

**Hebron University**  
**Faculty of Graduate Studies**



**The Impact of Using Asking for Clarification and Circumlocution Speaking Strategies on  
Enhancing the Speaking Skill of EFL Tenth Graders in Hebron**

**Master Thesis**

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**This thesis is submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of  
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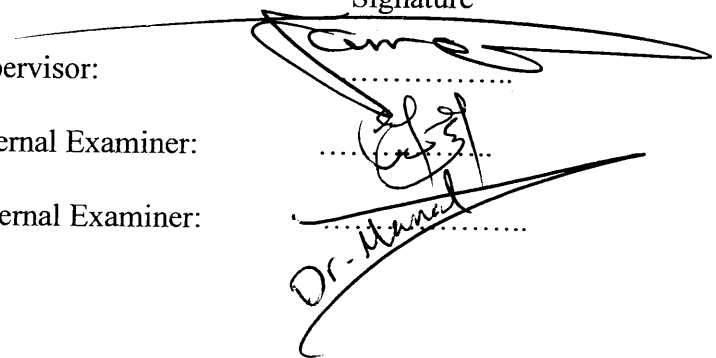
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Signature



The image shows three handwritten signatures, each written over a horizontal dotted line. The first signature is a large, stylized cursive signature. The second signature is a smaller, more compact cursive signature. The third signature is a cursive signature that includes the text 'Dr. Manal' written below the main signature.

*Dedication*

I would like to dedicate my work:

To my husband, who has always been supporting and encouraging me.

To my lovely children Laith, Layan and Adam

To my parents

To my brothers and sisters

To everyone who cares

## **Acknowledgement**

Foremost, I am grateful to Allah suphanah wataala, the Almighty, the Compassionate, the Most Merciful, who has always given me strength and courage to complete this research. May peace be upon His Messenger, Mohammad.

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## Abstract

This study mainly aimed at investigating the impact of teaching asking for clarification and circumlocution speaking strategies on enhancing students' speaking ability. In addition, it investigated the impact of teaching asking for clarification and circumlocution speaking strategies on students' use of other speaking strategies. Finally, it aimed at finding the correlation between language proficiency and students' use of the taught speaking strategies. Sixty-two 10<sup>th</sup> graders at Noba Secondary School for Girls, a government high school, participated in the study. Their native language is Arabic. They were divided into an experimental group comprised of thirty-one students and a control group consisted of thirty-one students. The experimental group had training on using two speaking strategies, namely asking for clarification and circumlocution, which lasted over a semester. The quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data which were collected through pre and post questionnaires and pre and post tests showed that the use of asking for clarification strategy enhanced students' speaking skill. However, students' speaking skill was not enhanced with the use of circumlocution strategy. In addition, there were no significant differences between the experimental and control group in their use of different speaking strategies after teaching asking for clarification and circumlocution speaking strategies. However, message reduction and alteration strategies and social-affective strategies were reported to be the most significantly used strategies by the experimental group. Furthermore, the results showed that there was a strong correlation between learners' proficiency level and their strategy use. Finally, the study came with a number of recommendations.

## Arabic Abstract

### ملخص الرسالة باللغة العربية

هدفت الرسالة إلى بحث تأثير استخدام استراتيجيات طلب التوضيح والإطنا ب على تعزيز مهارة المحادثة لدى طالبات الصف العاشر في مدرسة نوبا الثانوية للبنات، كما هدفت الدراسة أيضا إلى معرفة تأثير تدريس استراتيجيات طلب التوضيح والإطنا ب على استخدام الطالبات لاستراتيجيات المحادثة بشكل عام. كما هدفت الدراسة أيضا إلى إيجاد العلاقة بين مستوى الطالبات اللغوي، واستخدام استراتيجيات المحادثة.

تكونت عينة الدراسة من اثنتين وستين طالبة من الصف العاشر؛ تم تقسيمهن إلى مجموعة تجريبية مكونة من إحدى وثلاثين طالبة، وأخرى ضابطة مكونة من إحدى وثلاثين طالبة، واللغة العربية هي لغتهن الأم. تم تدريب طالبات المجموعة التجريبية على استخدام إستراتيجيتين ألا وهما: طلب التوضيح والإطنا ب. وقد استمر التدريب على مدار فصل دراسي كامل. أظهر التحليل الكمي والنوعي لبيانات الدراسة التي جمعت من خلال استخدام استبيان قبلي، وآخر بعدي بالإضافة إلى استخدام اختبار قبلي وآخر بعدي؛ أنّ استخدام إستراتيجية طلب التوضيح أسهم في تعزيز مهارة المحادثة لدى الطالبات، ولكن لم يطرأ أي تحسن على مهارة المحادثة لدى الطالبات نتيجة استخدام إستراتيجية الإطنا ب. كما تبين أيضا أنه لم تكن هناك فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية بين المجموعة التجريبية والمجموعة الضابطة في استخدام استراتيجيات المحادثة بشكل عام، ولكن كان هناك فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية بين التجريبية والمجموعة الضابطة في استخدام بعض الاستراتيجيات لاسيما استراتيجيات الحد من التعبير، وتغيير الفكرة، واستراتيجيات ذات علاقة بالناحية الوجدانية الاجتماعية للمتعلمين، وعلاوة على ذلك أظهرت النتائج أنه كان هناك علاقة بين المستوى اللغوي للطالبات واستخدام استراتيجيات طلب التوضيح والإطنا ب. وفي ضوء هذه النتائج خلصت الدراسة إلى عدد من التوصيات.

## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction**

#### **1.0. Background**

For many decades, Grammar Translation method and vocabulary drills have been prevalent in EFL classrooms. Later, many studies showed that knowledge of syntax is not enough for developing communication skill. This led to the appearance of an approach, which focuses more on communication; the communicative approach. This approach is needed as communication is a crucial need for humans. It is not only to express one's self, but also to get others comprehend one's ideas. Since the main goal of communication is to transfer information, this transference should be clear and goes smoothly. Unfortunately, speakers, especially foreign learners may fail to get their message across to the interlocutor. According to the researcher's experience as an English teacher, a student may be excellent in writing, reading and listening, but he or she may not speak for two minutes without having linguistic difficulties which prevent them from conveying their communicative goal. Students' inability to speak may be due to several reasons which are class size, traditional approaches still followed by some teachers and misuse of English teaching time. Moreover, few opportunities to communicate outside the class, teachers' commitment to finish the textbook on time, the Palestinian evaluation system that focuses on writing and reading, neglecting listening and speaking and some teachers' inability to speak in English with students during the class are other reasons for students' speaking deficiency.

Rababah (2003, p. 182-183) stated that "Arab learners find it difficult to communicate freely in the target language. This may be due to the methods of language teaching. It can be also due to the learning environment which some judge to be unsuitable for learning a foreign language." EFL learners have few opportunities to practice their speaking skill "so oral communication skills are harder to develop than the other language skills: reading, listening and writing" (Khan,

2010, p. 1). Lewis (2011, p. 45) attributes the fact that speaking skill receives little attention in EFL context due to “the very nature of speaking and the inherent difficulties and challenges of teaching it.” Khan (2010) added to this same idea the fact that although of all attempts that have been taken place to develop speaking, it appears that this skill is the most difficult to develop in the FL context. Furthermore, EFL learners’ inefficiency to communicate in English is due to several reasons. It could be because of lack of vocabulary to express ideas, shyness or lack of confidence, lack of environment to practice the language, or lack of some strategies that help to maintain a conversation (Nguyet & Mai, 2012). Specifically, according to the researcher’s experience Palestinian learners have little chance to practice speaking. Speaking skill is neglected although the Palestinian curriculum is based on the communicative approach that considers interaction the main aim of language learning. However, educators are looking for ways that help learners overcome such difficulties. Therefore, language strategy use may be a possible solution. That is, learners can use speaking strategies to keep the flow of their conversations and the training on using these strategies may make them as a part of their repertoire to use them later in other situations. Many scholars advocate the use of speaking strategies such as (Majd, 2014; Uгла, Adnan & Abidin, 2013a; Nguyet & Mai, 2012; Alibakhshi & Padiz, 2011; Tavakoli, Dastjerdi & Esteki, 2011; Tian, 2011; Nakatani, 2010; Khamwan, 2007; Lam, 2006; Atik, 2006; Campillo, 2006; Kendall, Jarvie, Doll, Lin & Purcell, 2005; Rababah & Seedhouse, 2004; Dobao, 2002; Dadour & Robbins, 1996; Gabrielatos, 1992). For example, Uгла, Adnan and Abidin (2013a) suggested incorporating speaking strategies into the English education program at the various levels to improve the learners speaking ability.

To be more specific, tenth grade students at Noba Secondary School face some communication problems. This may be because their communicative competence is not developed enough to achieve their communicative goal. Therefore, this study aims at

investigating whether the use of speaking strategies especially asking for clarification and circumlocution may enhance their speaking ability. In addition, it examines the impact of teaching these speaking strategies on students' use of some speaking strategies. Finally, it seeks to investigate whether the learners' language proficiency level correlates with their use of the taught strategies.

## **1.1. The study**

### **1.1.1. Background of the study**

It is evident that no one has a perfect control of a language. Both native and nonnative speakers are stuck by the fact that they might not be able to carry out a verbal plan without having linguistic difficulties. Thus, there are suggestions that the use of speaking strategies may alleviate this problem. Speaking strategies help them to bridge this gap and communicate their goal. In addition, speaking strategies have a potential effect on developing FL learners' speaking skill. (Majd, 2014; Uгла, Adnan & Abidin 2013a; Nguyet & Mai, 2012; Alibakhshi & Padiz, 2011; Tavakoli, Dastjerdi & Esteki, 2011; Tian, 2011; Nakatani, 2010; Khamwan, 2007; Lam, 2006; Atik, 2006; Campillo, 2006; Chen, 2006; Kendall, Jarvie, Doll, Lin & Purcell, 2005; Rababah & Seedhouse, 2004; Dobao, 2002; Lam & Wong, 2000; Dadour & Robbins, 1996; Gabrielatos, 1992). Therefore, there is a need to investigate the impact of teaching speaking strategies on enhancing learners' speaking ability in the Palestinian context since the current study is part of integrating speaking strategies in language learning.

### **1.2. Statement of the problem**

Although the Palestinian curriculum is based on the communicative approach, speaking remains a neglected skill in many Palestinian classrooms. The large number of students in class, teachers' inability to speak fluently, teachers' commitment to finish the textbook on time, as well as students' little opportunity to use the target language outside the classroom, all these factors



affects learners' ability to speak with ease. Therefore, the main problem faces EFL Palestinian learners is the inability to handle a communicative situation. If they confront a difficulty during the conversation, they just stop or use Arabic. From the researcher's experience, it is observed that when students are asked to answer a question, they just stand looking at one's mates who may whisper the answer, and the student just repeats it after them without any sense of understanding or finally says "I don't know." The inability to handle a communicative situation may gradually lead learners to reach a state of hatred to learn English.

Even proficient learners are sometimes unable to communicate their thoughts because they do not have access to the required word or expression due to failure in the memory or any other reasons such as fatigue and linguistic deficiency (Tovakoli, Dastjerdi & Esteki, 2011). Hence, "if the students know some communication strategies, their reactions will be different. Even if they do not know exactly what to say, they will try to find ways to get close to the answer" (Ogane, 1998, p. 1). The use of speaking strategies gets them feel secured that they try to keep their conversation. It is believed that more emphasis on teaching speaking strategies helps learners manage communication problems inside and outside the classroom by providing them with the necessary strategies that help them overcome linguistic difficulties (Ogane, 1998). Moreover, "the use of communication strategies has language learning potential" (Lam, 2010, p. 12).

### **1.3.Purposes of the Study**

The current study investigates whether the teaching of specific speaking strategies, such as asking for clarification and circumlocution, which other researchers have studied and found useful for second and foreign language learners at different levels, will enhance the ability of Palestinian students to communicate. Accordingly, this study attempts to serve a number of purposes. They are as follows.

1. To investigate the impact of using asking for clarification on enhancing 10<sup>th</sup> grade students' speaking ability.
2. To investigate the impact of using circumlocution on enhancing 10<sup>th</sup> grade students' speaking ability.
3. To investigate the impact of speaking strategy-training on students' use of some speaking strategies.
4. To investigate whether there is a correlation between learners' language proficiency level and the use of the taught speaking strategies among the 10<sup>th</sup> grade students.

#### **1.4. Research Questions**

Thus, the present study investigates the following research questions:

1. What is the impact of using asking for clarification on enhancing 10<sup>th</sup> grade students' speaking ability?
2. What is the impact of using circumlocution on enhancing 10<sup>th</sup> grade students' speaking ability?
3. What is the impact of speaking–strategy training on students' use of some speaking strategies?
4. To what extent there is a correlation between the language proficiency level and learners' use of the taught speaking strategies among the 10<sup>th</sup> grade students?

To summarize, the current study examines the impact of using asking for clarification and circumlocution speaking strategies on enhancing tenth grade students' speaking ability. In addition, it investigates the impact of teaching asking for clarification and circumlocution on students' use of some speaking strategies. Moreover, it investigates the correlation between learners' proficiency level and their use of the taught speaking strategies. The researcher chose tenth grade for her study because the strategies that were taught required a level of competence in English. In addition, these students do not have sufficient language to communicate effectively in social situations and when they have problems, they do not use any strategies to help them to

continue. As a result, they frequently experience breakdowns in communication. Furthermore, the researcher chose to teach these particular two strategies since there have not been any studies to teach these particular speaking strategies in Palestine until now. As well, the researcher chose to teach circumlocution to tenth grade because “once students reach intermediate-level classes, they must take additional responsibility for developing their skills through circumlocution” (Berry-Bravo, 1993, p. 374).

### **1.5. Hypotheses of the study**

1. Using asking for clarification will have an impact on learners’ speaking ability.
2. Using circumlocution will have an impact on learners’ speaking ability.
3. Teaching speaking strategies will affect students’ use of some speaking strategies.
4. Language proficiency level will have a contribution on using the taught speaking strategies.

### **1.6. Significance of the study**

To the best of the researcher’s knowledge, this study is among the first to be conducted in the Palestinian schools. As well as, due to the few studies that investigate the impact of using speaking strategies to develop the speaking skill, the need to draw the practitioners’ attention to the importance of using speaking strategies to enhance the speaking skill and to develop the students’ autonomy, this study comes to fill such a gap. Moreover, this study is conducted in this field because there have been few research studies that investigate the use of strategies for oral production (Nakatani, 2005). Furthermore, the results will help the practitioners to encourage the use of speaking strategies and to have them as a part in the textbooks and embed them implicitly and explicitly within the classroom activities. Moreover, this study provides an alternative way of teaching speaking to Palestinian students. According to Bialystok (1990) and Dornyei (1995) if learners develop their ability to use speaking strategies to compensate for deficiency in their target language, they will develop their communicative proficiency. Consequently, they can

speak with great ease the target language. Ya-ni (2007) also states that the teaching of speaking strategies makes English language learning more meaningful and influential. Mariani (1994) advocates the teaching of certain speaking strategies explicitly since if learners are aware of certain language features, this helps their integration in their repertoire. That is, if they have the sense of noticing these features during their learning process, consequently, they receive them and acquire them implicitly. Therefore, it is hoped that the results of this study will provide useful data for the development of teaching speaking strategies. That is, this study offers an alternative way of teaching speaking to Palestinian students.

### **1.7. Limitations of the Study**

The present study has the following primary limitations:

1. This study is confined to tenth grade students in the first semester of the academic year 2013/2014 at Noba Secondary School for Girls in Noba, Hebron. Hence, the generalization of the results is limited to this population and to the instruments used in this study.
2. Finally, the time frame of the study is limited to one semester.

### **1.8. Definitions of key words**

1. **Speaking strategies** are those devices used by students when face a communication problem, they use to continue their communication rather than give up (Dornyei, 1995).
2. **Circumlocution**: “is the alternative means of expression that allows the learner and the interlocutor to work to achieve an agreement on meaning through the use of a description” (Ismail & Kaur, 2012, p. 2).
3. **Asking for clarification or clarification requests** are a mean an interlocutor uses to explain what is said (Chiang & Lai, 2010).
4. **English Language Proficiency**

This refers to the students' English language proficiency as it is determined by the students' grades in the English subject

**a. intermediate Students**

The term refers to those students who had average grades in the English subject ranging from 70-99.

**b. Low Proficiency Students**

The term refers to those students who had average grades in English ranging below 70.

**1.9. Summary**

This chapter introduced the problem of the study. The problem is because speaking skill is neglected in the Palestinian EFL classrooms. In addition, the very nature of speaking makes it difficult to be taught. Moreover, the use of English is restricted to the classroom as it is an academic subject. Therefore, Palestinian learners find it is difficult to have a conversation without having difficulties that prevent them carrying it out. Hence, drawing attention to the use of speaking strategies to undo this problem could be a fruitful and effective tool in teaching, but they are not considered so in our schools. Therefore, there is a need to integrate speaking strategies activities into the textbooks in our schools to be taught explicitly and implicitly. Nevertheless, this integration of speaking strategies has to be investigated for its effectiveness beforehand.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Review of Literature**

#### **2.0. Introduction**

This chapter provides theoretical framework, a historical background about speaking strategies: their classifications, factors affecting the choice of speaking strategies, and a literature review of some of the empirical studies that used it.

#### **2.1. Theoretical Framework**

##### **2.1.1. Definition of speaking**

Speaking is "the use of the articulatory system, the actual physical effort of producing sounds that result in speech" (Itkonen, 2010, p. 6).

##### **2.1.2. Historical background about speaking**

Speaking took a peculiar position in second and foreign language throughout the teaching of the language. The speaking skill had been neglected for decades. It had been rarely focused on. This might go back to three reasons. Firstly, the prevailed use of grammar-translation approach which has still influenced language teaching, neglecting the teaching of communication skills (Bygate, 1987).

Secondly, the appearance of technology in the mid of 1970s especially tape recording helped the spread of the study of native speaker talk. It also helped teachers to use tape recording in teaching the language in classroom (Bygate, 1987).

The third reason for marginalizing speaking is that 'exploitation'. Most approaches to language teaching except grammar-translation approach did not exploit oral communication as a discourse skill. It was rather exploited as a medium for offering habit formation, memorization and language input. The focus was also on pronunciation. Interaction was marginalized. In other words, although audiolingualism was one of language approaches that provided clear perspective

on teaching speaking, valued input over output and recommended oral skill to be taught before writing. It focused on repetition as a central part in teaching speaking since this " helps memorization, automaticity and the formation of associations between different elements of language," neglecting the fact that the aim of speaking is interaction. (Bygate, 1987, p. 15).

However, recently, speaking has appeared as a skill in its own and as a central skill in language pedagogy, especially, after the appearance of the communicative approach.

### **2.1.3. The importance of speaking**

Speaking is one of the four skills that people use to express their ideas, viewpoints, feelings and their needs. However, this skill is not given enough attention during teaching English to secondary and elementary stages. This could be due to the traditional system that concentrates on reading and writing although it is believed that developing speaking skill helps developing other skills such as reading and writing (Torky, 2006). As well as, since English is an international language and the language of the modern technology, the internet, Facebook, and Twitter, commerce, advertising, business and the lingua franca among people of different languages, it has become vital for the EFL learners to develop their speaking ability. Furthermore, the importance of speaking skill is reflected in that there are many tests that are worldwide adopted to evaluate learners proficiency in speaking such as TOFEL.

### **2.1.4. Elements of speaking**

The ability to speak requires not only the knowledge of language features but also it requires learners to have the ability of processing information and language 'on the spot'. (Harmer, 2001)

#### **2.1.4.1. Language features**

The following elements are necessary for spoken production.

1. **Connected speech:** To be effective speakers of English, learners need to produce connected speech rather than just production of individual phonemes of English. Learners should be involved in activities that encourage the use of connected speech. The sounds that learners may produce in connected speech are omitted (elision), modified (assimilation) or weakened (Harmer, 2001).
2. **Expressive devices:** Learners need to use suprasegmental features and devices to be good communicators. These devices include the change of the pitch, stress, volume and speed of particular parts of utterances. These features help to convey meanings. Therefore, they are essential in teaching speaking (Harmer, 2001).
3. **Lexis and grammar:** Learners need to be provided with lexical phrases that express different functions such as agreeing, disagreeing, surprise, shock or approval. These phrases help to produce spontaneous speech (Harmer, 2001).
4. **Negotiation language:** Using asking for clarification is a way that is used in negotiated language. The use of this strategy helps to get effective speakers (Harmer, 2001).

#### **2.1.4.2. Mental/ social processing**

Speakers' success depends also on the rapid processing of language.

**1. Language processing:** Speakers need to process their messages in their heads and put them into a coherent order in order to produce a comprehensible output and as well as their production should convey the intended meaning. Language processing involves the ability to retrieve words and phrases from memory and put them in a proper sequence. Thus, learners should be exposed to a great number of speaking activities that develops their ability of processing language (Harmer, 2001).

**5. Interacting with others:** Interaction mostly occurs among two or more persons. Therefore, it is important for effective speakers to listen and understand how others feel. In addition,



effective speakers should know when to take turns or allow others take theirs (Harmer, 2001).

6. **(on-the-spot) information processing:** Effective speakers need to be able to process the message they receive as fast as possible. The longer they take, the less effective communicators they are (Harmer, 2001).

#### **2.1.6. Purpose of speaking**

The purpose of speaking can be either interactional or transactional. Interactional discourse differs from transactional discourse in the spoken language. In the interactional dimension of some conversations, the purpose of speaking is to maintain or create a relationship. This type is sometimes called interpersonal use of language. It is vital in social interaction. Some examples for this type are greetings and compliments. Therefore, this type is listener oriented (Torky, 2006).

On the other hand, in transactional discourse, the aim of interaction is to communicate information. This type of discourse is message oriented rather listener oriented. The most important elements for this type of interaction is accurate and coherent communication of the message. Also, the confirmation that the message is understood is another important element in this type of interaction. News broadcasts, descriptions, narrations and instructions are examples for transactional discourse (Torky, 2006).

#### **2.1.7. Factors affecting the development of speaking skill**

Three factors determine the successful development of the speaking skill. These factors include teachers, materials and learners.

1. **Teachers** play a prominent role in helping learners to acquire language or its skills. Teachers need to understand their learners' needs in learning and the difficulties they experience when communicating with someone. Teachers have to understand their learners' social, cognitive and

affective needs. This could happen through theoretical ideas and observation of their practice of a language. In addition, teachers have to help learners by providing feedback, input and scaffolding. Teachers as well have to support their learners during their communication. That is, they try to support learners' speaking development. This can be through planning activities in which students experience the development of their speaking skill (Burns, 2012).

2. **Materials** are another important element in speaking development. They include resources and activities that facilitate the development of speaking. Materials can be sorted into three categories:

1. Materials that provide practice.
2. Materials that help to develop language and learning skills.
3. Materials that promote metacognitive development.

Firstly, materials for speaking practice provide learners with contextualized and interesting topics. Materials for language learning help learners develop a linguistic knowledge and help them control their speaking skill through exposing learners to model spoken texts. Metacognitive materials aim to raise learners' awareness of learning processes and they provide learners with training using communication and discourse strategies.

Materials can "inform learners about the language" " provide experience of the language in use" " stimulate language use." On the other hand " help learners make discoveries about the language for themselves" (Burns, 2012, p. 5).

3. **Learners** are as teachers and materials important in achieving successful speaking development. Learners have to be motivated to develop and manage their speaking skill. This can be done through raising their awareness of the nature and demands of speaking. They can develop their speaking skill through cooperative speaking in addition to individual practice.

## 2.2. Communicative language teaching

Language performance is not only determined through the use of the language rules and grammar, but it is also determined through the knowledge of how to use these rules in a social context (Khan, 2010). This thought led to a serious change in language learning theory. There was a shift in language learning from focusing on what the learners learn (product-oriented theory) to how learners learn (process-oriented theory). With increasing importance to develop learners ability to use language appropriately in context, an approach focuses on communication emerged after a prevailing influence of structuralism and behaviorism on language teaching, methods and materials (Savignon, 1991). This approach was communicative language teaching which is defined by Brown (2000) as an approach of teaching methodology that considers language a system for expressing meaningful purposes, as well as it puts a great emphasis on interaction, student-centered learning, task based activities, and real communication. Savignon (2002, p. 1) wrote that communicative language teaching refers to 'both processes and goals in classroom learning.' She added that "the central theoretical concept in communicative language teaching is 'communicative competence'" (Savignon, 2002, p. 1). This concept was first introduced into foreign and second language discussions in 1970s (Savignon, 2002). Communicative competence means the knowledge of language use (Canale & Swain, 1980). On the other hand, Savignon defined it as "the ability of classroom language learners to interact with other speakers to make meaning" (2002, p. 3).

Communicative competence comprises of four components. They are grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic competence (Canale & Swain, 1980). Savignon (2002) illustrates that all the four components are equally important because they are needed "to develop a stronger communicative competence among L2 learners" (Wood, 2011, p. 233).

The four components are defined as:

**1. Grammatical competence** is the ability to identify the lexical, morphological, syntactical and phonological features of a language and to apply these features to form and interpret sentences (Savignon, 2002).

**2. Discourse competence** related to the sounds, words, utterances and sentences that form the text or any genre and the ability to interpret the text as meaningful one. The interpretation could be through two methods. The first is known as the bottom-up processing which is the “identification of isolated sounds or words contribute to interpretation of the overall meaning of the text.” (Savignon, 2001, p. 17). On the other hand, “the understanding of the theme or purpose of the text helps in the interpretation of isolated sounds or words” (Savignon, 2001, p. 17). This is known as the top-down processing.

**3. Social linguistic competence** exceeds the linguistic competence to include the appropriate use of language. This competence “requires an understanding of the social context in which language is used” (Savignon, 2001, p. 18).

**4. Strategic competence** is defined as “verbal and non-verbal communication strategies that may be called into action to compensate for breakdowns in communication due to performance variables or to insufficient competence” (Canale & Swain, 1980, p. 30). However, Dornyei and Thurrell (1991, p. 16) define strategic competence as “the ability to express oneself in the face of difficulties or limited language knowledge.” On the other hand, Rababah (2002) defines it as the ability of learners to use communication strategies such as transfer, paraphrase, circumlocution to get one’s ideas on and compensate for deficiencies in their linguistic knowledge or “the interference of such factors such as fatigue, distraction or inattention” (Rababah, 2002, p. 6). Dornyei and Thurrell (1991) argue that strategic competence is neglected. Hence, “the lack of fluency or conversational skills that students often complain about is” (p. 16) due to this fact. Mariani (1994) emphasizes this fact by indicating that the strategic competence received little

attention by both teachers and EFL materials. Strategic competence could be demonstrated through the use of language learning strategies and language use strategies. Language use strategies could include communication strategies, performance strategies and production strategies (Tarone, 1980; Cohen, Weaver & Yuan, 1996).

### **2.3. Language learner strategy**

The researcher of Language learner strategy appeared in the 1970s. Language learner strategy is the broader term of language learning strategies. Learner strategy includes all the strategies that a learner uses to produce language (production strategies) or communicates the target language (communication strategies) or to process the input of a language to improve linguistic knowledge (language learning strategies) (Khan, 2010). Production strategies are defined as “an attempt to use one’s linguistic system efficiently and clearly, with a minimum of effort” (Tarone, 1980, p. 420). On the other hand, communication strategies are “those devices language learners use to overcome linguistic difficulties encountered when trying to communicate in a foreign language with a reduced interlanguage system” (Dobao, 2002, p. 53). However, language learning strategies are defined as “conscious thought and behaviors used by students to facilitate language learning tasks and to personalize the language learning process” (Cohen, Weaver & Yuan, 1996, p. 3). Language Learning strategies are also defined by Chamot (2004, p. 14) as “the thoughts and actions that individuals use to accomplish a learning goal.” Moreover, learning strategies are defined as “an attempt to develop linguistic and sociolinguistic competence in the target language” (Tarone, 1980, p. 420).

The main difference between communication strategies and production strategies is that production strategies are not primarily used to negotiate meaning. However, learning strategies differ from communication strategies in that they are not primarily used to communicate meaning. Their primary purpose is to learn the language (Tarone, 1980). In spite of some

researchers' attempts to confuse language learning strategies and communication strategies through referring to an overlap between them, it is necessary to keep them distinct (Tarone, 1980).

Some classify language learning strategies either as direct strategies like (memorizing, cognitive processing, compensation or as indirect such as metacognitive, social and affective (Macaro, 2001). Others classify learning strategies into cognitive, metacognitive, social and affective strategies. Cognitive strategies are those strategies used to store, identify and retrieve words, phrases and other elements of the target language (Cohen, Weaver & Yuan, 1996). However, metacognitive strategies include pre-planning, self-assessment, evaluation of the language learning activities, organization and control over their performance (Cohen, Weaver and Yuan, 1996). On the other hand, social strategies include the actions that a student adopts to interact with his colleagues and the teacher. Affective strategies include the strategies that are used to regulate the learner's motivation, feelings and attitudes (Cohen, Weaver and Yuan, 1996).

The emergence of learning strategies research comes as a necessity to identify the characteristics of an effective learner (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). Good language learners are those who use cognitive, metacognitive and social-effective strategies during their acquisition of the target language. "While less effective students not only use strategies less frequently, but have a small repertoire of strategies and often do not choose appropriate strategies for the task" (Chamot & Kupper, 1989, p. 13).

#### **2.4. Historical background about speaking strategies**

There was a serious change in language learning theory from focusing on what the learners learn (product-oriented theory) to how learners learn (process-oriented theory). This was the first spark for the appearance of strategies (Khan, 2010).

Early speaking strategies research focused on the definitions and classifications of speaking strategies. Selinker (1972) was the founder of the concept communication strategies. He was the first to propose communication strategy when he talked about the factors that constitute interlanguage. Selinker (1972) stated that communication strategies develop learners' interlanguage. It is also worth mentioning that most of the early studies focused on the relationship between communication strategies and interlanguage, foreign talk and the interactional nature of communication strategies. Later on, other researchers developed the concept of communication strategies further. Research has been directed towards the relationship between communication strategies and language education in EFL and ESL settings (Maleki, 2010).

A review of the literature on speaking strategies reveals that research is divided into different theories and perspectives. Researchers viewed speaking strategies from either interactional perspective or psycholinguistic perspective.

Those who view speaking strategies from an interactional perspective, defined communication strategies as “mutual attempts of two interlocutors to agree on a meaning in situations in which the requisite meaning structures do not seem to be shared.” (Tarone, 1980, p. 420). Tarone is one of those researchers who viewed communication strategies as having an interactional function because they are used to negotiate meaning between the speaker and the listener (1981). These strategies are used to find mutual understanding between interlocutors through cooperative exchanges such as the use of clarification requests. Corder (1983) adopted Tarone's interactional view of communication strategies. He (1983, p. 16) defined communication strategies as “a systematic technique employed by a speaker to express his meaning when faced with some difficulty.” However, Tarone's concepts of communication

strategies were criticized as being “frequently not reliable” and “not psychologically plausible” (Ellis & Barkhuizen, 1995, p. 398 as cited in Meier, 2009).

Interactional strategies are directly beneficial to L2 and FL learning because “they serve to make input comprehensible” (Kasper & Kellerman, 1997, p. 6). On other words, meaning negotiation facilitates foreign and second language acquisition. As learners receive feedback, they modify their output (Khan, 2010). However, comprehensible input is not enough for acquisition until the learner is forced to produce complex utterances. This can be carried out through the use of psychological strategies in which the learner uses his own linguistic and strategic resources to produce “pushed output” (Kasper & Kellerman, 1997).

Therefore, it was necessary to introduce another approach, which is the psycholinguistic approach by Faerch and Kasper (1983). Those who view communication strategies from a psycholinguistic perspective consider communication strategies as “potentially conscious plans for solving what to an individual presents itself as a problem in reaching a particular communicative goal” (Faerch & Kasper, 1983, p. 36). Accordingly, Faerch and Kasper (1983) investigate communication strategies as being used during two phases of speech production: a planning phase and execution phase. During the planning phase, the rules and items which are considered the most appropriate for establishing a plan are chosen, “the execution of which will lead to verbal behavior which is expected to satisfy the original goal” (Faerch & Kasper, 1983, p. 25). Faerch and Kasper (1983) stated that communication strategies are part of the planning phase, which are used during the initial plan when the learner experiences a problem that prevents the speaker from conveying his communicative goal. From a psycholinguistic perspective, Faerch and Kasper (1983) viewed communication strategies as an individual problem rather than the speaker’s and the listener’s problem. They are conscious plans to solve an individual’s problem during his attempt to reach his communicative goal.



The difference between interactional and psycholinguistic perspectives is that Tarone views communication strategies as “a description of the linguistic results of the strategies themselves, the product” (Meier, 2009, p. 6). On contrast, Faerch and Kasper (1983) view them as “a description of the underlying mental processes” (Meier, 2009, p. 6).

Accordingly, due to the appearance of these two perspectives, researchers are divided into two extremes. Some were called “Pros” who consider communication strategies as having a great range of strategies. They include reduction and interactive strategies as communication strategies. They are interested in the output and they pay less attention to psycholinguistic. However, the “Cons” are interested in the mental processes underlie the formation of communication strategies with less interest in linguistic (Meier, 2009). The Pros criticized the 'Cons' in their view of the teachability of communication strategies. They justify that the 'Cons' did not take in their consideration the linguistic differences between L1 and L2 communication strategies. Hence, their claim that there is no need to teach communication strategies because they exist in L1 is not acceptable and some communication strategies are more effective than others are (Meier, 2009).

## **2.5. Features of speaking strategies**

According to Bialystok (1990), the different definitions of communication strategies have three features which are problematicity, consciousness, and intentionality.

"Problematicity" means the use of communication strategies when the speaker encounters a problem. This feature is the prevailing feature of communication strategies. However, communication strategies can appear in non-problematic situation (Bialystok, 1990).

The second feature is that "consciousness" which appears implicitly in all definitions that are suggested for communication strategies. "Consciousness" means that the speaker is aware of his use of strategy (Bialystok, 1990).

"Intentionality" is the third feature of communication strategies. It means that the speaker controls his repertoire of strategies. He selects from the strategies available to him and uses them deliberately to achieve the intended effect (Bialystok, 1990).

## **2.6. Different classifications of speaking strategies**

Because there is no an agreement on a precise definition for communication/ speaking strategies, there is no specific typology for them. However, according to Bialystok (1990, p. 61) "the variety of taxonomies proposed in the literature differ primarily in terminology and overall categorizing principles rather than in the substance of specific strategies."

Kasper and Faerch (1983), Tarone (1980), Bialystok (1990) and others have proposed several typologies. Varadi's (1983) classification was the first contribution to speaking strategies. His study was the first in the field of speaking strategies but it did not appear until after the publication of Tarone's (1980) typology. Varadi's work helped in the development of Tarone's work (Bailystok, 1990).

### **2.6.1. Tarone's speaking strategies classification**

Tarone (1980) classified communication strategies into five major categories. Each has its subcategories. They are avoidance, paraphrase, conscious transfer, appeal for assistance and mime. Avoidance strategies have two subcategories which are topic avoidance and message abandonment. In the former, "the learner simply doesn't talk about concepts for which the vocabulary or other meaning structure is not known" (Tarone, 1980, p. 429). In contrast, in the latter, the learner starts to talk in certain topic but he stops in the mid of the speech because he does not have the "meaning structure" (Tarone, 1980. p. 429). The speaker experiences difficulty and disability to express himself, thus, he avoids to talk in the topic because his linguistic resources do not help him, or he may find difficulty to talk about the topic so he gives up and goes to talk in another. Tarone (1980) classified paraphrase into three subcategories. The

first, approximation which means the use of single word or structure that has semantic features with the desired target item, but the learner knows that this vocabulary item is incorrect, for example, the use of “pipe” to refer to “waterpipe” (Tarone, 1980, p. 429). Word coinage is a subcategory strategy in which a learner creates a new word or structure to “communicate a desired concept,” e.g., “airball” for balloon. The last strategy is circumlocution where “the learner describes the characteristics or elements of the object or action instead of using the appropriate target language structure (“she is, uh, smoking something. I don’t know what’s its name. That’s, uh, Persian, and we use in Turkey, a lot of”) (Tarone, 1980, p. 429). The third strategy that Tarone (1980) identified is transfer which has three subcategories; namely, literal translation, language switch, appeal for assistance and mime.

#### **2.6.2. Faerch and Kasper's speaking strategies classification**

Faerch and Kasper (1983) divided communication strategies into two categories, namely, reduction strategies and achievement strategies. Reduction strategies could be formal reduction strategies or functional reduction strategies.

##### **2.6.2.1. Formal reduction strategies**

These strategies are used for two reasons. Firstly, they are used to avoid making errors. Secondly, formal reduction strategies are used to facilitate communication. The speaker is aware that they are not correct but they help him to be fluent and achieve the communicative goal (Fraech & Kasper, 1983). The use of formal reduction for the purpose of facilitating communication leads to produce utterances that help him to communicate but they are not correct from L2 point of view. Types of these strategies are generalization and borrowing (Fraech & Kasper, 1983).

### **2.6.2.2. Functional reduction strategies**

Functional reduction strategies consist of strategies such as topic avoidance, message abandonment and meaning replacement. Topic avoidance occurs during the planning phase. On the other hand, message abandonment occurs during the execution phase. The speaker uses such strategies because he wants to avoid making errors or he wants to increase fluency. Error avoidance is due to a psychological behavior. A learner does not like to communicate in the target language unless he is sure that there are no linguistic obstacles that hinder achieving his communicative goal. In addition, a learner may avoid communicating his goal because he believes that linguistic correctness is a must in communication. This belief is derived from foreign language classroom not from real-life experiences. Both in topic avoidance and in message abandonment, the learner does not complete a specific topic (Fraech & Kasper, 1983). However, in meaning replacement, the learner says everything he wants about the topic but in reality, he does not say anything at all about it (Fraech & Kasper, 1983).

### **2.6.2.3. Achievement strategies**

Through achievement strategies, a learner solves his communication problems through extending his communicative resources. Achievement strategies are used to solve problems at all linguistic levels (phonological, morphological, lexical and syntactic) although they are mostly used to solve problems at the lexical level. These strategies are used to solve problems at the planning and execution phase (Fraech & Kasper, 1983). However, achievement strategies are divided into compensatory strategies and retrieval strategies. Compensatory strategies are used to solve problems at the planning stage because of lack of linguistic resources. On the other hand, when they are used to solve problems in the execution phase, they are called retrieval strategies (Fraech & Kasper, 1983). Compensatory strategies are subclassified into code switching, interlingual transfer, inter-intra lingual transfer, interlanguage-based strategies (generalization,

paraphrase, word coinage, and restructuring), cooperative strategies and non-linguistic strategies (Fraech & Kasper, 1983). Faerch and Kasper's classification of communication strategies is the most complicated one because it consists of more distinctions and more subtypes.

### **2.6.3. Corder's speaking strategies classification**

Corder (1983) categorized communication strategies as adjustment strategies or avoidance strategies and resource expansion strategies. Message adjustment strategies comprise of either topic avoidance which means a refusal to continue or start one's speech because the speaker has some linguistic deficiency. In message abandonment, a speaker tries not to stop from the beginning. He starts his speech, but he stops when a communication deficiency faces him. On the other hand, resource expansion strategies comprise of borrowing which is seen as a risk-taking strategy. On the other hand, paraphrase and circumlocution are viewed as less risk-taking. Paralinguistic devices are another form of expansion strategies with appeal for help, the least risk-taking strategy of all.

### **2.6.4. Paribakht's speaking strategies classification**

Paribakht (1985) classified communication strategies into four approaches: linguistic approach, contextual approach, conceptual approach and mime. Linguistic approach concerns with the semantic features of the target items. This approach comprises of semantic contiguity, circumlocution, and metalinguistic clues. Contextual approach employs the contextual knowledge. This approach provides contextual information about the target item. It includes linguistic context, use of target idioms and proverbs and idiomatic transfer. Conceptual approach means the use of world knowledge. It includes demonstration, exemplification, and metonymy. Finally, mime means the knowledge of meaningful gestures.

#### **2.6.5. Bialystok's speaking strategies classification**

In the same vein, Bialystok (1990) classified CS into L1-based strategies (language switch, foreignizing native language and transliteration) and L2-based strategies include semantic contiguity, description and word coinage.

#### **2.6.6. Dornyei and Thurrell 's speaking strategies classification**

However, Dornyei and Thurrell (1991) classified achievement strategies into co-operative or non-co-operative strategies. Co-operative strategies are strategies as asking for clarification. On the other hand, non-cooperative strategies are like circumlocution.

#### **2.6.7. Dornyei and Scott's speaking strategies classification**

Dornyei and Scott (1997) classified communication strategies into three major types: direct, indirect and interactional strategies. In the first two types, the speaker solves problems in communication without outside help. Direct strategies like circumlocution are used to overcome communication problems through using alternative means. On the other hand, indirect strategies like using fillers are used to create mutual understanding and keep the communication channel open. They are not exactly problem-solving strategies. The speaker uses less perfect forms which need extra time to be understood. However, interactional strategies are used to find mutual understanding between interlocutors through cooperative exchanges such as clarification requests.

#### **2.6.8. Nakatani's speaking strategies classification**

Nakatani (2006) developed an oral communication inventory for EFL university students in Japan. Nakatani used the term oral communication strategy to focus on the negotiation behavior of the interlocutors to solve problems rise during communicating to achieve a communicative goal. The questionnaire consists of two parts. The first part focuses on strategies that are used to deal with speaking problems. This part comprises of eight categories, consisting of thirty-two

items. These categories are social affective, fluency-oriented strategy, accuracy-oriented strategy, negotiation for meaning while speaking strategy and message reduction and alteration strategies. On the other hand, the second part consists of seven categories that comprised of twenty-six items. These strategies are used to cope with listening problems. They are negation for meaning while listening, fluency-maintained strategies, scanning, getting the gist, nonverbal strategies while listening, less active listener and word-oriented.

Since the current study focuses on two speaking strategies, namely, asking for clarification and circumlocution the following paragraphs are dedicated to discuss fully these two strategies:

### **2.7. Asking for clarification**

Clarification requests with comprehension checks and confirmation checks constitute negotiation of meaning strategies (Nakatani, 2010). Clarification requests are requests for explaining and clarifying unclear meaning structure by using expressions such as “what do you mean by...? And “Could you clarify more..?” (Khamwan, 2007). Clarification requests reveal that the second speaker has a problem with the prior utterance of the first speaker.

There are three types of clarification requests: Nonspecific, specific and potential.

Nonspecific requests are very general, such as “what?” and ‘pardon?’’. Specific requests refer to certain part of clarification, either request for repetition, confirmation or specification. On the other hand, potential requests focus on missing element from the surface of the previous utterance but which is “potentially available” (Mctear, 1985, p. 165 as cited in Lloyd, 1992). A speaker signals his recognition of communicative inadequacy of the earlier utterance by using requests for repetition and confirmation. However, the use of potential request forms implies that the speaker has evaluated the received message when he pays attention to missing information. Consequently, their responses to this request may help to find solutions to the problem. On the other hand, Dornyei and Scott (1997) considered asking for clarification as one category of the

main communication strategy which is appeal for assistance. They mentioned that appeal for assistance includes direct appeal for help, indirect appeal for help, asking for repetition, asking for clarification, and asking for confirmation.

It is evident that learners' inability to take part in interactive tasks more than individual tasks is due not only to lack of vocabulary, but also because of a lack of effective interaction strategies (Lourdunathan & Menon, 2005). Therefore, the use of interactive strategies such as asking for clarification is important. If learners use such strategies to negotiate meaning, they may get benefit through acquiring new words (Faucette, 2001). Rababah and Bulut (2007) add that the teaching of asking for clarification "help(s) negotiation for meaning and this may facilitate second / foreign language acquisition" (p. 107). Negotiating meaning with interlocutors helps language learners to get unknown language items and use them later in other situations.

## **2.8. Circumlocution**

Circumlocution is a main component of strategic competence. As a strategy, circumlocution is defined by Tarone as when "the learner describes the characteristics or elements of the object or action instead of using the appropriate target language (TL) item or structure" (1981, p. 286). Tarone believes that circumlocution "may be used to bridge (the) gap" "between the linguistic knowledge of the second-language learner and the linguistic knowledge of the target language interlocutor in real communication situations" (1981, p. 288). It "is the alternative means of expression that allows the learner and the interlocutor work to achieve an agreement on meaning through the use of a description" (Ismail & Kaur, 2012, p. 2). However, Dornyei and Kormos define it as "exemplifying, illustrating, or describing the properties of the target object or action" (1998, p. 361).

"Native speakers of a language (L1) routinely employ circumlocution when a word fails to come to mind and are adept at asking for and providing one another with additional language that



keeps communication open” (Berry-Bravo, 1993, p. 371). That is, native speakers use circumlocutions when they confront vocabulary breakdown; however, this fact is ignored in our classrooms and our students are left “ill prepared to handle such L2 situations” (Berry-Bravo, 1993, p. 371). That is, circumlocution has “extensive experience in our native language but one that is seldom taught or practiced in the target language” (Berry-Bravo, 1993).

Ismail and Kaur (2012) stated that circumlocution could occur on three forms. It could be through making description, making reference to an action or exemplifying. Making description occurs when learners describe the intended target language item through describing its physical properties such as its shape, color, location, function and size. On the other hand, making reference occurs when learners refer to an action by describing its result when they fail to describe the actual action. The third type of circumlocution occurs when the learners use examples of people, actions and occasions connected with the object or the language item they desire to communicate.

Ismail and Kaur (2012, p. 8) stated that the form and type of circumlocution strategy “depends on the nature of the intended target referent, the context of the interaction and the interlocutors’ resources in the target language.” Circumlocution develops learners’ conversational ability as well as helps to keep the channel of communication open (Ismail & Kaur, 2012).

However, Jourdain (2000) analyzed the use of circumlocution from semantic continuity and from description point of view. Jourdain (2000) defines semantic continuity as a term related somehow to the intended item. Semantic continuity could be in the form of superordinate “a term whose meaning is more general than the term for the target item” (Jourdain, 2000, p. 194). Or it could be in the form of synonym: a term has the same meaning. Analogy, which is a comparison expression, and negative comparison, which is a description that describes what the

term is not are other forms of semantic continuity. Metonymy: means relating an attribute of an object to refer to the whole of another object and lexical creation means creating new L2 lexical item from L2 lexicon and morphology but not existing in L2 are also forms of semantic continuity. The second dimension is used to analyze the use of circumlocution through describing its size, material, shape, constituent features, style, elaborated features, functional description and locational property.

There is a need to teach circumlocution since it is rarely taught or mastered in the foreign language classrooms (Berry-Bravo, 1993). Hence, “once students reach intermediate level classes, they must take additional responsibility for developing their skills through circumlocution” (Berry-Bravo, 1993, p. 374). Learners need to be equipped with two factors to be able to make circumlocution. First, linguistic competence which means that learners should have lexical and grammatical bases to handle a communication process. Second, cognitive flexibility that happens when students have to be able to manipulate their repertoire is another factor that helps learners use circumlocution (Salomone & Marsal, 1997). Accordingly, all foreign teachers should seek ways to help them equip their students with the experiences and skills of circumlocution (Berry-Bravo, 1993). During the use of circumlocution, learners relate new vocabulary with what they already know, which facilitates the acquisition of new lexical words, concepts and semantic relationships (Berry-Bravo, 1993). Berry-Bravo (1993) advocates teaching circumlocution to the students when they reach intermediate level to take responsibility for developing their skills. Students will perform well in real-life situations if the use of circumlocution starts as early as possible. He also added the definitions produced by students during circumlocution are superior to those definitions found in dictionaries.

## **2.9. Strategy-based instruction**

This learner-centered approach focuses on integrating strategies into syllabus content implicitly and explicitly. By doing this, students experience the systematic application of strategies in their learning and use of the language they learn (Cohen, 2003).

### **2.9.1. Teaching speaking / communication strategies**

Teaching communication strategies is a controversial issue. Some scholars are with teaching communication strategies (e.g, Teng, 2012c; Ya-ni, 2007; Dornyei, 1995; Mariani, 1994; Dornyei & Thurrell, 1991; Tarone, 1981). The teaching of the linguistic competence is not enough to develop learners' communicative competence. Therefore, there is a need to develop strategic competence as a goal of language teaching. Hence, focusing on strategic competence should be taken into consideration in designing syllabi (Alcon, 2004). In Bialystok's words, (1990, p. 141) "any instruction that helps students to master part of the language or to become more comfortable using it is to be recommended and not criticized." Teaching speaking strategies is useful especially during the first stages of language learning. Therefore, students should be taught the right achievement strategies from the beginning. This is because with the use of speaking strategies, learners become risk-takers with the language and become more autonomous (Lewis, 2011). In the same vein, Canale and Swain (1980, p. 31) pointed out that learners do not need to know about communication strategies, they need to know how to use them and "the need for certain strategies may change as a function of age and second language proficiency." Herein, teaching CSs is "fruitful and effective" (Azarnoosh, 2009, p. 2). In addition, it sustains learners' sense of self-confidence when they try to communicate with deficient resources (Dornyei, 1995).

Konishi and Tarone (2004) pointed out that there are two benefits for teaching speaking strategies. First, practicing speaking strategies in everyday EFL lessons provides learners with

authentic practice of communicative English. Second, the used activities on speaking strategies help teachers to supply students with natural contexts that require the use of English sentence structures. As a result, this encourages the development of these structures in the learners' interlanguage. One another benefit of speaking strategies is that they "keep the channel open and thus secure more input for the learners" (Dong & Peng, 2010, p. 73). In addition, teaching speaking strategies' key goal is to decrease anxiety and increase participation (Graham, 1997).

On the other hand, others such as Bialystok (1990) were against teaching speaking strategies. "Most researchers would agree that strategic competence develops in the speaker's L1 and is freely transferable to target language use" (Dornyei, 1995, p. 60). Due to these similarities between L1 and L2 speaking strategies' use, there is no need to teach them. As well as, they believe that speaking strategies can be viewed from cognitive perspective. Since cognitive processes cannot be taught, speaking strategies are unaffected by instruction. In other words, speaking strategies are a reflection of underlying cognitive process. Focusing on surface structure does not develop learners' strategy use or enhance their communication skill. Learners need more language and consequently their strategy use will use high-level of analysis and control skills which help them to develop their competence (Bialystok, 1990). Thus, the inconsistency in most communication strategies' studies' findings in relation to the uncertainty of effectiveness of strategy instruction, gives a rational for further research in this field (Lam, 2010). Through reviewing a great number of previous studies that investigated speaking strategies, Hassan, Macaro, Mason, Nye, Smith and Vanderplank (2005) found out that training learners to use certain speaking strategies is successful but there is no strong evidence. One can say that strategy training works well for reading and writing, but there should be a research evidence for listening and speaking. Moreover, they recommended that there should be experimental studies that examine long-term benefits of strategy training.

There are some views that the overuse of speaking strategies leads to fossilization. That is, the learner finds the use of speaking strategies easier than the use of the target item. He does not attempt to get the target item. However, this depends on “whether a learner continues to his/ her efforts to pursue the target term and increase his/her interlanguage repertoire or not after his or her successful communication” (Dong & Peng, 2010, p. 73). Therefore, learners should be encouraged to use speaking strategies and be aware that the use of them is temporary solution. They have to look for the permanent solution (Dong & Peng, 2010). In support of these arguments, this study came to find out more evidence in favor of teaching speaking strategies.

## **2.10. Factors affecting the choice of communication strategies**

Meier (2009) pointed out that there are six variables affect the use of communication strategies. These include learner’s proficiency level, age, learning situation, personality, the nature of the task and the native language of the learner.

### **2.10.1. Learners’ level of proficiency**

The relationship between the use of speaking strategies and the proficiency level is the most variable that is paid attention to. This is because of the need to understand the acquisition process and its contribution on the language teaching practice. However, after more than four decades, there is no precise conclusion concerning the relationship between language proficiency and the use of speaking strategies that has been reached to (Dobao, 2002). Some scholars found that proficiency level affects learners’ choice of strategies. Generally speaking, high proficient learners prefer to use achievement strategies, whereas; low proficient learners use L1-based strategies. In addition, Berry-Bravo stated that high level learners “often show a well-developed ability to compensate for an imperfect grasp of some forms with confident use of communicative strategies, such as paraphrasing and circumlocution” (1993, p. 372).

### **2.10.2. Learners' attitude**

Learners' positive attitude towards certain strategy affects their use of that strategy. In turn, negative attitude leads to less use of that strategy (Putri, 2013). In the natural learning context, learners' attitudes towards using a particular strategy affect its use. In other words, positive attitudes towards a strategy lead to high frequency use of it. However, in classroom context, this fact is not the case. Generally speaking, negative attitudes towards L1- based strategies does not lead to less frequency use of them. This is due to traditional teaching methods and neglected strategic competence (Dong & Peng, 2010).

### **2.11. Empirical studies**

Various research studies have investigated the impact of teaching speaking strategies on developing the different language skills and the impact of different variables such as proficiency level on the frequency and choice of certain speaking strategies. The following studies focus on the impact of using speaking strategies on learners' oral performance. They can be classified into three categories according to the place: Palestinian, regional, and international studies.

#### **2.11.1. Palestinian studies**

Little research has been done in the field of speaking strategies in Palestine. Most Palestinian studies dealt with speaking strategies as a subcategory of language learning strategies. There have not been studies that directly focus on this subject. Shmais (2003) conducted one of these studies on ninety-nine male and female students at An-Najah National University to examine the frequency of strategies use according to gender and proficiency variables. The results showed that compensation strategies were the least used of all strategies. Additionally, the results showed a positive relationship between strategy use and proficiency level with no significant difference on the overall strategy use.

A similar study was conducted by Khalil (2005) to assess the use of language learning strategies by two samples of Palestinian EFL learners at the secondary and university level. The study also aimed to examine the effect of proficiency level and gender on reported strategy use. The quantitative analysis of the results showed that Palestinian EFL learners showed medium use of strategies. In addition, it was found that there was a statistically significant effect of proficiency level and gender on learners' overall use of strategies. That is, university students' means were higher than secondary students were. However, proficiency level has an effect on five categories: memory, cognitive, metacognitive, compensatory and social strategies.

### **2.11.2. Regional studies**

Few studies were also conducted in this stream in the Arab World. Most of the studies were concentrating on speaking strategies came under the heading language learning strategies. Al-Senaidi (n.d) conducted a study on four children in the fourth grade to investigate the effect of using speaking strategies such as asking for clarification, using fillers and paraphrasing on improving speaking in quality and quantity. She used pre and post information gap activities in which learners had to describe individual pictures. She audio recorded the task. As well as, she used follow up interviews to find learners' reactions to the work of using speaking strategies and to see if they were aware of any improvement in their speech. She found that students had used a lot of self-repetition, self-correction and miming strategies before the strategy training occurred. However, later after the strategy training, learners spoke and interacted more. There was no evidence if strategy training had an impact on improving the quality of speech. That is, speaking strategies might improve learners' interactive ability.

In another study, Dadour and Robbins (1996) conducted two studies on university-level students in Egypt and Japan. The aim of the first study was in Egypt to investigate the effect of strategy-instruction on improving learners' speaking ability. It had two groups: experimental and

control. The experimental group was exposed to language learning strategy-instruction. The results showed that strategy-instruction affected the speaking performance of the experimental group. In addition, strategy instruction affected the experimental group's strategy use regardless of proficiency level. However, there was no significant difference between the first-year and the fourth-year students in the frequency of strategy use.

Similarly, Rababah and Seedhouse (2004) conducted a study to examine the effect of using speaking strategies on Arab learners' ability to transmit comprehensible and successful messages. Three tasks were used: identification-object, role-play and picture story-telling tasks. The results showed that most learners' attempts were successful and comprehensible. All high-level students' attempts were comprehensible and successful. In addition, he found that high proficiency learners used speaking strategies more effectively than low- proficiency learners did.

Al-Shabou, Asassfeh and Al-Shboul (2010) conducted a study to investigate the relationship between language learning strategy use and gender, foreign language proficiency and an academic level. One hundred and eleven university students completed a strategy inventory for language learning questionnaire. The results showed that students showed high medium use of strategies. The most used strategies were the metacognitive followed by cognitive, social, affective and compensation. However, the least used strategies were memory strategies. Furthermore, the results indicated that females used more strategies than males. As well as, high proficient students used more strategies than low proficient.

Abu Anawas (2012) set out a study on sixty-six students; twenty-eight males and thirty-eight females at Zarka University. The participants were freshmen, sophomore, junior and senior English majors. A picture description test and interviews were employed as an instrument to collect data. It was found that students used different speaking strategies to communicate their



intended meaning. In addition, it was found that students' proficiency levels affected their choice of speaking strategies.

In the same vein, Uгла, Adnan and Abidin (2013b) used Scott and Dornyei's taxonomy to investigate Iraqi university students' use of speaking strategies. Through a questionnaire, they found that Iraqi students reported that the most used strategy is direct appeal for help. In addition, they found that there was medium use of the following strategies by Iraqi students: foreignizing, message replacement, word-coinage, mime, approximation / generalization, literal translation, omission, retrieval, use of similar sounding word, message-reduction, use of all-purpose words, other repairs, self-rephrasing, circumlocution/paraphrase, restructuring, mumbling and message abandonment strategies. However, they used the interactional CSs, direct appeal for help, asking for clarifications and response more often.

### **2.11.3. International studies**

Many international studies were conducted to investigate the effect of teaching speaking strategies on the different language skills. The following studies focus on those studies that explored the impact of using speaking strategies on speaking ability. First, Paribakht (1985) conducted a study to examine the relationship between the type of speaking strategies used and frequency of their use and the proficiency level of the learners' target language. She used a concept-identification task in which the subjects had to communicate twenty lexical items to native interlocutors. The items comprised of abstract and concrete nouns. She justified this choice because abstract nouns lack visual clues. Thus, this put extra burden on the subjects to communicate the concept which helped to display the disparity between the group' communicative abilities. The results revealed that the learner groups used mime more often than the native speakers did. However, the use of mime is the same between the two groups. Furthermore, it appeared that the use of speaking strategies and proficiency level are related.

Lloyd (1992) conducted a study on children aged seven to ten. They worked in pairs of the same age. The aim of the study was to measure the participants' communicative performance in a more demanding task. The results showed that seven-year-children used most requests for repetition. On the other hand, ten-year children did not use the repetition form. In addition, the seven-year children were able to detect the inadequacy of the message. However, they failed to solve the inadequate messages received through using potential requests as the ten-year old children did.

Salomone and Marsal (1997) conducted a study on two-year English speakers studying French. In their study, two classes were chosen. One group was asked to circumlocute; the other was not. They were given twenty items to explain in French. Then, they were given informational handout to train on circumlocation. The results showed that circumlocutions' quality used by the experimental group improved after training. As well as, they learned to focus on the salient features of the circumlocuted items. They focused mostly on the function of the described item as a salient feature.

Jourdain (2000) conducted a study on three native French speakers and three native English speakers to examine whether there is a difference between natives' and natives-like use of circumlocution. The participants described twelve objects to elicit circumlocution. Results showed that high-proficient learners preferred to use synonyms, superordinate and analogy.

Scullen and Jourdain (2000) conducted a study to examine the effect of explicit training of circumlocution on improving learners' abilities of successful circumlocution use. The experimental and control groups received identical pre and posttests. The experimental group received training on four different strategies of circumlocution. They are superordinate terms, analogy, function and description. The results showed that learners' ability to circumlocute developed.

Lam and Wong (2000) conducted a study to see whether strategy training on the use of interaction strategies would improve learners' oral competence. The participants' age was about seventeen years old. They employed a questionnaire to elicit teachers' views of what interaction strategies student needed most. Depending on the findings of the questionnaire, they decided to focus on three strategies in their training: clarifying oneself, seeking clarification and checking one's understanding of other people's messages. Pre-and posttests were used to assess the effect of strategy training. The results showed that there was an increase in the use of the strategies after training. As well as, strategy training improved learners' speaking ability. However, qualitatively, the results showed that few instances indicated successful and effective use of interaction strategies. They recommended that ineffective and unsuccessful use of interaction strategies could be solved through peer cooperation and help.

In another study, Dobao (2001) conducted her study on fifteen female and male students aged sixteen to twenty-six to examine the effect of various proficiency level on the frequency and choice of speaking strategies. The results indicated that learners' proficiency levels correlate with the frequency and choice of speaking strategies.

Dobao (2002) conducted a study on Galician learners of English to investigate the effect of different levels of proficiency on the use of speaking strategies. Quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis were used. The results showed that advanced learners used more speaking strategies than lower level learners did. They faced many lexical difficulties because they provided more detailed and complex description. That is, advanced learners achieved higher communicative goals than the low-level learners did.

Wannaruk (2003) conducted a study on seventy-five students majoring in agriculture, engineering and information technology to investigate what types of speaking strategies they used in generating a conversation with native speakers of English and if the different levels of

oral proficiency affect students' use of speaking strategies. Data were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. It was found that students used speaking strategies differently according to their different level of proficiency. Furthermore, it was found that the most used speaking strategies were modification devices. It was found that the most frequently used speaking strategies were the use of modification devices, nonlinguistic strategies, L1-based strategies, target language-based strategies, and avoidance strategies.

In the same vein, Nakatani (2005) conducted a study on sixty-two female students at a private college in Japan. Through analyzing learners' conversations test scores, transcription data from the tests and retrospective verbal reports, the researcher tried to examine the impact of awareness training of strategy use on EFL learners as well as the relationship of strategy use to oral proficiency. The results showed that there was a difference in awareness of strategy use according to the participants' oral proficiency level. Moreover, it was found that high oral proficient participants used more negotiation of meaning strategies as well as using more strategies of maintaining conversation flow than the low oral proficient learners.

Kendall, Jarvie, Doll, Lin & Purcell, (2005) conducted their study to examine students' application of speaking strategies. The training took ten hours. Data were collected twice. The first time was after five hours. The last time was after ten hours of training. The students talked in topic that interested them. The results showed that although the produced speech by the participants did not look like the one used by native speakers, it appeared that their use of speaking strategies improved their interaction.

Lourdunathan and Menon (2005) conducted a study to examine the effect of interaction training strategies on developing learners' oral proficiency. The participants were divided into ten groups. Each group comprised of four members. The participants were given ten minutes to discuss in groups certain topics. The group discussion was recorded and observed before and

after the training. The transcriptions were analyzed and compared to see whether there was an improvement in-group interaction. The training took eight hours. The results showed that learners' interaction in the pre-test was not effective. They did not discuss the ideas thoroughly. Further, they found that before training, there were no much cooperation and peer support. After the training, learners' use of interaction strategies such as asking for clarification and clarifying oneself extremely improved. They found also that learners' use of asking for clarification was not so effective, especially with low-proficient learners. It was easier for high proficient learners.

Lam (2006) conducted a study on two classes in the secondary ESL classroom in Hong Kong to examine the effect of strategy teaching on oral task performance as well as to examine whether the use of the target strategies would cause a greater use of these strategies in L2 oral tasks. He trained the learners to use oral communication strategies for six hours. Lam (2006) used a report questionnaire, work discussion and observation to answer his research questions. He found out that the experimental group outperformed the control group on the discussion tasks. In addition, he found no correlation between English proficiency and oral strategy use. This is because he assessed the participants according to group performance rather than individual performance.

Atik (2006) conducted his study on 9<sup>th</sup> grade students at Anatolian High school to examine the effect of speaking strategy training on improving their speaking skill. He conducted a long-term study, which lasted for two semesters in which an experimental group had strategy training to use speaking strategies while the control group did not have any training. He used three instruments: pre and post speaking strategy questionnaire, pre-post speaking tests, diary of language learning and structured interview. The results showed that after strategy training, learners' use of compensation strategies improved their speaking.

Chen (2006) conducted her study on intermediate Chinese students to examine the effectiveness of teaching circumlocution and improve students' aural-oral and recognition skills. She used games as fun activities to train students. Later, she involved them as a part in each unit test. Her study focused on speaking, listening and reading. Chen's instruments were a unit test and an informal survey to get the participants' feedback about the effectiveness of practicing circumlocution. The results showed that training improved learners' spoken discourse in the target language.

Campillo (2006) conducted a study on six female Spanish students speaking English as FL whose ages were fifteen to eighteen to examine the effect of using circumlocution on enhancing learners' ability to keep their conversations through and to examine the nature and use of circumlocution. The results showed that circumlocution helped learners to keep their conversations going on. Moreover, learners tended to describe the function of the items mostly. This is because the researcher used only concrete nouns which required describing the function. One of the limitations of this study is that there was no pre-test.

Khamwan (2007) conducted a study on 11<sup>th</sup> grade students to explore the effect of interaction strategy training on their comprehension, confidence and learning atmosphere. In addition, this study aimed at examining the effect of the strategy training on promoting teacher-student interaction in EFL classroom. Using three research instruments: Observation, questionnaire, and semi-structured interview, it was found that interaction between the teacher and students increased after training. Students used repetition requests more than clarification requests. He justified their little use of clarification requests because clarification requests are long and could not be remembered to use them automatically in speaking tasks. Moreover, after training, students' comprehension of the teacher's instruction and their confidence developed. As well as, after training, students reported that the classroom atmosphere was more comfortable.

Twenty Malaysian undergraduates from Chinese-speaking backgrounds were chosen randomly to investigate the influence of language proficiency on the use of speaking strategies. After qualitative analysis, it was found that proficiency did not have an influence on the number and types of the speaking strategies. However, proficiency affected the use of tonicity the proficient speakers used. On the other hand, less proficient ones used code-switching (Ting & Phan, 2008).

Moreover, Hie and Yin (2008) conducted a study on fourteen pairs of Malaysian learners of English. They found that the most used strategy was restructuring while they did not find any use of circumlocution and word coinage. In addition, the participants slightly negotiated meaning through comprehension checks and clarification requests. In addition, higher proficient learners used discourse strategies greatly.

Sesma (2008) conducted a study that aimed to improve adult oral production. The results showed that after training through the use of ten interactive speaking activities that include learning strategies, it appeared that students' oral production improved considerably.

Chuanchaisit and Prapphal (2009) used a self-report questionnaire to assess the frequency use of oral speaking strategies and an oral communication test to assess learners' oral communication ability. They used four types of speaking tasks: warm up task, an interview task, a description task and problem-solving task. The results showed that there was a significant use of social-affective-strategies by high-ability students more than by low proficient ones. In addition, it was found that high proficient students used fluency-oriented, asking for clarification and circumlocution strategies more significantly than the low proficient students.

Kongsom (2009) conducted a study on Thai university students to investigate the impact of teaching specific speaking strategies on students' performance while speaking. Qualitative and quantitative methods were used. The researcher used a pre and post speaking tests, a self-report

questionnaire, retrospective verbal protocols and an attitudinal questionnaire. Sixty-two engineering students participated in twelve-week speaking strategy-based instruction. Nine speaking strategies were chosen to be taught to twelve of sixty-two participants. These speaking strategies were topic avoidance, circumlocution, approximation, appeal for help, self-repair, confirmation check, comprehension checks, clarification requests, pause fillers and hesitation devices. The results revealed that there was a statistically significant increase in the overall level of speaking strategies use after the treatment. In addition, after the treatment, students used the nine taught speaking strategies more successfully and frequently. In addition, students' ability to circumlocute improved after speaking-strategy instruction and students were more confident in using asking for clarification to negotiate meaning. Speaking-strategy instruction raised students' awareness of strategy use. Students considered pause fillers and hesitation devices, approximation, self-repair and circumlocution useful strategies.

In the same vein, Binhayerong (2009) investigated the impact of language proficiency and task type on the use of speaking strategies. She conducted her study on twenty students from Attarkiah Islamiah School. The results showed that all participants used compensatory strategies more than avoidance ones. This is an indication that students were willing to keep communication by compensating for their language deficiencies. In addition, they used intra-actional strategies more than interactional ones. This showed that students preferred using their resources rather than asking for or giving assistance. Furthermore, high proficient students used more speaking strategies than low proficient. Moreover, the high proficient used fewer avoidance strategies than low proficient. As for the task type, they used more avoidance strategies in implementing the definition formulation task because it was more difficult than the role-play task.



In another study, Lam (2010) explored the effect of teaching eight strategies such as resourcing, asking for clarification and paraphrasing. He found that low-proficiency students used more resourcing than high-proficiency students. This is because the use of this strategy is effortless. However, the use of paraphrasing by low-proficiency students was low. This is because the use of this strategy requires high linguistic command. The results also indicated that high and low proficiency students gained more improvement in their oral performance than the control group.

Nakatani (2010) conducted his study on Japanese students to investigate whether the use of oral communication strategies improves learners' English proficiency in communicative tasks. The study lasted twelve weeks during which students took a strategy-training course. Multiple data collection procedures were used to analyze a post training conversation test to measure learners' performance. Furthermore, a reported questionnaire was used to elicit learners' use of speaking strategies. The researcher analyzed the test's transcripts according to production rate, number of errors and the real use of strategies. The results showed that negotiation of meaning and maintaining discourse strategies had an effect on improving learners' communicative ability.

Huang (2010) conducted a study on ninety-eight sophomore students of Lunghwa University of Science and Technology to investigate the factors that affect speaking strategies. The qualitative and quantitative analysis revealed that students used reduction and alteration strategies more than message abandonment. In addition, motivation and frequency in speaking English correlated with the use of speaking strategies. However, language proficiency and gender did not correlate with the use of speaking strategies.

Alibakhshi and Padiz (2011) reported an experiment to investigate the impact of teaching speaking strategies on enhancing learners' speaking ability. Using pre-and post-tests to collect the data, the researchers found that there was significant difference between the experimental and

control groups in their use of some speaking strategies. The major reason for conducting this study was to decrease learners' use of avoidance and language switch strategies in turn they aimed to increase their use of other seven strategies such as appeal for assistance and circumlocution. They found that there was significant difference between the two groups after training. Moreover, they found that speaking strategies instruction had positive effect on learners' oral performance.

A study was conducted by Tavakoli, Dastjerdi and Esteki (2011) on forty intermediate EFL learners at Isfahan language schools to examine the impact of teaching speaking strategies (circumlocution, approximation, all-purpose words and lexicalized fillers) on enhancing students' oral productions with focus on complexity, accuracy and fluency. The results showed that the experimental group productions were more complex, accurate and fluent than that in the control group.

Nguyet and Mai (2012) conducted a study on Vietnamese learners to investigate the impact of teaching speaking strategies through video clips on enhancing learners' speaking performance and the correlation between the frequency of strategy use and learners' speaking performance as well as the effect of teaching conversational strategies on the frequency of the use of these strategies. Two speaking tests (a pre-test and post-test) and semi-structured interview were used to collect quantitative and qualitative data. The results showed that the experimental group who was trained through video clips had much improvement in their speaking performance than the control group who was trained on using conversational strategies directly. Furthermore, teaching conversation strategies through video clips increased the frequency use of the strategies especially asking for clarification and comprehension checks.

Nakatani (2012) also conducted a study on Japanese college students to examine the effect of teaching speaking strategies on enhancing EFL learners' speaking proficiency. Nakantani used

pre and posttests, a self-report questionnaire to elicit the data. The results showed that there was a significant difference between the pre and posttests' scores, which means that strategy instruction affected learners' performance positively. Furthermore, students reported increased use of the following strategies after training: Social-affective strategies, fluency-oriented and negotiation for meaning while speaking.

Ismail and Kaur (2012) conducted a study on Malaysian students to investigate the types of circumlocution strategies used to solve speaking problems during learner-learner interaction. As well as, they wanted to see if there was a correlation between the use of circumlocution and the different levels of oral English proficiency. The participants in their study were twelve students. They were divided into two groups, three pairs high intermediate and three pairs low intermediate. According to a Malaysian oral proficiency test, the participants were classified into low and high. The participants had to describe fourteen common objects and actions in a picture narration task. The task was recorded and transcribed. The results showed that the most common types of circumlocution used by the participants were description, making reference and giving examples. In addition, the use of description circumlocution was the most used by the learners. Whereas, the least used type of circumlocution was resorting to examples since the use of such type needs shared knowledge of the intended target item between the two interlocutors. Furthermore, it appeared that high-level proficiency learners used more circumlocution than the low level. High and low intermediate used the same type of circumlocution but with different frequency.

Teng (2012 b) conducted a study to analyze the speaking strategies used by EFL learners. To collect the data, a questionnaire, an interview and a role play were used. The results showed that nonverbal strategies while speaking had the highest average frequency followed by message reduction and alteration strategies and negotiation for meaning while speaking. However, accuracy-

oriented strategies had the lowest average frequency. Furthermore, the results showed that there were significant differences in seven strategy categories between proficient and less proficient learners. The categories are fluency-oriented strategies, negotiation for meaning while speaking, accuracy-oriented strategies and nonverbal-strategy while speaking.

In another study by Teng (2012 c) to investigate the impact of teaching speaking strategies on improving the frequency and the effectiveness of these strategies by using an oral test of role-play, he found that learners used more speaking strategies after the training. Specifically, circumlocution was the most used strategy in the pre-test; whereas, appeal for assistance was the most used one in the posttest. He justifies their decrease use of circumlocution in the posttest than it was in the pre-test because students are familiar with this strategy beforehand. Therefore, “strategy instruction may not be effective to improve the use of circumlocution for EFL learners” (Teng, 2012 c, p. 3569). As for the effectiveness of strategy use, it appeared that the subjects had higher communicative effectiveness in the post-test. Furthermore, he found that nonverbal strategies were the most used of all strategies before training. However, this tendency nearly disappeared after training.

Kaivanpanah, Yamouty and Karami (2012) conducted a study to investigate the frequency of speaking strategies and their relationship to task type and gender differences. A questionnaire was distributed to two hundred twenty-seven students at elementary, pre-intermediate and intermediate levels. It was found that language proficiency did not have an influence on the frequency use of speaking strategies. However, task type had an impact on the choice of speaking strategies. Moreover, gender affected the use of circumlocution, asking for clarification, omission, comprehension check, use of fillers and over explicitness.

Hua and Nor and Jaradat (2012) set out a study on student at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, a public university in Malaysia. The subjects were ten low proficient Arabic speakers

and ten high proficient Chinese and Arabic speakers. The researchers used recordings of the participants' discussions and self-report questionnaire. The results showed that the two groups used most code-switching strategy; whereas, word coinage was the least used. Another finding was that the different levels of oral proficiency of the participants influenced the frequency of use and the selection of types of speaking strategies.

Lin (2013) conducted a study on forty English major Taiwanese students to examine examples of speaking strategies produced by Taiwanese students and their reflections of speaking strategies. The strategy-instruction took eighteen weeks. The results revealed that learners showed positive attitudes towards the use of different speaking strategies. In addition, the study indicated that learners used speaking strategies to compensate for their linguistic deficiencies.

Melendez, Zarala and Mendez (2014) reported a study of teaching fillers, circumlocution, asking for clarification and gestures speaking strategies to beginners. A pre-test and post-test, questionnaire and checklist were used to collect the data from ten participants. The results showed that students' use of the strategies increased after training.

Majd (2014) conducted a study on learners aged between twelve to fourteen years to investigate the impact of teaching circumlocution, appeal for help, approximation on improving Iranian EFL learners' communication skills and to find out whether the use of speaking strategies in classroom activities motivate learners and reduce their anxiety level. The results showed that learners speaking ability improved after training and the strategy teaching had an effective impact on enhancing learners' motivation and reducing their anxiety level.

However, there are studies that are in contrast with the previous studies in their results of teaching speaking strategies. For example, Dornyei (1995) conducted a study on one-hundred and nine Hungarian students of different secondary schools (seventy-two girls and thirty-seven

boys) to examine the teachability of speaking strategies, their effect on language proficiency, their effect on the learners' speech rate and learners' attitudes toward using them. The training lasted for six weeks. He trained the subjects on the using of three strategies, namely: circumlocution, using fillers and topic avoidance. To collect his data, he used a pre- and post-tests and he compared the results of the experimental group with the control one. The results showed that the quality of circumlocutions improved after the training. As well as, the treatment group's use of fillers and hesitation devices improved. In addition, learners' oral proficiency improved. Their attitudes toward strategy training were positive.

Moreover, Cohen, Weaver and Yuan (1996) conducted a study to examine the effect of strategy training on improving the speaking ability of foreign language learners. The learners were exposed to strategy-based instruction for ten weeks. The training was sometimes explicit and other times it was implicit. All of the strategies focused on teaching speaking. They used three speaking tasks to complete in the pre-posttests, which were preceded by a pre-treatment questionnaire. The results showed that the experimental group did better than the comparison group in the third speaking task, the city description. There was no difference on the overall performance.

Prinyajarn (2007) conducted a study to investigate the effect of teaching back channels, pause fillers and hesitation devices, requests for clarification and circumlocution on developing learners' communication skill and on the use of these strategies. The participants reported in a questionnaire that teaching clarification requests was the most useful, followed by circumlocution. Moreover, it was found that high-level students performed better than lower-proficiency level students did in their use of speaking strategies. Furthermore, it was found that there was no use of asking for clarification and circumlocution in the pretest. However, after the training, the participants used all the strategies. It is worth mentioning that they used back-

channels, pause fillers and hesitation devices more than asking for clarification and circumlocution. In addition, higher-proficiency students used the strategies more accurately than the weaker ones. Students made greater use of speaking strategies after the training. The findings showed that the teaching of circumlocution and asking for clarification was not so effective. This is because the teaching material did not provide enough chance to use these strategies.

### **2.12. Conclusion of the previous studies**

In summary, all empirical studies, including speaking strategies instruction, have been carried mostly on university students. The major research instrument used for data collection was communicative tasks. In addition, researchers used mostly pre-and post-speaking tests to elicit data of speaking strategies (e.g. Dornyei, 1995; Salomone & Marsal, 1997; Nakatani, 2005; Lam, 2006). Furthermore, researchers used self-report questionnaire, retrospective protocol and interviews to examine the effect of teaching speaking strategies. It is also noticed that most studies results support the teaching of speaking strategies. Based on this conclusion, the current study will use the experimental method to investigate the impact of using asking for clarification and circumlocution speaking strategies on enhancing EFL Palestinian students' speaking skill.

### **2.13. Summary**

This chapter shed light on the theoretical framework of speaking and speaking strategies, different classification of speaking strategies and the strategy-instruction of speaking strategies. As well as, it gave an overview of the various studies which investigated the impact of teaching different speaking strategies on improving speaking ability, in addition to studies that showed the relationship between learners' proficiency level and the frequency and choice of speaking strategies.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Methodology & Procedures**

#### **3.0. Introduction**

This chapter describes the methodology of this research. The first section describes the research approach. The second section describes the participants. The third section describes the instruments and data collection. It also describes the validity and reliability of the instruments. Finally, the fourth part describes how the data are analyzed.

#### **3.1. Research approach**

This study was a partial replication of the previous research studies on the impact of teaching speaking strategies, however, certain aspects such as the sample, level of proficiency, the setting differ from previous studies. The current study, which follows an experimental approach, is designed to offer answers to the main research questions and provide more information related to the correlation between students' proficiency level and their use of speaking strategies.

#### **3.2 Participants**

The sample of population for the study was tenth grade students in the public schools in Palestine who were enrolled in 2013/2014. The sample contained sixty-two students in Noba Secondary School for Girls at Northern Hebron. Thirty-one students were in the experimental group and thirty-one were in the control group. At that stage, the students had studied English for ten years in public schools. Most of them were of the same age. So, it could be assumed that they had a similar cultural and educational background.

This particular sample was used based on some considerations. First, the students have been learning English for ten years which makes it satisfying to choose them for the sample since they are not too young to handle the strategies in hand. For example, circumlocution strategy



requires a satisfied linguistic level to be used. Therefore, it is easier to be used by advanced learners than by younger ones.

These students were categorized into two groups, intermediate and low-ability, based on their average grade in English subject in the previous year. The intermediate group consisted of students who obtained average grades above 70 in English and the low-ability group comprised of students whose grades in English were lower than 70. In other words, all the students were put into pairs formed from the same proficiency level. The students of the same proficiency level were allowed to choose their own partner and decide between themselves which role they wanted to play.

### **3.2.1. Noba Secondary School for Girls**

The study was conducted at an experimental school, called Noba Secondary School for Girls in Noba, a village to the North of Hebron. The participants of the study were two sections (a, b) of the tenth grade of sixty-two students. They started studying English from the first grade. The researcher who is the English teacher in the school talked to the principal of the school to give her permission to conduct her study in the school.

#### **3.2.1.1. Experimental group**

The experimental group was chosen randomly of the two sections (a, b). Section (a) was considered as the experimental group. They were thirty-one students who were categorized into intermediate and low level students. They were exposed to speaking strategy training on two strategies, namely, asking for clarification and circumlocution.

#### **3.2.1.2. Control group**

The control group was chosen randomly of the two sections (a, b). Section (b) was the control group that as the experimental group also consisted of thirty-one students and was paired of the same proficiency level: intermediate and low proficiency level. The teacher, herself the

researcher, used the traditional way of teaching without any changes in teaching the control group. They were not given any hints about speaking strategies.

### 3.2.2. Participants Equivalency

In order to make sure that the control and experimental groups are equivalent concerning their use of speaking strategies, a t-test was carried out for the two groups to examine their use of speaking strategies in the pre-questionnaire as seen in Table 3.1.

**Table 3.1: t-test for pre-use of speaking strategies due to group**

Group Statistics				Independent Samples Test			
		N	Mean	Std deviation	df	t	Sig (2-tailed)
Group	Experimental Group	31	3.43	0.28	60	0.478	0.635
	Control Group	31	3.39	0.38			

As Table 3.1 shows, there is no significant difference at ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) on pre- use of speaking strategies questionnaire due to the group, which means that the two groups are equivalent concerning their use of speaking strategies.

Likewise, in order to make sure that the control and experimental groups are equivalent concerning their speaking competence, a t-test was carried out for the two groups to examine their speaking competence using the pre-speaking test as seen in Table 3.2

**Table 3.2: t-test for the pre-test due to group**

Group statistics					Independent sample test-		
	Group	N	Mean	Std deviation	df	t	Sig(2-tailed)
Total results of the test	Experimental	31	7.67	4.06	60	0.341	0.734
	Control	31	7.30	4.48			
Asking for clarification test' results	Experimental group	31	4.41	2.43	60	1.190	0.869
	Control group	31	4.50	1.99			
Circumlocution test's results	Experimental group	31	3.08	2.27	60	309	0.758
	Control group	31	2.90	2.24			

As it can be seen in Table 3.2, there is no significant difference at ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) on pre-test results due to the group, which means that the two groups are equivalent regarding their speaking competence. Therefore, considering the pre-strategy use results and the pre-test results for the two groups, which show no significant differences, we can consider that the results of the treatment, which targets the experimental group, show exactly the difference that happens and can be compared to the control group.

### 3.3. Research instruments

Data for this study were collected by quantitative and qualitative methods. The researcher used multi methodologies. First of all, it is an experimental study which depends on collecting information through two main instruments: a questionnaire, and a test. Second, it investigates the differences between learners' use of speaking strategies before and after the treatment and their speaking performance before and after implementing the experiment for the experimental and control groups. Not only does this study investigate the differences between the control and

experimental groups before and after conducting the study in their strategy use and oral performance, but also it investigates whether other variables such as proficiency level correlates with their strategy use. Finally, the results are discussed and illustrated in light of the studies reviewed in the second chapter of this study.

### 3.3.1 Self-report questionnaire

The questionnaire was prepared to get the quantitative data for the study. It was designed to investigate the learners' use of speaking strategies in general. It was administered to the participants in the experimental and control groups before and after conducting the study. It was adopted and adapted from the article ‘‘Developing an oral communication strategy inventory’’ by (Nakatani, 2006 & Dornyei, 1995).

The first draft of the questionnaire consisted of twenty items. Eighteen items were adopted from Nakatani’s oral communication strategy inventory and two were adopted from Dornyei’s classification (See Appendix 1, p. 107). The questionnaire was designed in a way that included two sections. In section (A) students were asked about their backgrounds: their age, average, class and study years (See Table 3.3). Section (B) included twenty statements that view students’ preference of speaking strategies when they face a communication problem.

**The demographic characteristics of the sample include proficiency level (the GPA), age and the class. Table (3.3) shows the variables of the sample.**

Variables	Number	Percentage	Missing values
<b>Proficiency level (GPA)</b>			
90-99	8	13%	-----
80-89	8	13%	
70-79	4	6.5%	
60-69	12	19%	
50-59	13	21%	
Less than 50	17	27.5%	
<b>age</b>			

15	44	71%	
16	18	29%	
<b>class</b>			
(A)	31	50%	-----
(B)	31	50%	

Three instructors from the English Department in Hebron University validated the questionnaire in order to avoid misconceptions of any kind. They were requested to evaluate the suitability, clarity, and sufficiency of the items. After reviewing them, they gave the researcher their first remarks, and their comments and suggestions were taken into consideration. The second draft of the questionnaire was prepared in light of the comments and suggestions. After slight modifications on the questionnaire's twenty items, they became eighteen items. According to an expert's suggestions, items six and seven were put in one item. In addition, items nine and ten were put in one item (See Appendix 2, p. 109).

The subjects were given the opportunity to answer the questions on a Lickert scale of five levels ranging from never used, rarely used, sometimes used, often used and always used.

The questionnaire items, which investigated the participants' general use of speaking strategies, could be categorized into eight strategies. The first strategy is social-affective strategy. This strategy is concerned with the learners' affective factors in social situations. To keep their conversation going on, learners try to control their anxiety, motivate themselves to use English and risk making mistakes. Furthermore, they avoid silence by using fillers. Items thirteen and fifteen in the present questionnaire represent this category (See Appendix 2, P. 109).

Fluency-oriented strategy includes items that focus on rhythm, intonation, pronunciation and clarity of speech. In addition, learners take their time so that they would not send inappropriate message to the interlocutor. Items seven and eight represent this category (See Appendix 2, p. 109).

Learners may repeat their speech to make sure that the listener understands and gets the intended meaning. Moreover, they take care of the listener's reaction. This strategy is the negotiation for meaning while speaking strategies. Items eleven, twelve and eighteen represent this category (See Appendix 2).

Learners try to correct themselves when they make mistakes. They pay attention to grammar. They try to speak like native speakers. These variables go under the accuracy-oriented strategy (See items six and ten in Appendix 2).

Learners sometimes tend to use familiar words. They reduce their original message and simplify their speech. These variables come under the title message reduction and alteration strategies (See items two, three and four in Appendix 2).

Nonverbal strategies while speaking is the sixth strategy in Nakatani's inventory (2006). The learner tries to keep eye contact, use body language, gestures to achieve his communicative goal (See item nine in Appendix 2).

In message abandonment strategy, learners leave their message unfinished. This is when they face difficulty during the execution of their original verbal plan (See items five and fourteen in Appendix 2).

The last inventory in Nakatan's inventory is that attempt to think in English. Learners try to think in English when they want to construct a sentence in English. Another item this strategy includes is that attempting to think first in the native language, then constructing a sentence in English. This item should have a negative attitude of the learners (See item one in Appendix 2).

Code switching is the use of a word from the first language with the first language pronunciation in FL. This strategy was adopted from Dornyei's typology (1995) (See item sixteen in Appendix 2).

Finally, circumlocution strategy which is defined as “describing or exemplifying the target object or action” (Dornyei, 1995, p. 58) was also adopted from Dornyei’s typology (1995). Item seventeen represents this strategy.

On the other hand, since the questionnaire had to be given to Arab EFL learners, and to make sure that they get the exact meaning of the items, and to answer the questions as they understand them, the questionnaire had to be translated. Therefore, it was translated by the researcher and evaluated by an instructor in the English Department at Hebron University, who approved it with some final modifications (See Appendix, 3, p. 111).

In order to measure the internal consistency reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach (*alpha*) measurement is used. The researcher conducted the reliability statistics for the questionnaire using Cronbach Alpha Coefficient for the control and the experimental groups. The result is shown in Table 3.4

**Table 3.4: The Reliability Statistics for the Control and Experimental Groups before Conducting the Study.**

<b>Reliability Statistics</b>	
<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>N of Items</b>
<b>0.72</b>	<b>18</b>

As shown in Table 3.4, the result reveals that the Cronbach Alpha Coefficient of the pre-questionnaire is (0.72), which indicates an acceptable degree of internal consistency.

### **3.3.2. The tests**

The researcher based her speaking tests on previous studies (Nakatani, 2012; Mei & Nathalang, 2010; Lam, 2006; Lam & Wong, 2000; Paribakht, 1986). The tests were accepted by two instructors with minor grammatical modifications in task one and three. The tests that were

used to collect the data were two speaking tasks. The first task was three-conversation task, which was primarily dedicated to elicit the use of asking for clarification strategy. The other one was a description of ten pictures, which was used to elicit the use of circumlocution.

### **3.3.2.1. Speaking pre- tests**

The pre-tests were administered to guarantee that the two groups had the same speaking competence. The pre-tests consisted of two tasks: The first task was three-conversation tasks (See Appendix 4, p. 112). Whereas, the second task was a description of ten pictures which was used in many studies such as (Nakatani, 2012; Nakatani, 2005; Lam, 2004; Berry-Bravo, 1993) (See Appendix 5, p. 113). In the former task, the researcher designed problem-solving tasks to elicit the use of clarification requests strategy. The first task was about their delayed flight in which students in pairs asked and talked about the reasons that made the flight be delayed and tried to find a solution for this emergency with the officer. The second task is that a witness of an accident. The students give a description of the accident doer, victim and place to the police officer. Third task is an interview between a well-known character and a reporter. For example, the character will be asked about things he or she did to be admired. In addition, things he should do or have done. Each pair of the same level was given five minutes to prepare the role-play. After that, the researcher videotaped their conversations.

However, the second part of the pre-test was a description of ten pictures (See Appendix 5, p. 113) which was taken from everyday real life. The pictures were divided into abstract names, concrete objects and verbs. The ten pictures exemplified the following actions: saw the wood and plough the earth. Whereas, the word “depression” represents abstract nouns. On the other hand, pictures such as a ladle, nail clipper, bucket, fire extinguisher and earrings represent concrete nouns. This task was written due to time limitation. Students were given ten minutes to complete the task individually.



### **3.3.2.2. Speaking post-test**

After the treatment, a post-test was conducted on the experimental and control group to investigate the impact of training on learners' oral production. The participants did the same tasks they did in the pre-test. A transcription was made for learners' speech. The aim of this transcription is to analyze learners' speech in terms of fluency, vocabulary, grammar and the use of speaking strategies to see if there is any improvement of learners' oral production after strategy training. Two raters, who were the researcher herself and an English teacher who has BA degree in teaching English, independently assessed the tests to guarantee reliability of evaluation. After comparing the two ratings, which were nearly the same, the mean of the scores was considered.

### **3.4. Procedure**

In the current study, two of ten speaking strategies that the questionnaire included were chosen and taught to the students. These speaking strategies were asking for clarification and circumlocution. According to many researchers (e.g., Nakatani, 2005; Lam, 2004; Dornyei, 1995), these speaking strategies are very useful for students to overcome their communication problems.

First, in the second week of September, the participants completed speaking strategies questionnaire, which was adopted from Nakatani's study (2006) and Dornyei's (1995). Then, an oral pre-test was given to the participants in the two groups in the third and fourth weeks of September. The speech production of the role-play tasks was videotaped. Additionally, the participants in the two groups were given a sheet of paper that included eight pictures and two words that students were told their meanings in Arabic. This is to avoid misunderstanding. The participants had to describe the given words or pictures without using the exact word.

Speaking strategy-instruction lasted nine weeks. It included activities and games on the use of asking for clarification and circumlocution. This training program was based on techniques used in the previous researches (Lam & Wong, 2000; Dornyei, 1995). In the last two weeks of December, the questionnaire and the post-tests were administered.

The researcher used the following procedures in training the learners on using asking for clarification and circumlocution strategies as suggested by some researchers (Mariani, 1994)

#### **1. Raising students' awareness of the nature of the strategy.**

Through demonstrating examples of students' use of asking for clarification and circumlocution that were taken from previous studies such as (Lam & Wong, 2000), the participants tried to identify the use of the strategy and to notice how it was used.

#### **2. Providing practice.**

The researcher let the participants work individually, in pairs or in groups to practice the intended strategy. They then demonstrated what they had prepared to the other students who in turn should try to guess what a word they tried to communicate if they were practicing the circumlocution strategy.

#### **3. Revising, practicing the use of the two strategies.**

In this phase, the participants worked individually, in pairs or groups in activities that stimulated the use of the two strategies (See Appendix 8, p. 116).

#### **4. Evaluation of the students' use of the two strategies.**

The students in groups or individually tried to evaluate each other production and use of the two strategies.

#### **3.4.1. Training phase**

Table 3.5, shows the training program schedule from September to December 2013 adapted from Kongsom (2009).

Month	September				October				November				December		
Week	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3
Preparation	■														
Speaking strategy questionnaire		■													
Pre-speaking tests			■	■											
Speaking strategy-instruction					■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	
Post-speaking test Questionnaire														■	■

To make sure that the students in the experimental group know the two types of strategies and how to use them, training was first conducted to get rid of any misconceptions or misuse of the strategies before the students start using the strategies. The students were trained by the researcher during their regular English classes. The overall period of training and practice was over a whole semester. The participants were told that they would be exposed to training on the use of two speaking strategies: circumlocution and asking for clarification. The instruction program included a number of strategy training activities suggested by Lam (2006), Lam and Wong (2000) and others. Some of the activities were adapted to suit the time frame of the study and the participants' culture. The training was conducted on this way (See Table 3.5).

**At the presentation phase**, using Arabic, the native language of the participants, one class received a brief explanation about speaking strategies in general in the first week of October and the teacher who herself is the researcher presented the concept asking for clarification in the second week of October. Students were introduced with clear instruction about this strategy they were going to study, including its meaning, its form, and its use. In addition, the researcher presented examples of previous studies showed the use of asking for clarification.

**In the practice phase** which was in the third and fourth week of October, the participants practiced some activities focusing on asking for clarification which were on the form of pair work or groups (See Appendix 6, p. 114). Students were given five minutes for each task to prepare.

**In the production phase**, students either individually, in pairs or in groups performed what they had prepared. Then, the researcher asked the students to evaluate their use and their mates' use of the strategy in the **evaluation phase**.

The same thing was done with the other strategy. In the fifth week of October, an explanation of circumlocution strategy was presented. The researcher provided demonstrations of the strategy. The activities concerning circumlocution comprised of different activities. For example, students had to give definitions of English words as well as to describe objects or abstract words. They created definitions using relative clauses, and they played games such as "Guess who I am" (See Appendix 7, p. 115). In the next stage, students prepared at home their own definitions. In the next class, they came in front of the class and told their mates their definitions. Their mates were asked to clarify more until the intended word or concept be understood. In November and in the first week of December, the participants practiced the two strategies. The activities were role play or games that were designed for the use of the two strategies, asking for clarification and circumlocution (See Appendix 8, p, 116). The students tried to employ the two strategies in the same task or they were given tasks especially to practice one strategy or the other. The researcher revised the target strategies regularly to make sure students are aware of the task.

### 3.5. Validity of the instruments

The researcher investigated the validity of her instruments through submitting them to experienced EFL instructors who gave their comments, which the researcher took them in consideration. Based on the referees' comments' the instruments were revised.

### 3.6. Reliability of the instruments

To find out the reliability of the post questionnaire that was used in this study in order to investigate the students' use of speaking strategies, the Cronbach's Alpha reliability was calculated and the results showed that the questionnaire that was used in this study was reliable with 0.75

**Table 3.6: The Reliability Statistics for the Control and Experimental Groups after Conducting the Study.**

#### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.75	18

As shown in Table 3.6, the result reveals that the Cronbach Alpha Coefficient of the post-questionnaire is (0.75), which indicates an acceptable degree of internal consistency. Accordingly, the questionnaire is considered as a reliable instrument.

### 3.7. Obstacles faced during conducting the study

Research becomes difficult when certain difficulties are encountered. The researcher of the current study is like any researchers faced some difficulties during conducting her study. Firstly, it was not easy to persuade the headmistress to give permission for the researcher to conduct her study. Secondly, some of the students refused to participate. It took time to persuade them to participate. Finally, even those who participated in the beginning of the study, they evaded to

video tape the post speaking tasks although the researcher motivated them by making them a party at the end of the semester.

### **3.8. Personal experience**

The researcher used her experience as an English teacher in public schools of North Hebron in diagnosing the problem. She concluded that:

1. Students find English language a difficult subject. Thus, most of them fail in this subject. After investigation, it was found that the students do not use speaking strategies.
2. As well as, it was noticed that the reason behind students' failure to comprehend a text or be able to listen to a passage is that they do not recognize strategies that help them.
3. In addition, tenth grade textbook does not pay attention to the use of speaking strategies. It focuses on teaching the speaking skill through just making students imitate a certain dialogue, which consists only of a question, and answer without any negotiation. For example, most of the textbook speaking tasks are like giving suggestion and advice, giving or asking about directions and predicting the weather. The textbook never promotes the teaching of these tasks through using speaking strategies. Furthermore, students never try to ask assistance or clarification of their own mates. If some try, they do it as it is something forbidden. In addition, if a student does not know a word that is needed to complete the conversation, she stops and never tries to express herself through using circumlocution.

The researcher tried to solve the problem through applying individual, unplanned method. During her teaching in schools, the researcher has done her best to develop students' reading, speaking, listening and writing skills. However, her attempts achieved slight improvement. Finally, she might find the solution which is represented in the use of strategies especially speaking strategies.

### **3.9. Data Analysis**

Data were collected, analyzed, and reported. Responses relating to speaking strategies use, questionnaire, speaking test scores, and demographic data were investigated. By using SPSS Program, version 19, a t-test was used to compare the questionnaire and speaking test mean scores of the experimental and control groups statistically. Mean scores were used to report the results of Lickert-type statements for the student questionnaire and test. Responses from the participants were described, interpreted, synthesized. The findings were then reported.

### **3.10. Summary**

To sum up, this chapter explained the methods followed in this study. It described in details the participants, data collection, and the instrumentation of carrying out the study. Besides, it presented the formation, validation, and the reliability of these used instruments. Finally, it presented the way the obtained data were analyzed. The following chapter describes the results and the discussions about them.

## Chapter Four

### Results and discussion

#### 4.0. Overview

This chapter presents the results of the study. The results of the questionnaire are discussed in light of the learners' perceptions before and after implementing the study. The following section presents the findings and discussions related to the research questions of the study. The results of the questionnaire are presented first, and then they are followed by the results of the posttest.

#### 4.1. Quantitative analysis

##### 4.1.1. Question One: What is the impact of using asking for clarification on enhancing 10<sup>th</sup> grade students' speaking skill?

The researcher decided to run a t-test for each strategy separately to see if the learners showed any improvement in their speaking skill due to their use of asking for clarification or circumlocution as shown in Table (4.1 and 4.2)

Learners were instructed on the use of asking for clarification requests. They were given a chance to practice using this strategy over one school semester. At the end of the semester, the learners were given three speaking task-tests to both the experimental and the control groups. The results were as seen in Table 4.1.

**Table 4.1: A t-test for the results of asking for clarification pre and post-test due to groups.**

	Group	Number	means	Std deviation	T	Sig.
Asking for clarification	Control group	31	4.50	1.190	1.190	0.869



pre test' results	Experimental group	31	4.41	2.43		
Asking for clarification post test' results	Control group	31	3.98	2.31	2.084	0.041
	Experimental group	31	5.18	2.21		

The Table shows that the experimental group's speaking skill was enhanced due to their use of asking for clarification strategy. Experimental group students were able to keep their conversations on through the use of asking for clarification. This is in accordance with (Teng, 2012c, Nguyet & Mai, 2012; Alibakhshi & Padiz, 2011; Lam & Wong, 2000; Gabrielatos, 1992; Lloyd, 1992).

However, this result contrasts with Hie and Yin (2008) and Prinyajarn (2007) who found that the participants slightly negotiate meaning through the use of clarification requests.

This strategy is easier for students to use since it does not require high language proficiency. A learner needs just to use a memorized expression such as ("what?" " Could you explain?") to indicate misunderstanding or inability to carry on a verbal plan. Their use of such expressions secured them and helped them to get rid of the feeling of embarrassment, which results of not being able to carry on a conversation.

#### **4.1.2 Question Two: What is the impact of using circumlocution on enhancing 10<sup>th</sup> grade students' speaking skill?**

To answer this question, learners were instructed on the use of circumlocution. They were given a chance to practice using this strategy over one school semester. At the end of the semester, the learners were given a picture-description speaking task-test to both the experimental and the control groups. The results were as seen in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.2: A t-test for the results of circumlocution pre and post-test due to groups.**

	group	N	mean	Std deviation	T	Sig.(2-tailed)
Pre circumlocution test	Experimental	31	3.08	2.27	309	0.758
	Control	31	2.90	2.24		
Post circumlocution test	Experimental	31	4.32	2.83	1.350	0.182
	Control	31	3.40	2.51		

The table shows that there are no significant differences between the experimental group and control group in their speaking skill due to the use of circumlocution strategy. It is worth mentioning that there is slight improvement of the two groups' scores as a result of using circumlocution after treatment. However, looking at the mean scores of the two groups, it appears that the experimental group's mean scores are higher than the control group's. This is in accordance with (Prinyajarn, 2007) and (Salomone & Marsal, 1997) who found no significant difference between the groups due to their use of circumlocution. However, this result is in contrast with (Campillo, 2006; Chen, 2006; Jourdan, 2000) who found that teaching circumlocution improved students' speaking skill.

Although it was expected that tenth graders should have a satisfied linguistic competence, this particular group of participants had so weak proficiency level. Therefore, they were not able to use circumlocution as a strategy to improve their speaking skill. This strategy requires high language proficiency. However, the participants' English proficiency is so weak; they are not able to use this strategy as a means of overcoming linguistic deficiencies.

**4.1.3. Question Three: What is the impact of speaking-strategy training on students' general use of speaking strategies?**

First of all, the researcher examined the impact of teaching asking for clarification and circumlocution speaking strategies on the experimental and control groups' general use of the strategies after treatment. To see whether there is an impact of speaking strategy training on tenth graders' general use of speaking strategies, a t-test was carried out to find the answers of the post questionnaire between the control and experimental groups. The results are shown in Table 4.3.

**Table 4.3: A t-test for the post-general strategy-use in all of the questionnaire items due to group.**

Group statistic				Independent samples test			
group		N	Mean	Std deviation	df	t	Sig(tailed)
	Experimental	31	3.51	0.63	60	-0.177	0.860
	Control	31	3.54	0.46			

The result of Table 4.3 shows that there is no a significant difference between the two groups at ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) of their use of speaking strategies. Their means are (E=3.51, C=3.54), which indicate that teaching asking for clarification and circumlocution do not affect the experimental group general use of speaking strategies. This is in accordance with Nunan (1997). However, this is in contrast to the results of (Melendez, Zarala & Mendez, 2014; Lin, 2013; Nguyet & Mai, 2012; Teng, 2012c; Kongsom, 2009; Prinyajarn, 2007; Nakatani, 2005) who found that learners' use of speaking strategies was affected by treatment and consequently their use of the strategies increased. That is, after strategy-training students used speaking strategies more frequently than they used before treatment. Treatment aroused their awareness of the existence and importance of these strategies. Consequently, they showed positive attitudes towards the use of these strategies.

Additionally, Table 4.3 shows a medium use of speaking strategies by EFL Palestinian learners. This is in line with the results of (Ugla, Adnan & Abidin, 2013b; Al-Shabou, Asassfeh & Al-Shboul, 2010) and Khalil (2005) who found that Palestinian EFL learners have a medium use of strategies.

Strategy-training did not increase students' reported use of speaking strategies. This might be attributed to cultural factor. That is, Palestinian students rarely use English outside the classroom. Therefore, they have never been in a need to use these strategies in real life situations. They do not appreciate the importance of the use of these strategies as they do not try to speak English outside or inside the classroom.

Then, the researcher investigated the impact of teaching asking for clarification and circumlocution speaking strategies on the experimental group's use of individual speaking strategies compared to the control group. A t-test was carried out to analyze the answers of the students' use of speaking categories after treatment. Table 4.4 shows the results.

**Table: 4.4, a t-test for the post use of speaking categories.**

Group statistics					Independent samples			Rank
Speaking strategy Category	group	N	Mean	Std deviation	df	t	Sig.	
Message reduction and alteration strategies	experimental	31	<b>4.42</b>	0.807	60	1.470	0.029	1
	control	31	4.03	1.224				
Negotiation for meaning while speaking	Experimental	31	<b>4.10</b>	1.062	58	0.665	0.377	2
	Control	31	3.93	0.868				
Social-affective strategies	Experimental	31	<b>3.84</b>	1.003	60	1.004	0.004	3
	Control	31	3.52	1.480				
Attempt to think in English strategy	Experimental	31	<b>3.74</b>	1.290	60	1.548	0.860	4
	Control	31	3.23	1.334				

Nonverbal strategies	experimental	31	<b>3.63</b>	1.245	59	-1.095-	0.309	5
	Control	31	3.97	1.140				
Code-switching	Experimental	31	<b>3.55</b>	1.234	58	-1.353-	0.549	6
	Control	31	3.97	1.149				
Circumlocution	Experimental	31	<b>3.52</b>	1.318	60	1.173	0.980	7
	Control	31	3.13	1.284				
Accuracy-oriented strategy	Experimental	31	<b>3.40</b>	1.192	59	-0.783-	0.075	8
	Control	31	3.61	0.919				
Fluency-oriented strategy	Experimental	31	<b>3.27</b>	1.285	58	-1.393-	0.624	9
	Control	31	3.70	1.119				
Message abandonment strategies	Experimental	31	<b>3.18</b>	1.056	57	0.172	0.924	10
	Control	31	3.13	1.147				

Table 4.4 shows that after treatment, message reduction and alteration strategies and social-affective strategies were reported to be the most significantly used strategies by the experimental group. It is also worth mentioning that the experimental group showed high use of message reduction and alteration strategies, negotiation for meaning while speaking, social-affective strategies and attempt to think in English strategy after treatment. The least used strategy was message abandonment strategies.

This in accordance with (Nakatani, 2012; Teng, 2012b; Huang, 2010) who found that message reduction and alteration strategies and social-affective strategies as well as negotiation for meaning increased after treatment.

Regarding message reduction and alteration strategies, figures show that there is a significant difference between the groups at ( $\alpha = 0.029$ ). Their means are (E= 4.42, C=4.04), which means that the treatment affected the experimental group positively. Their reported use of

message reduction and alteration strategies improved. The researcher noticed that before the treatment in the pre speaking tests, the participants tended mostly to avoid talking in the given topics. They took time to be persuaded to speak. However, after the treatment, the participants tried to speak with a restricted linguistic competence. In other words, they use simple words to communicate their message. They sometimes delivered the message incomplete\*<sup>1</sup>. Although the use of this category of strategies is not preferable, the training on the use of asking of clarification and circumlocution forced the participants to use this strategy, which is better than not talking at all.

Concerning social-affective strategies, results show that there is a significant difference between them at ( $\alpha = 0.004$ ). Their means are ( $E=3.84$ ,  $E=3.52$ ), which means that the treatment affected the experimental group positively in this category. Their reported use of social-affective strategies was enhanced. This is in line with Prinyajarn (2007) who found that the students used more pause fillers (social-affective strategies) than circumlocution. In addition, Gabrielatos (1992) reported that his participants became risk takers (social-affective strategies) after their strategy-training despite of their lexical and grammatical deficiencies. This is also in line with (AL-Shabou, Asassfeh & Alshboul, 2010; Chuanchaisit & Prapphal, 2009).

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<sup>1</sup> (Pre speaking test) \*Reman: Hello, Mohmoud Darwish

Noha: welcome

Reman: how was prize in 1952?

Noha: in proze in Palestine.

Reman: how did ..... work ???????

Noha: lot of magazine Alkarmel.

Reman: thank you

Noha: welcome.

(Post speaking test) \*Reman: Hello, welcome.

Noha: Where you born?

Reman: was born in 1942 in Al Birwah, a village near Aca in Palestine.

Noha: he graduate from secondary school?

Reman: scientific school in 1949 then to Haifa and to work in newspaper.

Noha: thank you

Students' increased use of social-affective strategies after strategy training could be because students became more confident to speak. They became more able to control their emotions and consequently they were ready to take risk while speaking English. In addition, teaching English in Palestinian classrooms focuses on accuracy. Teachers always focus on producing accurate language. They are intolerant with students' mistakes. Learners are always afraid of committing mistakes. Hence, they will not risk talking in English; consequently, they will not be put in a situation that requires the use of speaking strategies.

On the other hand, the control group showed high use of message reduction and alteration strategies, code switching, nonverbal strategies, negotiation for meaning while speaking and fluency-oriented strategy. Whereas, the control group reported that the least used strategies were message abandonment strategy and circumlocution strategies with (E=3.18, C=3.13) and (E=3.52, C=3.13) respectively.

It is worth mentioning that although the training affected the participants' reported use of some other speaking strategies such as message reduction and alteration strategies and social-affective strategies, the training on the use of circumlocution did not affect learners' speaking skill because this particular strategy is somehow difficult for the participants to use to overcome linguistic deficiencies. Through the training, the students were aware of the existence of other simple strategies that they preferred to use. This implies that the teaching of speaking strategies should take in consideration learners' proficiency level; teachers should start teach those strategies that suit their learners' proficiency level.

Although there is no significant difference between the control and experiment groups in their reported use of circumlocution after treatment, it is apparent that the experimental group' reported use of circumlocution slightly improved after treatment. This is in line with Kongsom (2009) who found that students' frequent use of circumlocution increased after treatment. In

addition, the results show that there is no a significant difference of negotiation for meaning while speaking between the two groups although this strategy gets high use by the experimental group. This means that the experimental group has positive attitudes towards the use of this strategy. The result is in line with (Yaman, Irgin & Kavasoglu, 2013; Teng, 2012b; Nakatani, 2012) who found that learners preferred using negotiation for meaning.

#### 4.1.4. Question Four: What is the correlation between the use of the taught speaking strategies and language proficiency among the 10<sup>th</sup> grade students at Noba Secondary School?

To investigate the correlation between learners' proficiency level and speaking strategy use, a t-test was carried out to see the impact of students' proficiency level on the use of speaking strategies as seen in Table 4.5.

**Table 4.5: A t-test for the correlation between language proficiency and the taught speaking strategy use due to groups:**

	Proficiency level	number	means	Std deviation	R	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
<b>Before training</b>	High	20	3.44	0.27	.800 <sup>a</sup>	.640	2.92173
	Low	42	3.39	0.36			
<b>After training</b>	High	20	3.67	0.35			
	Low	42	3.46	0.61			

The table shows that (R) is (.80<sup>a</sup>) and this is an indicator that the correlation between intermediate and low students in their use of the taught speaking strategies is strong. The result is in agreement with (Ugla, Adnan & Abidin, 2013b; Abu Anawas, 2012; Al-Shabou, Asassfeh & Al-Shboul, 2010; Nakatani, 2005; Khalil, 2005; Rababah & Seedhouse, 2004; Shmais, 2003; Dobao, 2001; Berry-Bravo, 1993; Paribakht, 1985). However, this result contrasts with (Kaivanpanah, Yamouty & Karami, 2012; Razmjoo & Ardekani, 2011; Huang, 2010; Khan,



2010; Lam, 2006; Dadour & Robbins, 1996) who found no clear relationship between strategy use and proficiency level. This is because “external factors such as task or internal factors such as learner’s style may also be significant in determining strategy use” (Khan, 2010, p. 49).

#### 4.2. Experimental group questionnaire results

##### 4.2.1. Question One: What is the impact of speaking-strategy training on students’ general use of speaking strategies due to the experimental group?

After the treatment, the experimental group students were asked to complete the strategy speaking questionnaire again to investigate any differences in their report of use of speaking strategies. A paired-test was carried out to find the answers of the experimental group. The results are shown in Table 4.6,

**Table 4.6: A paired-test of the experimental group use of speaking strategies**

Experimental group	Mean	N	Std deviation	Sig.
Pre questionnaire	3.43	31	0.28	0.508
Post questionnaire	3.51	31	0.63	

As shown in Table 4.6, the overall mean score for the reported speaking strategies in the pre questionnaire was 3.43 (SD= 0.28) while the overall mean score for the reported speaking strategies in the post questionnaire was 3.51 (SD= 0.63). The mean scores in the post-questionnaire indicate that there is no statistically difference between pre and post speaking strategies questionnaire mean scores of speaking strategy use. This means that teaching speaking strategies does not affect the participants’ use of speaking strategies generally. This result is in line with Nunan (1997) who found that the effect of strategy training on strategy-use is not so clear.

To see the impact of teaching speaking strategies on individual speaking categories, a paired test was carried out as shown in Table 4.7

**Table: 4.7, a paired test of the experimental group use of individual speaking strategies.**

Speaking strategies categories	Questionnaire	N	Mean	Std deviation	Sig.(2-tailed)
attempt to think in English	pre	31	3.19	0.94	0.024
	post	31	<b>3.74</b>	1.29	
message reduction and alteration strategies	pre	31	3.41	1.39	0.062
	post	31	<b>2.70</b>	1.02	
message abandonment strategy	pre	31	2.61	1.28	0.458
	post	31	<b>2.93</b>	1.66	
Accuracy-oriented strategy	pre	31	3.06	1.15	0.147
	post	31	<b>2.61</b>	1.14	
Fluency-oriented strategy	Pre	31	3.74	1.52	0.484
	post	31	<b>3.45</b>	1.62	
Nonverbal	pre	31	3.48	1.38	0.410

strategies while speaking	post	31	<b>3.80</b>	1.55	
negotiation for meaning while speaking strategies	pre	31	3.35	1.22	0.014
	post	31	<b>4.25</b>	1.36	
Social-affective strategies	pre	31	3.06	1.09	0.009
	post	31	<b>3.96</b>	1.66	
Code-switching	pre	31	4.22	0.88	0.029
	post	31	<b>3.54</b>	1.23	
Circumlocution	pre	31	2.90	1.16	0.044
	post	31	<b>3.51</b>	1.31	

Table 4.7, shows that speaking strategy-instruction affected the experimental group use of negotiation for meaning while speaking (e.g., asking for clarification), social-affective strategy, attempt to think in English and circumlocution significantly. This result is in line with Nakatani (2012) and Nunan (1997) who stated that strategy-instruction improved learners' knowledge of the investigated strategies. This appeared in the current study results in which learners reported the use of the under investigation strategies (circumlocution and asking for clarification) improved after training. In addition, the training was beneficial in that it changed the participants' attitudes towards unacceptable strategies such as code switching significantly. The frequency use of this strategy decreased after treatment. The subject had negative attitudes

towards this strategy. They were aware of the existence of more useful and acceptable speaking strategies than code switching. This is in line with Alibakhshi and Padiz (2011) who found that learners reduced their use of avoidance and language switch strategies after training to use appeal for assistance and circumlocution. It is worth noting that, in the pre-questionnaire the participants showed medium use of negotiation for meaning, social affective strategy, attempt to think in English and nonverbal strategy which changed after treatment to be a high use. That is, teaching asking for clarification and circumlocution strategies affected the participants' use of some strategies positively. The frequency of use of these two strategies increased after the treatment.

This result contrasts with Dornyei (1995) who found that no significant improvement of the quantity of circumlocution after the treatment. Khenoune (2012) also found that circumlocution and appeal for assistance are the least frequently used by Algerian students.

### **4.3. Qualitative analysis**

The qualitative analysis supports the findings of the quantitative analysis. This can be seen in the light of analyzing some extracts of the participants' performance in the tests.

#### **4.3.1. Actual use of asking for clarification**

In the pre-test speaking tasks, students did not interact with one another. Most of their ideas were not discussed thoroughly. In addition, the pre-training tasks rarely had any of the taught strategies. This is in line with Melendez, Zarala and Mendez (2014) who found that students did not use any speaking strategies before the treatment (As seen in the following pre-test example).

**In the following extract, taken from a pre-training recording, a student had assumed the role of an interviewer and another a famous character talked about the famous character's achievements, regrets and about him/ herself.**

Lubna: hi, I'm Lubna Shrouf . I'm TV presenter in the president program. I'll ask Yassir some questions.

Lubna: Good morning

Layan: Good morning  
 Lubna: you with me on the line. I'll ask you some questions  
 Layan: yes  
 Lubna: When you are become a president?  
 Layan: I become a president in Palestine in 1994.  
 Lubna: yeah, what are you doing for the refugee?  
 Layan: I I makes some I makes some money for the refugees and build house for the refugees in Lebanon and the Syria in the Palestine.  
 Lubna: That's good either. What's your opinion of Israel?  
 Layan: it bad people and talk (took) something don't have and killed the children and human  
 Lubna: thanks for you to be with me on line.

In this pre-training extract, students did not have much interaction with one another. They did not show willingness to negotiate. They just responded when their turn came. This is because students lack the necessary vocabulary to express themselves. These results showed that students rarely showed cooperative behavior before treatment. That is, they rarely used asking for clarification. However, after treatment, learners' interaction had improved after treatment. There were more attempts of asking for clarification strategy in comparison to the pre-speaking test. The following example shows students' use of asking for clarification strategy after the treatment.

Lubna: Good evening everybody. I'm TV. presenter in the president program. I want to meet Yassir Arafat now. Hello, Yassir Arafat. How are you?  
 Layan: Hello, I'm fine and I happy to meet you  
 Lubna: thanks thanks Mr. Yassir . I'd ask you some questions.  
 Layan: yes, welcome.  
 Lubna: When did you become a president for Palestine?  
 Layan: I become a president for Palestine in 1994.  
 Lubna: Until you become a president what would you do for Palestine?  
 Layan: I I would give Palestine peace and freedom.  
 Lubna: You would give Palestine peace and freedom. That's good. **Why? (Asking for clarification)**  
 Layan: Because I feel the Palestinian is poor and so closed.  
 Lubna: That's sadly. What do about poor Palestinian people out Palestine?  
 Layan: Oh, I give a lot of money to the poor people and the refugee in Lebanon, Jordan to build a houses and school.  
 Lubna: That's so good. Where did you live before become president?  
 Layan: Sorry. I don't hear you. **Can you repeat again? (Asking for clarification)**  
 Lubna: Where did you live before become president?

Layan: I'm lived in royal home in Palestine but I lived another countries like Tunis and Jordan and in..... a country north Palestine.

Lubna: **Do you mean Lebanon? (Asking for clarification)**

Layan? Yes, Beirut in Lebanon..

Lubna: Yes, thanks for your meeting. Goodbye

Layan: Yes, welcome.

Analysis of the post-training transcript of the same pair revealed some evidence of asking for clarification strategy which had not been found in their pre-training recording. As seen in the example, Lubna used an asking for clarification strategy in her talk when she stated 'do you mean Lebanon?'' and Layan adjusted her response according to Lubna's request. The students supported each other by providing the intended word here (Lebanon). On the other use of asking for clarification in this extract, Layan asked for clarification through asking Lubna to repeat what she had said. Although this type of asking for clarification does not serve the exchanged meaning, it serves to maintain the flow of the conversation. The use of asking for clarification helped the interlocutors keep the conversation on. In addition, it is noticed that the post extract is longer than the pre extract. Moreover, although this extract is full of grammatical mistakes, the interlocutors have succeeded in delivering their message. In another example, the use of asking for clarification is apparent.

Deema: Welcome, tonight we have popular man. He's brave, determined and responsible. He's Palestinian. He's Yassir Arafat. Welcome Sir.

Ola: Thanks for this beautiful introduction. I'm very happy to be in this famous show.

Deema: Let's start, shall we?

Ola: Ok, let's go on. I'm ready.

Deema: You start your life an engineer. Let's talk about that.

Ola: I born in Cairo and I study engineering in Cairo University. After that, I go back to Palestine.

Deema: How did you be a president?

Ola: First of all I worked in PLO. I work hard for the Palestinian and for Palestine. I get love from people.

Deema: **What do you mean of " people"?**

Ola: The Arab people and some of European people

Deema: So what do you want?

Ola: Like a Palestinian. I want to come refugees back, freedom to Palestine for the whole Palestine. I want to remove the settlements in West bank and Gaza Strip.

In the above extract, the students were able to build in some requests for clarification. Deema for example, appealed directly for clarification from Ola by indicating non-understanding in “what do you mean of people? ”Subsequently, Ola clarified herself with “the Arab people and some of European people.” The post- training extract indicates an improvement in students’ interaction because this is in contrast to their behavior before the training. They simply took turn to ask questions and answer them. On the contrary, they were able to ask questions to clarify ambiguities, and there was cooperation by clarifying one’s ambiguities.

The results revealed that the practice of asking for clarification strategy could help students in a way that made them more confident when they used the taught expressions to bridge a linguistic gap during their conversation. Based on the researcher’s experience, it was noticed that in the pre-training the participants refused or were obliged to try to speak. However, after they were taught expressions related to this strategy, they volunteered to speak.

#### **4.3.2. The actual use of circumlocution**

The analysis of the participants’ descriptions in the second task revealed that most students either in the control group or in the experimental group were able to circumlocute. This appears in the following episodes taken from their descriptions.

##### **An extract from intermediate level students’ (control group)**

**Malak:** It’s a material, small material. That is used to cut nails. We often use it in our school when our nails tall.”

**Sarah:** It used to cut nails as you said. It is like made of iron and material.

##### **Experimental group (intermediate level students –pre-circumlocution)**

**Deema:** We use this tool to cut our neels (nails) to and it’s kind of cleaned.

**Ola:** When the needs is long?

**Deema:** Cut it, yes

**Ola:** I get it.

The above extracts that are taken from the intermediate level students' speech in the two groups show that they were able to use circumlocution. This means that EFL learners are familiar with this strategy, but there is a need to draw their attention to use it.

#### **Extracts are taken from low-level students' descriptions**

##### **Control group (low level)**

**Mehad:** It is in girls. It is in ears to your home (haflat: Arabic word for parties)

**Refqa:** It's ears. It beautiful people?

**Mehad:** yeah

**Refqa:** yes.

##### **Experimental group (Low level)**

**Isra':** My see in girls ..the ear

**Siren:** What's used?

**Isra':** Girls use to the in happy. Small beautiful.

**Sireen:** They use the ear?

**Isra':** Yes.

The above extracts which are taken from low-level students' speech showed that both the experimental and control group students were able to convey their message through the use of circumlocution. However, their use was not appropriate. They were not able to give successful descriptions.

In the following episodes, it appeared that learners' use of circumlocution slightly improved.

##### **(Intermediate level students –post circumlocution use)**

**Deema:** It is a tool we use it to cut our nails. Like this. To cut our nails. It is made from iron ,iron, yes.

**Ola:** To cut the extra nails to make the fingers more beautiful.

**Deema:** Yes, yes it part of cleaning.

##### **(Low-level students-post circumlocution)**



**Experimental group (low level)**

Isra: Use in ear, in happy.

Siren: Any color? Many color?

Isra: It's

Siren: What's color?

Isra: Not color

Siren: Any other color? Small?

Isra: yes, small

Siren: Beauty? Use ear

Isra: yes

Siren: The woman the ear?

Isra: The girls?

It appeared that students in the experimental group used circumlocution after treatment more appropriately. However, the students before treatment could not use the circumlocution strategy appropriately due to lack of knowledge of the circumlocution strategy. This strategy requires high linguistic level.

It is evident from the examples shown above that the ability of using circumlocution strategy improved after training as the students were able to use circumlocution more appropriately. The participants' message was delivered more comprehensibly than in the pre-circumlocution. Although there were a lot of grammatical mistakes, they were able to communicate the intended expression. However, the low-level experimental group students' use of circumlocution was more effective than that in the pre-circumlocution. The low-level experimental group somehow employed what they had been taught about circumlocution in their description.

**4.4. Conclusion**

Investigating the research questions shows that students' speaking ability was enhanced through the use of asking for clarification strategy. Asking for clarification had a positive impact on enhancing learners' communication skill. Moreover, students' frequency use of speaking

strategies was not affected by strategy training. Finally, it was found that there was a correlation between learners' proficiency level and frequency use of the taught speaking strategies.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Conclusions, Recommendations and Future Research**

This chapter presents a summary of the research. It discusses in brief the research problem, questions, methodology, and the findings of the current study. Conclusions, recommendations and future research are also presented.

#### **5.1 Research Summary**

This research provides an overview of the role of the speaking strategy use in enhancing learners' speaking skill. It is divided into five chapters. The first chapter introduced the problem of the study. This problem is represented by the fact that Palestinian curricula are designed based on the communicative approach which focuses on interaction. However, speaking skill is still the weakest skill among EFL learners. This goes back to various factors. One of which is the evaluation system that focuses on writing and reading, neglecting listening and speaking. In addition, English has a limited use outside the classroom. Finally, the traditional approaches still followed by some teachers. Therefore, there is a need to integrate speaking strategy-instruction into our curricula. This could be through conducting training courses for teachers on the use of speaking strategies. Moreover, each unit of the textbook should include activities on the use of speaking strategies. Nevertheless, this integration has first to be investigated for its effectiveness compared to the traditional way of teaching in our Palestinian context.

The second chapter of this research presented a brief historical background about speaking and speaking strategies, theoretical framework of teaching speaking strategies and their typologies. Finally, it reviewed some of the empirical studies.

The third chapter described the methodology of the research. The first section described the participants. The second section talked about the instruments used in carrying out the study and data collection, which are a questionnaire and a test. Finally, this chapter described how the data

collected were analyzed. These data included results relating to pre and post speaking strategy questionnaire, pre and post speaking test scores and demographic data. They were analyzed by using SPSS Program version19, and discussed in light of the literature review.

The fourth chapter presented the results of the study. The analyzed results of the questionnaire were discussed in light of the learners' perceptions before and after the study. The analyzed results of the speaking tests were discussed according to the marks learners got in the pre and posttests.

## **5.2 Conclusion**

Teaching speaking in our schools has been characterized by the use of the traditional way of teaching with the use of merely question and answer, repetition and habit-formation. Recently, English language researchers have started supporting using speaking strategies in teaching to improve learners' speaking skill. Many studies have been conducted and their findings have confirmed that using speaking strategies might have a positive effect on the learning process as using these strategies may help learners to keep their conversation, as a result they may be exposed to more input which in turn facilitates their acquisition of the language.

### **5.2.1 Research Questions Findings**

#### **Summary of the major findings of the study**

The major findings of the study include the impact of using asking for clarification and circumlocution on enhancing learners' speaking competence; as well as; the learners' frequency use of speaking strategies for communicating their goal and the correlation between learners' proficiency level and using speaking strategies.

The first question was whether there was an impact of using asking for clarification on enhancing 10<sup>th</sup> grade students' speaking skill. The data for answering the question were taken from the participants' scores of the tests before and after introducing the intervention. The results

confirmed that there was a significant difference at ( $\alpha = 0.041$ ) due to group in their oral performance after conducting the study. Learners' positive attitudes towards negotiation strategies (asking for clarification) might lead to active use of these strategies. The qualitative analysis showed that learners rarely used asking for clarification before the treatment. In addition, the interlocutors practiced merely a question and a response to the question. There was no negotiation between the interlocutors. However, after the treatment, the learners used asking for clarification to keep the flow of their exchanges. They felt secured when they used this strategy since the use of this strategy sustained their self-confidence in that they are doing something positive. This finding is in line with (Nguyet & Mai, 2012; Nakatani, 2010; Kongsom, 2009; Lourdunathan & Menon, 2005; Gabrielatos, 1992) who indicated the positive impact of using asking for clarification on enhancing the speaking skill. This indicates that using asking for clarification by the experimental group improves their oral performance more than using the traditional way of teaching speaking without using speaking strategies.

However, this contrasts with Hie and Yin (2008) who found that the participants slightly negotiated meaning through comprehension checks and clarification requests. Prinyajarn's study (2007) showed that the teaching of asking for clarification was not so effective.

The second question is related to the impact of using circumlocution on enhancing 10<sup>th</sup> graders' speaking skill. The results showed that there was no significant difference in the post-test results due to the using of circumlocution to enhance learners' speaking skill. Students already use this strategy, but they need to be aware of through providing them with activities to sustain its presence. This is in line with (Prinyajarn, 2007; Salomone & Marsal, 1997) who found that there was no significant difference between the two groups. However, they differed qualitatively. In addition, Lam (2010) pointed out that strategy-instruction did not affect circumlocution since this strategy needs high linguistic level.

The third question was that whether there were significant differences between the experimental and control group' use of speaking strategies after treatment. It appeared that there were no significant differences between them. It was revealed that generally students maintained the same frequency use of speaking strategies comparing with the control group. However, there were significant differences between the two groups in some speaking categories, which were message reduction and alteration strategies, and social-affective strategies. However, some strategies such as negotiation for meaning and attempt to think in English were high among the experimental group although these strategies were not significantly used. On the other hand, the control group showed high use of message reduction and alteration strategies, code switching, nonverbal speaking and fluency-oriented strategy. It appeared that message reduction and alteration strategies maintained high use by the two groups. This fact can be justified in that the English learning environment in Palestine restricts the use of achievement strategies. Palestinian students use English just inside the classroom. There is no chance to practice the language outside the classroom. Consequently, there is no a force that imposes on them using speaking strategies in natural situations. They practice communication in a language-learning context. As a result, they use less speaking strategies, especially when the emphasis of the class learning is on the accurate use of the target language, not fluent communication. Students communicating in class use reduction strategies more often and achievement strategies less often. Moreover, in Palestine, English teaching mainly focuses on reading, writing and grammar. It emphasizes accuracy. Palestinian students study grammatical rules and vocabulary mechanically, they cannot appropriately apply what they learned to the real communicative situations. Moreover, the kind of vocabulary they learned in classroom has no way to be used in practice. Students are not equipped with a sort of vocabulary that they need in their daily life.

Hence, in order to avoid any mistakes during a conversation, students, when encountering meanings that are too difficult for them to express, usually abandon them or stop in the middle of the conversation. Thus, they do not actively use achievement strategies such as asking for clarification, approximation, and circumlocution, which help them to overcome some linguistic deficiency and consequently communicate their message. In addition, there are few chances for oral practice to use such achievement strategies. Such environment restricts the development of strategic competence as a result this restricts students' use of achievement strategies. On other words, teachers, curriculum designers and textbooks do not pay attention to the existence of speaking strategies and they do not provide learners with activities that advocate the use of different speaking strategies. Consequently, learners will not develop their strategic competence. This result is in accordance with (Nunan, 1997).

On the other hand, the experimental group's speaking strategy-use in the post questionnaire comparing with the pre questionnaire had no significant differences at ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ). The overall mean score for the reported speaking strategies in the pre questionnaire was 3.43, while the overall mean score for the reported speaking strategies in the post questionnaire was 3.51. This revealed that the students had medium use of speaking strategies which requires the drawing of the learners' awareness of the presence of such strategies that help them to develop their speaking skill. However, looking at individual speaking strategies revealed that learners' use of circumlocution and asking for clarification increased after the treatment. In addition, learners reported increased use of other strategies such as social-affective strategy and attempt to think in English. These strategies had significantly high frequency use among the experimental group students.

The fourth question was whether there was a correlation between learners' proficiency level and their strategy use of the taught strategies. Learners' test scores were analyzed in light of their

proficiency levels. There was a strong correlation at (.008) of learners' use of the taught speaking strategies and their proficiency level.

This result is in agreement with (Ugla, Adnan & Abidin, 2013b; Abu Anawas, 2012; Al-Shabou, Asassfeh & Al-Shboul, 2010; Nakatani, 2005; Khalil, 2005; Rababah & Seedhouse, 2004; Shmais, 2003; Dobao, 2001).

However, the result is in contrast with (Kaivanpanah, Yamouty & Karami, 2012; Razmjoo & Ardekani, 2011; Khan, 2010, Lam, 2006; Dadour & Robbins, 1996) who found no clear relationship between strategy use and proficiency level.

From the researcher's experience as a teacher, she found that after the treatment, the students enjoyed the activities concerning the taught strategies. Furthermore, the low-level students volunteered to practice doing the activities, which was not the case before conducting the study. It was found that the class that was trained to use the strategies was better than the other class that was taught through the traditional way. It was also noticed that the experimental group conversations were longer than control group. Additionally, it was noticed that the experimental group students became more active participators in the school activities concerning the English language.

### **5.3. Recommendations**

The results of this study showed the effectiveness of using asking for clarification to improve learners' speaking skill. Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Since the goal of EFL teaching and learning is to develop the communicative competence among students, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education should promote the development of speaking strategies through designing activities that promote the use of some speaking strategies such as asking for clarification to develop EF learners' speaking skill.



2. Teachers should introduce speaking strategies to students and encourage their use. They should offer more time and activities for students to practice using the strategies to ensure using them appropriately and automatically.
3. Moreover, teachers should focus on low-ability students through providing them with activities to practice the use of strategies.
4. Teachers should start gradually with strategies that suit learners' proficiency level. For example, circumlocution as a speaking strategy should be introduced in later stages in learning to speak English.

#### **5.4. Recommendations for Future Research**

1. Other studies should explore any other strategies that help students develop their speaking skill such as approximation.
2. Other studies should build a questionnaire that covers all of the speaking strategies that learners used when communicate to others. In other words, the used questionnaire in the current study focused on small range of speaking strategies, therefore, it is devisable that another questionnaire includes other speaking strategies that the current questionnaire did not pay attention to.
3. A replication of this study with another group of students at the same school or another school in Palestine may provide some more evidence about the impact of speaking strategy instruction.
4. Moreover, as the students in this study were put into pairs of similar proficiency levels to perform the role play task, it would also be interesting for further studies to put the students in mixed proficiency pairs for the role play task so that the different speaking strategies could be elicited.

## 5.5. Conclusion

This study shows that the use of speaking strategies especially asking for clarification might be a temporary solution for learners' speaking deficiency. The use of asking for clarification helps learners to keep the channel of communication between learners open. However, it appears that learners' speaking skill was not enhanced through the use of circumlocution since this strategy requires high linguistic level. Therefore, it is advisable that the teaching of this strategy starts as soon as learners are equipped with the basic speaking skill. Furthermore, the results showed that there is a strong correlation between learners' proficiency level and the use of the taught strategies. The teaching of speaking strategies should take in consideration learners' proficiency level. In other words, textbooks should contain a type of speaking strategies that suit learners' level.

Accordingly, the study gives a good step towards adopting the use of speaking strategies especially asking for clarification to help learners overcome any linguistic deficiencies that they encounter during their attempts to speak the language.

It is also hoped that the study stimulates further researches in the area of teaching speaking strategies to enrich the knowledge of the teachers and the learners about the effectiveness of integrating speaking strategies in the instructional field. Finally, it is hoped that the Palestinian educators will get better insights about the use of speaking strategies that can be used in this particular TEFL context.

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**Appendix 1:  
First draft Questionnaire**

**The purpose of this questionnaire is to measure students' knowledge of speaking strategies**

Dear students,

This questionnaire is part of a research project on the use of speaking strategies.

Please answer the questions. There is no right or wrong answer. Your answers are confidential. You have the right to refuse, to participate, at any time. However, your experiences and opinions are important, and will help us understand teaching from your point of view

**Section A**

**Personal information**

<b>Age</b>	<b>a. 14</b>	<b>b. 15</b>	<b>c. 16</b>		
<b>GPA</b>	<b>a. 90 .. 99</b>	<b>b. 89-80</b>	<b>c. 70-79</b>	<b>d. 60-69</b>	<b>e. 50 – less than 40</b>
<b>class</b>	<b>10<sup>th</sup> grade section ( A / B)</b>				
<b>Years of learning English</b>	<b>a. 6 years</b>	<b>b. 9 years</b>	<b>c. 10 years</b>	<b>d. 11 years</b>	

**Section B**

*A. Indicate the extent to which you use the following items by putting a tick (✓) in the appropriate box using the scale given below.*

Never used      rarely used      sometimes used      often used      always used  
 1                      2                      3                      4                      5

Speaking strategies	1	2	3	4	5
1.I think first of what I want to say in my native language and then construct the English sentence.					
2.I use words which are familiar to me.					
3.I reduce the message.					
4.I replace the original message with another message because of feeling incapable of executing my original intent.					
5.I abandon the execution of a verbal plan and just say some words when I don't know what to say.					
6.I pay attention to grammar and word order during conversation.					
7.I try to emphasize the subject and verb of the sentence.					
8. I take my time to express what I want to say.					
9.I pay attention to my pronunciation.					
10. I pay attention to my rhythm and intonation.					
11.I use gestures and facial expressions if I can't communicate how to express myself.					
12. I correct myself when I notice that I have made a mistake.					
13. I repeat what I want to say until the listener understands.					
14. I make comprehension checks to ensure the listener understands what I want to say					
15. I try to use fillers when I cannot think of what to say.					
16. I leave a message unfinished because of some language difficulty.					
17. I don't mind taking risks even though I might make mistakes.					



18. I use Arabic when I don't know the intended word during the conversation					
19. I describe or exemplify the object or action instead of using the appropriate target language item or structure					
20. I turn to the interlocutor for help					

Thank you for your collaboration

## Appendix 2

### Pre and Post speaking strategy Questionnaire in English

#### Questionnaire

**The purpose of this questionnaire is to measure students' knowledge of speaking strategies**

Dear students,

This questionnaire is part of a research project on the use of communication strategies.

Please answer the questions. There is no right or wrong answer. Your answers are confidential. You have the right to refuse, to participate, at any time. However, your experiences and opinions are important, and will help us understand teaching from your point of view

#### section A

##### Personal information

Age	a. 15	c. 16			
GPA	a. 90 .. 99	b. 89-80	c. 70-79	d. 60-69	e. 50 – less than 40
class	10 <sup>th</sup> grade section ( A / B)				
Years of learning English	a. 6 years	b. 9 years	c. 10 years	d. 11 years	

#### Section B

**B. Indicate the extent to which you use the following items by putting a tick (✓) in the appropriate box using the scale given below.**

Never used      rarely used      sometimes used      often used      always used  
 1                      2                      3                      4                      5

Speaking strategies	1	2	3	4	5
1.I think first of what I want to say in my native language and then construct the English sentence.					
2.I use words which are familiar to me.					
3.I reduce the message.					
4.I replace the original message with another message because of feeling incapable of executing my original intent.					
5.I abandon the execution of a verbal plan and just say some words when I don't know what to say.					
6.I pay attention to grammar during conversation.					
7. I take my time to express what I want to say.					
8.I pay attention to my pronunciation ,rhythm and intonation.					
9.I use gestures and facial expressions if I can't communicate how to express myself.					
10. I correct myself when I notice that I have made a mistake.					
11. I repeat what I want to say until the listener understands.					
12. I make comprehension checks to ensure the listener understands what I want to say					
13. I try to use fillers when I cannot think of what to say.					
14. I leave a message unfinished because of some language difficulty.					
15. I don't mind taking risks even though I might make mistakes.					

16. I use Arabic when I don't know the intended word during the conversation					
17. I describe or exemplify the object or action instead of using the appropriate target language item or structure					
18. I turn to the interlocutor for help					

Thank you for your collaboration

### Appendix 3 Pre and Post speaking strategy Questionnaire in Arabic

الهدف من هذا الاستبيان هو قياس معرفة الطلاب بالاستراتيجيات المستخدمة في المحادثة

الطالبات العزيزات

هذا الاستبيان جزء من مشروع بحث رسالة ماجستير عن استخدام استراتيجيات التواصل. الرجاء الاجابه عن الاسئلة . لا يوجد اجابه صحيحة او خاطئة. إجاباتكن ستعامل بسريه. لديك الحق في الرفض بالمشاركة رغم أن أرائكن هامه وسوف تساعدنا في التغلب على مشاكل اكتساب اللغة ثانية ( اللغة الانجليزية)

القسم الاول  
معلومات شخصيه

العمر	١٦.2	١٥.1
المعدل الحالي باللغة الانجليزية	٣. ٧٩-٧٠ .٤ ٦٩-٦٠ .٥ ٥٩-٥٠ .٦ اقل من	١. ٩٩-٩٠ .٢ ٨٩-٨٠
الصف	العاشر الأساسي ( أ ب )	
عدد سنوات تعلم اللغة الانجليزية	٣. ١٠ سنوات	٢. ٩ سنوات

القسم الثاني

اظهري لأي مدى تعبر العبارات التالية عن نفسك وذلك بوضع علامة صح في المربع. حيث أن التقييم الآتي يعني لا استخدمه أبدا نادرا ما استخدمه أحيانا استخدمه غالبا ما استخدمه دائما استخدمه

	١	٢	٣	٤	٥
عبارات تمثل استراتيجيات المحادثة					
١. أفكر أولا بما أريد أن أقوله بلغتي الأم ومن ثم أقوم ببناء جملة باللغة الانجليزية					
٢. استخدم الكلمات التي هي مألوفة بالنسبة لي					
٣. احصر تعبيرتي فيما اعرفه					
٤. استبدل الموضوع الأصلي بموضوع آخر بسبب شعوري بالعجز على التعبير عن الموضوع الأصلي					
٥. أتجنب تنفيذ ما أريد قوله وأقول بعض الكلمات عندما لا اعرف ماذا أقول					
٦. اهتم بقواعد اللغة أثناء المحادثة					
٧. أخذ وقتي في التعبير عن ما أريد أن أقول					
٨. اهتم باللفظ والإيقاع والنغم عند تولي الجملة					
٩. استخدم الإيماءات وتعبيرات الوجه إذا لم أتمكن من التعبير عن نفسي					
١٠. أصحح نفسي عندما لاحظ بأنني قد ارتكبت خطأ					
١١. اكرر ما أريد أن أقول حتى يفهم المستمع					
١٢. استخدم تعبيرات معينة للتحقق من الفهم أثناء المحادثة لأضمن أن المستمع يفهم ما أريد أن أقول					
١٣. استخدم كلمات مثل ( اها - ممممم / حسنا) عندما لا استطيع أن أفكر بما سأقول					
١٤. أتوقف عن إكمال موضوعي والتعبير عن فكري بسبب بعض الصعوبات اللغوي					
١٥. أغامر بالحديث بلغة الانجليزية على الرغم من أنني قد أخطئ					
١٦. استخدم اللغة العربية عندما لا اعرف معنى كلمة بلغة الانجليزية					
١٧. أوصف الشيء أو الحدث بلغة الانجليزية بدل من استخدام الكلمة المستخدمة لهذا الحدث أو الشيء					
١٨. اطلب المساعدة من الشخص الذي أتجاوز معه					

شكرا لتعاونك

## Appendix 4

### Pre and post speaking tasks (conversation tasks)

#### **The impact of using asking for clarification and circumlocution on enhancing EFL 10<sup>th</sup> grade students' speaking ability.**

##### Task (1)

Work in pairs, one student will be a passenger and the other will be the officer in the airport. You have a problem that is your flight was delayed. Tell the officer at the airport about this problem; try to find solutions with the officer for this problem.

##### Task (2)

You are going home from school, you have seen an accident. The driver did not stop. You will be the witness who will give description and details about the accident to the police officer about (the place, the vehicle, the causality and your feelings and opinions towards the accident and the whole situation)

##### Task (3)

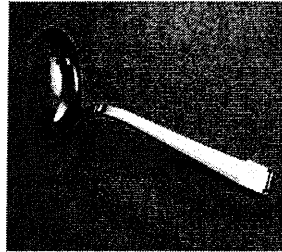
Play a role of a famous character such as Yassir Arafat, or Sharoon ). You will have a talk with a TV. presenter to tell her about the field you are active in , about your achievements, things you regret that you did and things you think you should have done. Say what you think of the other opponent either Palestinians or Israelis

Appendix 5  
Circumlocution (description task)

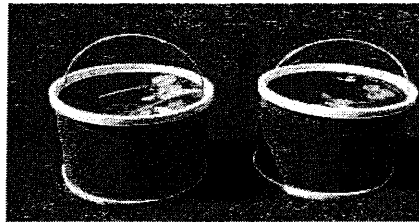
1



2



5



6



E887

9. Praise()مدح.....

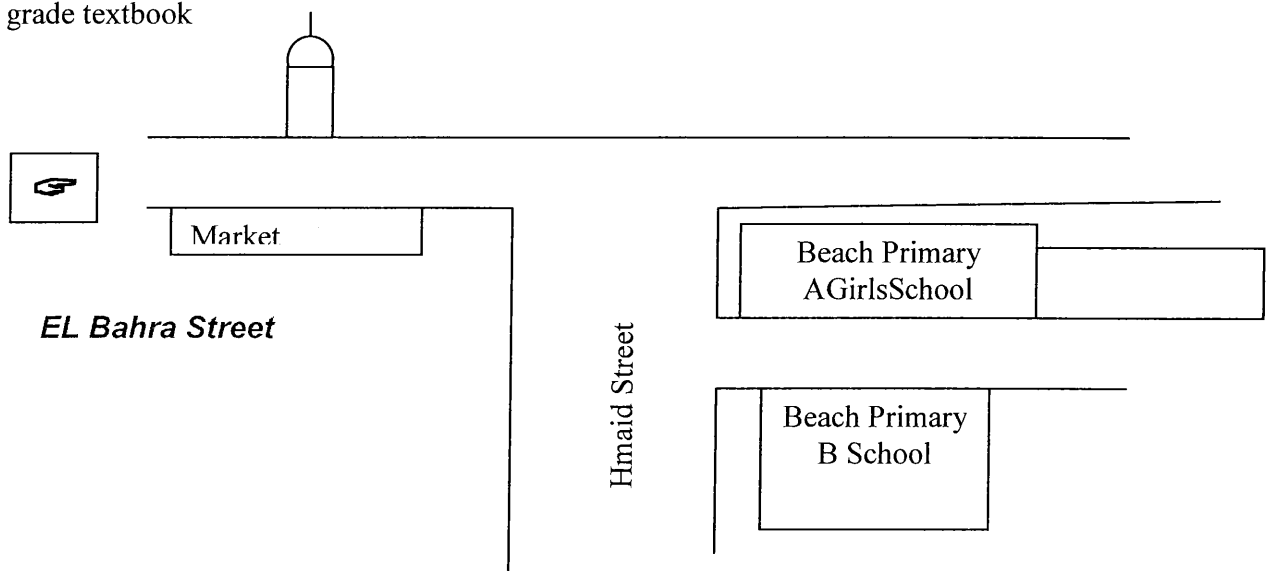
10. Thyroid gland (الغده الدرقيه).....

## Appendix 6 Activities for practising asking for clarification

Activity 1: You and your group are the design team of a Palestinian toy manufacturer. You must make a proposal to your boss for a new best-selling toy. In your discussion, you should decide- the type of toy which you think will sell the best (including the name of the toy; whether it is for girls, boys or both; whether it is connected with a popular film, TV programme, comic book, etc.);2- the price of the toy (or price range, if you are thinking of a series of toys);3 the location where the toy will be manufactured (in Palestine or in another country);You should also be prepared to give your boss reasons why you think this toy would be successful.

Activity 2: Your school has been given \$1000 by a rich businessman who once attended the school. The only stipulation is that the money is to be spent to build or improve sports facilities at the school in order to allow the students to enjoy a broader range of sports. You have to discuss how to spend the money, and to organize action to implement the final decision.

Activity: 3 is a task for giving directions which is adapted from English for Palestine ninth grade textbook



**Appendix 7:**  
**Activities on the use of circumlocution**

**Game: Guess who am I?**

The speaker has to tell the interlocutor description, and the interlocutor has to guess what has been described.

1. What do you want for your birthday?
2. What subject do you like the best?
3. What country do you want to visit?

Example: S1: Which season do you like the best?

S2: Well, I like July, August.

S1: You like summer

S2: yes.



**Appendix 8**  
**Activities to practice the use asking for clarification and circumlocution**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

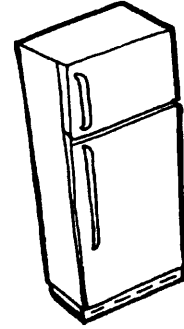
Descriptions: 1.

2.

3.

4.

5.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

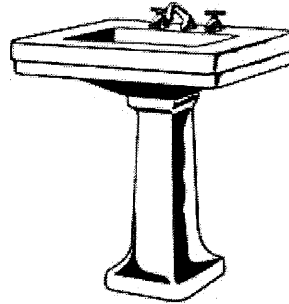
Descriptions: 1.

2.

3.

4.

5.



**Task 2**

The teacher divides the class into teams: four teams consist of five students and two teams consist of six students. Then, using slips of paper, give each team a slip of paper includes one word, which they will not show to the other teams. After two minutes, working together to think how to describe the word, play begins. The team chooses one student to play on behalf of them. After the chosen student tells the other teams her team's definition of the given word, the other teams can ask the student for more clarification and then they write on a piece of paper their guessing of the intended word and handed their answers to the student to read them and see who gets the right answer. This game continues until all the teams take their turn and at the end the teacher who was recording the points for the winning teams, announces who is the winner.



## Appendix 9

### Some of the participants' production

Deema: sir, I think we should manufactured sponge pop toy.

Lubna: do you mean the sponge which we put the soap on it and clean the glass?

Deema: I mean sponge toy which the children which it on TV.

Duaa: why

Deema: because it very funny, famous and popular toy which it price 5 shekels and it price is not high.

Lubna: when we can manufactured it?

Deema: we can manufactured it in the world.

Lubna: I agree with you, but I think we should manufactured the strawberry shurcate toy.

Reman: what do you mean by strawberry shurcat?

Lubna: the toy which the girls love it and watch it on TV.

Areej: how much the price?

Lubna: just 2

Areej: when we can manufactured it?

Lubna: we can manufactured it in Jerusalem.

Doua: why?

Because very people visit it.

Areej: yes, we agree with sponge pop.