). It is a matching exercise, column (a) gives some problems and column (b) gives some advices and the subjects are required to match the problem with the suitable advice.

The results of exercise 2.1 reveal that (49.3 %) of the responses are correct, whereas (50.7%) are incorrect as shown in the following table:

Table (1)

The Results of Exercise 2.1

Item	No. of correct answers	%	No. of incorrect answers	%
1	21	26.25	59	73.75
2	44	55	36	45
3	50	62.5	30	37.5
4	50	62.5	30	37.5
5	52	65	28	35
6	40	50	40	50
7	26	32.5	54	67.5
8	40	50	40	50
9	32	40	48	60
Total	355	49.3	365	50.7

4.3.1.2 The Results of Exercise 2.2

Exercise 2.2 requires matching between a problem in column (a) and the suitable advice in column (b). This exercise is different from exercise 2.1 in the constructions as the subjects are asked to use the constructions (**You shouldn't**) or (**You had better not**) instead of (**You should…**) or (**You had better…**).

The results of exercise 2.2 show that (68.23%) of the responses are correct against (31.77%) incorrect as they are presented in Table (2) :

Table (2)

The Results of Exercise 2.2

Item	No. of correct answers	%	No. of incorrect answers	%
1	57	71	23	28.75
2	47	58.75	33	41.25
3	60	75	20	25
4	46	57.5	34	42.5
5	61	76.25	19	23.75
6	54	67.5	26	32.5
Total	325	68.23	155	31.77

4.3.1.3 The Results of Exercise 2.3

This exercise is about writing two conversations. Three suggestions are given to be discussed by using the constructions of suggestions given in this chapter. The conversational turn will be considered wrong if the subjects fail to use the constructions of suggestions or the conversational turn is grammatically incorrect.

Each conversation consists of six turns. Each turn will be considered as an item; accordingly, each conversation will be of six items.

The results of exercise 2.3b reveal, as shown in Table (3), the subjects' performance is not good as the percentage of correct responses is (41.87%), whereas that of incorrect ones is (58.13):

Table (3)

The Results of Exercise 2.3b

Item	No. of correct answers	%	No. of incorrect answers	%
1	42	52.5	38	47.5
2	5	6.25	75	93.75
3	50	40	40	50
4	38	47.5	42	52.5
5	39	48.75	41	51.25
6	37	46.25	43	53.75
Total	201	41.87	279	58.13

The results of exercise 2.3c are shown in Table (4):

Table (4)

The Results of Exercise 2.3c

Item	No. of correct answers	%	No. of incorrect answers	%
1	45	56.25	35	43.75
2	45	56.25	35	43.75
3	45	56.25	35	43.75
4	15	18.75	65	81.25
5	44	55	36	45
6	45	56.25	35	43.75
Total	239	49.8	241	50.2

The results show that the percentage of the correct responses of exercise 2.3c is (49.8%).

The total results of exercise 2.3 (b, c) are shown in Table (5):

Table (5)

The Total Results of Exercise 2.3

Item	No. of correct answers	%	No. of incorrect answers	%
B	201	41.87	279	58.13
C	239	49.8	241	50.2
Total	440	45.88	520	54.12

According to Table (5), the percentage of the correct responses is (45.88%)

4.3.1.4 The Results of Exercise 4.1

Exercise 4.1 is about a given situation and then followed by a conversation with some deleted information and the subjects are required to fill in the blanks by using the constructions of giving advice depending on the given situation.

The results of exercise 4.1 are shown in Table (6):

Table (6)

The Results of Exercise 4.1

Item	No. of correct answers	%	No. of incorrect answers	%
1	47	58.75	33	41.25
2	47	58.75	33	41.25
Total	94	58.75	66	41.25

Table (6) reveals that the percentage of the correct information is (58.75%).

4.3.1.5 The Results of Exercise 4.2

In this exercise, the subjects are required to complete a conversation by giving recommendations about the situation mentioned previously in exercise 4.1. Table (7) below shows the results of exercise 4.2:

Table (7)

The Results of Exercise 4.2

Item	No. of correct answers	%	No. of incorrect answers	%
1	5o	62.5	30	37.5
2	45	56.25	35	43.75
3	53	66.25	27	33.75
Total	148	61.6	92	38.4

According to Table (7), the percentage of the correct responses is (61.6%).

4.3.1.6 The Total Results of the Structural Part

The total results of the structural part of the test are shown in Table (8):

Table (8)

The Total Results of the Structural Part

Item	No. of correct answers	%	No. of incorrect answers	%	Total Answers
2.1	355	49.3	365	50.7	720
2.2	325	68.23	155	31.77	480
2.3	440	45.88	520	54.12	960
4.1	94	58.75	66	41.25	160
4.2	148	61.6	92	38.4	240
Total	1362	53.2	1198	46.8	2560

The results presented in Table (8) show that the number and rate of the correct responses of the structural part are (1362, 53.2%).

4.3.2 The Communicative Part of the Test

4.3.2.1 The Results of Exercise 1

Exercise (1) presents six people each one has a problem. Certain services are given in advance and the subjects are required to choose the correct service that solves the given problems. The first item is done as an example. (See Appendix 2).

The results of exercise 1 are shown in Table (9)

Table (9)

The Results of Exercise 1

Item	No. of correct answers	%	No. of incorrect answers	%
2	70	87.5	10	12.5
3	67	83.75	13	16.25
4	66	82.5	14	17.5
5	73	91.25	7	8.75
6	65	81.25	15	18.75
Total	341	85.25	59	14.75

Table (9) shows that the percentage of the correct answer is high; (85.25%).

4.3.2.2 The Results of Exercise 2

Exercise 2 is of two branches **A** and B. Branch **A** requires matching between two columns *(a)* and *(b)*. Column *(a)* gives some verbs, while column *(b)* gives some phrases that match with the verbs in column *(a)*. The first item is done. According to Table (10), the percentage of the correct responses is obviously good; (75.75%):

Table (10)

The Results of Exercise 2(a)

Item	No. of correct answers	%	No. of incorrect answers	%
2	80	100	0	0
3	70	87.5	10	12.5
4	50	62.5	30	37.5
5	46	57.5	34	42.5
6	57	71.25	23	28.75
Total	303	75.75	97	24.25

Branch **B** of exercise 2 requires using the verbs in column *(a)* in the construction (**Do you know where I can have someone…**) .Each question should be answered by giving an advice or a recommendation. The first item is done as an example.

The results of exercise 2(b) are shown in Table (11):

Table (11)

The Results of Exercise 2(b)

Item	Question				Answer			
	Correct	%	Incorrect	%	Correct	%	Incorrect	%
2	70	87.5	10	12.5	32	40	48	60
3	60	75	20	25	42	52.5	38	47.5
4	52	65	28	35	53	66.25	27	33.5
5	44	55	36	45	50	62.5	30	37.5
6	46	57.5	34	42.5	53	66.25	27	33.5
Total	272	68	128	32	230	57.5	170	42.5

Table (11) shows that the percentage of the correct questions formed by the subjects is (68%), whereas the percentage of the incorrect ones is (57.5%).

The total results of exercise 2 (b) are shown in Table (12)

Table (12)

The Total Results of Exercise 2 (b)

Item	No. of correct answers	%	No. of incorrect answers	%
Question	272	68	128	32
Answer	230	57.5	170	42.5
Total	502	62.5	298	37.25

Table (12) shows that the total percentage of the correct responses of branch **B** of exercise **2** (for both the questions and answers) is (62.5%).

The total results for both, branch **A** and **B,** of exercise 2 are shown in Table (13):

Table (13)

The Total Results for Branch A and B of Exercise 2

Item	No. of correct answers	%	No. of incorrect answers	%
A	303	75.75	97	24.25
B	5205	62.5	298	37.25
Total	805	67.1	395	32.9

Table (13) shows that the percentage of the correct answers of exercise 2 is higher (67.1%) than that of incorrect ones (32.9%).

4.3.2.3 The Results of Exercise 3

Exercise 3 is about giving recommendation about certain services by using the passive voice. The services are presented in pictures and the subject is required to respond to these pictures. The first item is done as an example.

The results of exercise 3 are shown in Table (14)

Table (14)

The Results of Exercise 3

Item	No. of correct answers	%	No. of incorrect answers	%
2	48	60	32	40
3	49	61.25	31	38.75
4	57	71.25	23	28.75
Total	154	64.17	86	35.83

Table (14) reveals that the percentage of the correct responses is (64.17%).

4.3.2.4 The Results of Exercise 4

Exercise 4 is about choosing the correct phrasal verb. Four sentences are given in which the verb is missing and the subjects are required to choose the correct phrasal verb from the choices that follow each sentence.

Table (15), which presents the results of exercise 4, reveals that the percentage of the correct answers is much better (66.25%), as compared with the incorrect ones (33.75%):

Table (15)

The Results of Exercise 4

Item	No. of correct answers	%	No. of incorrect answers	%
1	47	58.75	33	41.25
2	59	73.75	21	26.25
3	59	73.75	21	26.25
4	47	58.75	33	41.25
Total	212	66.25	108	33.75

4.3.2.5 The Results of Exercise 5

A passage is given in exercise 5 and followed by five statements. The subjects are required to decide which statements are correct and correct the incorrect ones. The item is considered incorrect if it was false and left without correction. Table (16) below shows the results of this exercise:

Table (16)

The Results of Exercise 5

Item	No. of correct answers	%	No. of incorrect answers	%
1	60	75	20	25
2	43	53.75	37	46.25
3	22	27.5	58	72.5
4	65	81.25	15	18.75
5	28	35	52	65
Total	218	54.5	182	45.5

According to Table (16), the percentage of the correct answers is (54.5%).

4.3.2.6 The Results of the Communicative Part of the Test

The total results of the communicative part of the test are shown in Table (17):

Table (17)

The Total Results of the Communicative Part

Item	No. of correct answers	%	No. of incorrect answers	%
Q1	341	85.25	59	14.75
Q2	805	67.1	395	32.9
Q3	154	64.17	86	35.83
Q4	212	66.25	108	33.75
Q5	218	54.5	182	45.5
Total	1730	67.57	830	32.43

According table (17), the percentage of the correct responses for the communicative part of the test is (67.57%).

5. Conclusions

Though the Audio lingual Method is the main method used for teaching the subjects tested throughout their years of study, and though the subjects taught conversation according to the Communicative Method for a short time, comparing with the Audio Lingual

one, their performance on the structural part is not good if it is compared with the communicative one. The frequency and rate of the correct responses of the structural part of the test are (1362, 53.2%), whereas those of the communicative part of the test are (1730, 67.57%). The percentages of the correct responses for the two parts of the test reveal that the subjects' performance in conversation when it taught according to the Communicative Method is better than their performance when conversation is taught according to the Audio Lingual one.

The results of the test reflect that teaching conversation will be more effective when it is taught according to the communicative Method as the concept of communication goes beyond the sentence to texts and   conversations in which the appropriacy of language use is considered alongside with accuracy; yet it is believed that the performance of the students might be much better if the number of the students in each class is less than what it is used to be now. This will allow teachers to spend more time on interactions of students and enable them to predict the process in the class more effectively.

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